

The European Social Worker (Volume 8:1)



International federation of social workers European region

Hot off the Press!

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Dr Rory G. Truell has been appointed to the post of Secretary General. Dr Truell, who has spent the last four years as Chief Executive of The New Zealand Social Services Training Organization and whose distinguished career spans a number of years in the human services and international social work sector will assume the role as of 1 July.

Announcing the appointment, IFSW President Gary Bailey said "In our new secretary-general we were looking for someone who has an equally strong vision for the future and who would also build upon IFSW's past successes. We believe that in Rory Truell we have found an incredible leader and someone who will play an integral role in elevating the awareness and recognition of professional social work worldwide."

The IFSW Executive wishes a warm welcome to Dr Truell and looks forward to a long and productive relationship.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! The IFSW Executive wish social workers across the region a peaceful and relaxing holiday season.....

Now is the time when across Europe many social workers will be taking holidays. As social workers we are facing difficult times with limited resources and the rise of inequalities across the region. By the end of the holiday season we hope to be able to distribute the results of our current project considering the social consequences of the financial crisis.

It is important that social workers take care of themselves to avoid the potential for burnout. We hope that all of our readers enjoy the holiday period and take some time to recharge their batteries for the challenges ahead. Together we will face the challenges and find the solutions.



Report on the European Delegates Meeting 2011 in Brussels: Siobhan Maclean and Cristina Martins

The Delegates Meeting of IFSW Europe was held this year in Brussels, Belgium, from 8 to 10 April 2011. More than 50 delegates and observers from 26 member organisations were present or represented by proxy.

The following countries were represented at the meeting: Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark (with proxy for Iceland) Finland (with proxy for Norway), France, Germany, Georgia, Ireland, Kosova, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden (with a proxy for the Faroe Islands), Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom. Albania was present as an Observer.

SPECIAL SESSION

The meeting began with a Special Session by Ariella de Gennaro, a project Officer for the Social Platform.

The social Platform is the largest civil society alliance in Europe. 46 pan European networks are members of the Platform. One of the aims of the Social Platform is to connect people working in social roles within Europe.

Ariella outlined the current work programme of the Social Platform, inviting members to consider which of the areas they were most interested in and which they could contribute to.

Ariella also talked about the study visits which the Social Platform have each year. Some IFSW members have been able to attend study visits and have found these useful. This year the networking visit will be to Poland.



The European President Nicolai Paulsen then welcomed delegates and observers to the Delegates Meeting and Liliane Cocozza welcomed the Delegates on behalf of the Belgium Association. The President gave a particular welcome to the three new members present at the meeting – Kosova, Belgium and Georgia.

The work programme of IFSW was then presented around four core items: human rights, social policy, professional development and organisational development.

Human Rights

Graça André, contact person to the Global Human Rights Commission, reported on her work and presented a proposal for a project plan on the topic of "Social Workers Realising Human Rights: Are social workers doing it?" She asked for member's involvement.



Ian Johnston, executive committee member, reported on his work representing IFSW Europe e.V. on the Fundamental Rights Platform. He stated that the promotion of fundamental rights is a vital task for social workers and explained that IFSW are also part of the FRAND group – which is a working group providing support to the Social Platform on Fundamental Rights Issues. Marjut Kosonen has been very much involved in the work with FRAND.

Cristina Martins, executive committee member, then launched a DVD promoting social work positively. (See page 8)

A statement on human rights and social work was developed and adopted before the end of the meeting.

Project: Social Impact of the Financial Crisis

Ian Johnston and Siobhan Maclean gave a presentation on the project development to date. The aim of the project is to develop a set of materials that can be used in each individual country. Action can then be taken in each country as best fits with the country context.

A statement of principles on the social impact of the economic crisis was also developed and adopted before the end of the meeting.



Council of Europe

Gabriele Stark-Angermeier gave a verbal report to add to the detailed report provided by Antonina Dashkina on her role within the Council of Europe. Gabriele reported that there has been a funding cut within the Council of Europe. This will have an impact on how the Council of Europe will consult with NGOs. Therefore the number of meetings and the number of commissions will be reduced. There is an ongoing debate about the role of the Council of Europe with more members joining the EU. Gabriele encouraged delegates to become involved in the Council of Europe support team.

Barbara Molderings is representing IFSW Europe e.V. in the Council of Europe project looking at international professional competences. This project will lead to the publication of Guidance.

Charter of Rights

Ian Johnston explained that part of the executive's work on the development of the profession has been the development of a charter of rights. The idea of this is to support associations in looking at the main areas of concern for social workers – especially in protecting social workers from burnout. The executive will launch the Charter very soon as a poster.



Elections/New Executive

Maria Moritz from Austria and Ian Johnston from UK were elected to the executive committee. Klaus Kihune from Switzerland is the first deputy and Annica Skoglund from Sweden the second deputy.

Appointment of external and internal representatives of IFSW Europe e.V.

Gabriele Stark-Angermeier was appointed as Representative of IFSW Europe to Council of Europe, Graça André as the contact person to the Global Human Rights Commission and John Brennan for IFSW Europe Election Officer.

The next Delegates Meeting will be in Armenia from
27th to 29th of April 2012.





ESW Special Edition DM 2011 What were your impressions of the Delegates Meeting?

Our roving reporter Cristina Martins was out and about at the Delegates meeting to see what participants thought:

Gary Bailey, IFSW President

“ I was struck as I sat in the Delegates Meeting in Brussels by the dedication of the individuals who were in attendance. I was impressed with the willingness of the different individuals from across Europe to come together to share ideas and to try new ones. There was a great deal of diversity of opinion yet at the same time there was also a great deal of solidarity amongst the participants. I left feeling very proud that as President of IFSW I was engaged in the advancement of the social work profession with such a group of global colleagues. The issues which confront us are truly global issues but I am heartened that we will find the ways to respond to the needs of our clients and communities and work together to make them even stronger. ”



Annica Skoglund, Sweden

“ I liked it! I really like when we have time to talk, and I think we had that. I like when we are having work together in smaller groups, you have time to listen and learn from each other. Good discussions! I like to meet "my colleagues" from Europe and to hear them talk about social work. I learn a lot. I think it was good that you and Siobhan also were on the stage. More of that! One thing was not so good, the time, if you say we will finish at 13.00, we must finish at that time. ”



Martina Kalcoc, Croatia

“ For me it was a very useful experience, I would say much more from the ENSACT Conference. The reason is that I had the possibility to exchange knowledge and experiences with colleagues from very different countries and learn a lot from their work. No matter how different the member countries are, the truth is that we can always learn from each other a lot and learn from other countries experiences and that is what is good in being an IFSW member. My previous experiences in international workshops also showed me that social workers basically have some same problem issues, no matter if they come from a well or less developed or rich country, I was very grateful to participate in the Delegate's Meeting in Brussels! ”

Diana Petrova, Bulgaria

“ We have to do a lot of work in a short time. It was very well structured before the meeting. The materials were published in the website. I felt very informed before coming and had time to read and think about issues that are priority to our National Association. Because we are not all EU members states we should have time for only EU matters and not EU matters if it's appropriate regarding the mission of IFSW Europe. I am very pleased with the preparation of the meeting, but we need more time or maybe have a shorter agenda.

Liliane Esan, Belgium

“ Dear friends and colleagues of IFSW, it was a very good experience to participate in this Delegates Meeting, after many years of absence, representing UFAS (Union Professionnelle Francophone des Assistants Sociaux) in Belgium, being again in contact with professional social workers coming from so many countries in Europe. I feel once again that our profession is always existing, working for ameliorate good living conditions for all, with this guide for our method of intervention which is the code of Ethics. It seems to me, following the discussions in the plenary session and during the workshops, that we are now more open to develop political strategies to obtain a better recognition of our profession and demonstrate how we contribute as agent of the front line to bring in the voice of those who have no voice to build a society, with rights accessible for all. The method to discuss the different points of the agenda and in the workshops, gives time enough to all the participants to express their point of views. This time is always necessary to permit participants to clarify their Ideas. It is always important that all the members have the feeling that they are part of the organisation. It is not very easy to obtain a real participation of the members; for that reason I have appreciated the way to prepare the subject of the conference “social consequences of the financial crisis” The different steps before the meeting – the questionnaire - the workshops organised in different countries before the Delegates Meeting, give arguments to build the different statements that are really specific of IFSW. And in my point of view can have a real impact in the different European Institutions. We have to make the link between the past of IFSW and the actual situation of the profession. Let me say, because I am a veteran member, how it is painful to see that after a so long fight to obtain a European recognition, we are today at the same starting point as in 1992. The delegates who are now in charge to re-examine the situation in the different countries could receive my support to take profit of the past. I think we have the possibility to be more combative to defend colleagues in Hungary – in France also, where in 1992 we obtained a official response of the Parliament to consider that the proof time during the training are part of the training to obtain the diploma – so it is considered as three years- and must be classified in the high superior training. I want also, as conclusion, to express my gratitude to all the delegates and the executive members for being patient with me when I explained some positions in different discussions that are influenced by my experience in the European institutions.

”

Salome Namicheishvili, Georgia

“ Being the first representation for Georgia has been absolutely fantastic because in Georgia we are facing a lot of challenges, it's a group of young women qualified social workers advocating for the profession, identity, establishment, promotion and it's been very difficult. Coming here gave me the opportunity to share similar stories where Social Work profession is emerging, even the long social work history they are dealing with some challenges. Sharing experiences, knowledge, getting feedback, empowered me with addition energy and I go back with full of commitment.

I really love the DVD and the song.

”

Marjut Kosonen, United Kingdom

“ As always, it was good to meet up with colleagues old and new. Two new countries were represented this year – Georgia and Kosovo, the latter by an Albanian colleague. It was inspirational to witness their commitment to social work, as was the case with many others – the steady old hands, the young enthusiasts and those in-between.

We usually get an opportunity to meet a number of social workers from the country hosting the Delegates Meeting; therefore it was disappointing that only one indigenous social worker was present. Again the question of representation raised its head considering that in many countries social workers serve diverse populations and speak different languages. We missed our colleagues from the Faro Island. Please, come back next year.

Since my first attendance at the DM in 2004, also held in Brussels I have seen a greater clarity of purpose emerging along with a better balance between processes within, and clearer outcomes from the meeting. However, we still struggle between procedural issues, fullness of the agenda and creating sufficient opportunities for delegates to hear about what is social work and how it is practiced in different countries. Would it be possible to create more space in the programme for learning about social work in different countries, particularly from the new generation of social workers and from the emerging countries that have more recently joined the federation?

I look forward to meeting colleagues in Armenia in 2012.

”

We always like to hear what Delegates feel about the Delegates Meeting and try to use the feedback to improve things for the future.

Cristina and Siobhan are currently working on a paper about how the Delegates Meeting should be organised - so let us know your views!

IFSW EUROPE STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

IFSW Europe, meeting in Brussels on 8-10 April 2011 is seriously concerned about the financial crisis affecting all the countries of Europe and the radical changes in social services and social protection arrangements which governments are imposing on our communities, with damaging consequences for poorer and marginalised people.

IFSW Europe points to the fact that Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is upheld by all countries in Europe, states (among other rights) that 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.'

Social workers across Europe know from daily experience that the continent faces a major social crisis with growing anger/anxiety, fear and poverty. Social workers also see that the biggest impact of the crisis is on the weakest members of the community, including older people, children, people with disabilities and those with few skills, all of whom have rights under the Declaration.

European social workers meeting together also observe that the crisis is threatening European solidarity. There are growing divisions between richer and poorer countries and between richer and poor people within countries which have a damaging impact on community cohesion and on marginalised groups.

IFSW Europe calls on the European Union, Council of Europe and national governments and global bodies to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights (and other related international instruments) and in particular the right to social support and social services.

IFSW Europe calls on individual social workers and their employing agencies to uphold the values and ethics of the profession and to support the civil, political, social, and cultural rights of service users.

IFSW Europe calls on national member organisations to monitor the commitment of social work agencies to human rights, to take action to publicise human rights abuses and to challenge agencies when they fail to uphold human rights.

IFSW Europe invites our ENSACT, Social Platform and other partners to work jointly with us in this field and to promote education and research in this field.

IFSW Europe calls on all schools of social work to ensure that all students do at least one project in the area of human rights.

IFSW Europe will provide support to national organisations to help them support social workers to promote the human rights of service users and the rights of social workers.

Contact: Nicolai Paulsen, President of the IFSW European Region [International Federation of Social Workers – Europe e.V.]

E-mail: vpeur@ifsw.org Cell phone: + 45 40 56 19 59 Web: www.ifsw.org/europe

THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

“We don’t pay for your crisis”

The financial crisis is a result of financial systems disregarding social responsibilities and social investments.

The financial crisis has had serious social consequences in Europe and becomes even more important with pronounced aggravation of the crisis in the latest year. The accelerating problems of debt in Greece and Ireland together with common developments in other countries can create a new and dangerous situation which can worsen the social problems because of stern social cuts.

1. People who are marginalised are disproportionately affected by the economic crisis – for example, older people, women, young people and working poor (stories can be used to illustrate this). We want Governments to look at the impact of all cuts to ensure that the impact is not disproportionate. Decisions must be openly discussed in society and the decisions made must be sustainable.
2. The impact of the financial crisis is different in the different regional areas of Europe. National organisations need to strengthen their position in cooperation with other progressive organisations and institutions. Social workers at a National level must work effectively within their country in the current economic climate. National organisations should also work together to strengthen our voice across Europe and the world.
3. The workload of social workers has increased as a direct result of the impact of the financial crisis. This is not sustainable and will lead to unsafe practice. Governments need to ensure that the International standards for social work (see the standards) are implemented to ensure high quality and safe practice.
4. One of the responses to the financial crisis is to cut down on preventative and early intervention services in social care. Preventative services have a long term impact which is usually outside of the life of a Government. A focus on services which provide short term outcomes is politically driven rather than driven by the needs of society. A lack of sustained investment in social care has detrimental long term consequences for society. Cuts and a lack of investment now will lead to greater expenditure later. Society needs Governments to take a long term view to funding social care. We need to invest now.
5. The financial crisis has led to Governments introducing indicators and measures based on financial concerns rather than social cohesion, social justice and social wellbeing. Social workers need to strengthen their voice based on evidence and information. As an organisation the International Federation of Social Workers provides a forum for the sharing of information and evidence. This should be used by National organisations to develop indicators and measurements. Governments must take in account the experience of service users and social workers. Social policy makers must focus on the needs of people and society.
6. Marginalised people are often not able or allowed to vote. They have therefore no or very little political power. Marginalised people need to develop a collective voice which will be heard by politicians. Social workers should seek to support people to develop more political power.
7. The countries of Europe do have sufficient money to meet the needs of their citizens. The issue is about Governments choosing how the money is spent. Social workers need to work together to develop a clear argument for investment in social care and welfare services.
8. In modern times people focus on individuals (themselves) more. The financial crisis has exaggerated this trend in society. There is a loss of interest in community and common good. We have lost a sense of social solidarity. Social work which focuses on individuals and not society is exaggerating this problem. Social work should be proactive in reclaiming group and community work as effective social work models.
9. Social workers serve the most vulnerable people who need the greatest priority at the time of economic crisis. Social workers pay and conditions should be protected from cuts with the social work profession rewarded at a similar level to other valued professions.

Contact: Nicolai Paulsen, President of the IFSW European Region [International Federation of Social Workers – Europe e.V.]

E-mail: vpeur@ifsw.org Cell phone: + 45 40 56 19 59 Web: www.ifsw.org/europe



Joana Domingues

IFSW Europe e.V. DVD focusing on Social Work and Human Rights: Cristina Martins

A DVD focusing on Social Work and Human Rights was produced and a Song was composed and recorded for the soundtrack of the DVD that was launched at the Delegates Meeting in Brussels in April 2011.

This video is composed of nine small situations that give examples of positive images that encourage disadvantaged, marginalized people or people dealing with difficulties in the society, to be helped by social workers, for a better quality of life. The executive committee of IFSW Europe e.V. decided to have 2 versions of the same DVD, one with labels identifying the situations and other without labels to give the opportunity to be used for instance in training sessions with Social Work students to identify the areas where social workers intervene, making a difference to people's lives.

The DVD will be on youtube very soon.

The DVD was directed and produced by Joana Domingues. Joana Domingues is Portuguese has studied in the Catholic University of Porto where she got a degree in Sound and Image and a master in Television. She did recently a post graduation in movie direction at the FAMU, Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.

She has been doing a lot of media work that can be watched in internet such as video clips for example "Me Jane" to Andrew Thorn

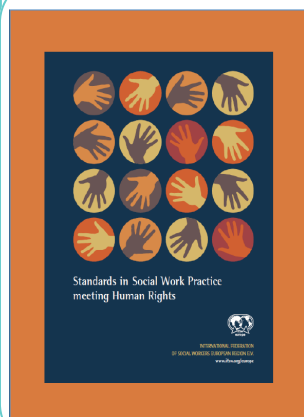
<http://www.youtube.com/user/migalha6?feature=mhum#p/a/u/2/OZMhil4dGbw>

"Social work is"

How can social work help me?
Tell me what it is

Social work is a profession of the human rights
Social work includes those who are marginalised
Social work empower people to control their lives
It makes the difference that makes the difference
Social work is for individuals and families
Social work works with groups and communities
Social work is there for you whenever you're in need
It makes the difference that makes the difference.

(Excerpt from the song lyrics by Cristina Martins)



The booklet explores the importance of social work as a human rights profession and includes:

- Definition of social work
- Roles and professional title
- Codes and ethical thinking
- Knowledge base for practice
- Social work qualification
- Accountability
- Organisational contexts to enable good standards of practice
- Organisational frameworks which support best social work practice.

Booklet on the Social Work Standards Meeting Human Rights Project: Anthea Agius

The International Federation of Social Workers, Europe, published in 2010 a booklet with the Executive Summary of a Europe wide project set out to establish the basis for a common framework of Standards in Social Work Practice. The framework is intended to consolidate the basic parameters within which Social Work in Europe operates into a common framework including Ethics, Professional Role, Training and Qualifications and Organisational Contexts for Social Work in Europe. This framework is considered a key step in contributing towards the on going development of Standards for Social Work Practice in Europe. At the heart of this work is the consideration that an integral part of Social Work Practice is the realisation of Human Rights. This framework is considered to be a key and alive document that will accompany the on going development of Standards for Social Work Practice in Europe. Your comments and contributions to discussions are therefore most welcome and will be considered for future reviews.

The leaflet brings together the salient features of such a framework while the full publication can be found at: www.ifsw.org/europe.

Editor's Note

At Delegates Meeting in Brussels we found out about how the booklet has already been used and distributed:

- Armenia have translated the booklet and sent it to their Government.
- Austria have translated the booklet into German and it is used in German speaking schools of social work.
- Bulgaria have translated the booklet and distributed it to members.
- Croatia have translated and published the booklet.
- Turkey have translated the booklet.
- Gabriele Stark-Angermeier said that the project booklet has been distributed to Council of Europe members.

“Globetrotting or just plain hard work?”

Ian Johnston’s feet haven’t touched the ground since joining the IFSW Europe Executive in 2009.....

Ian finds his roots on a field visit in Ghent.



Globetrotting or just plain hard work?

Actually it's been both of these things and a whole lot more besides.

Since being elected to serve on the Executive Committee I have worked hard to promote the values, principles and concern for others that unite social workers the world over and to raise IFSW's standing and impact in Europe. I have delivered presentations on our work in Romania, Portugal (the Azores), Italy, Switzerland and France and participated in EU Social Platform meetings in Brussels, Naples, Budapest and Warsaw.

IFSW global and regional conferences have taken me to Hong Kong and Malta and earlier this year I contributed to workshops held in Croatia and Dublin focussing on the current project on the impact of the global recession on social work services. I have also represented the Federation at the annual meetings of the EU Fundamental Rights Platform held in Vienna.

Social work is not just about helping people make sense of the trials and tribulations which confront even the most fortunate of us at some time in our lives but is of course about exploring possibilities and inspiring others to develop these in a way that benefits individuals and groups, particularly those who are disadvantaged or excluded.

The many wonderful people I have met and the wealth of knowledge they have shared with me more than compensate for long waits in airport lounges, being marooned far from home on account of volcanic ash clouds and snowdrifts and of course the fact that the more you do on the international stage the more in demand you become!

I am writing this note as I leave Le Man (three days before the 24 race) having addressed a seminar on “Social Inclusion and the Right to Work”. My next port of call is Warsaw for a Social Platform networking and capacity building visit. This will be my first time in Poland and I would have liked to have stayed longer in both places had my presence back home in Scotland for a wedding this weekend not been demanded.

‘C’est la vie!!!

Rising inequalities – rising discrimination and racism in europe : Maria Moritz

The phenomenon of rising right-wing movements throughout Europe who promote discrimination against foreigners and marginalized groups is a development that occurs since more than 20 years now. Its development started with the neoliberalistic economy spreading worldwide, which raises the gaps between rich and poor, between leading and marginalized groups in society, between people with and without future perspectives.

The financial crisis has widened these gaps dramatically and nurtured the discriminating movements and the attraction of right-wing parties. In Hungary the right-wing conservative "Fidesz" has succeeded in election and formed a coalition with the right-extremist party "Jobbik", having 2/3 of the parliament seats and the ability to change the constitution in Hungary. And this they did, having changed dozens of laws already to form in Hungary a nationalistic and authoritarian presidential state, I don't want to use the word democracy!

At the beginning of 2011 the media-laws were changed and the great public media in Hungary are controlled by the government, avoiding all critical commentaries. The constitution has been amended and the priority for "true Hungarian" matters and groups is basis of all laws and rights. Now the social laws are to be changed, prioritizing aid for "true" Hungarians, allowing humiliating controls for the local authorities, where poor people, unemployed people, people with special needs and foreign people, asylum seekers and Roma people live.

This development is not a singular one in Europe, it is the one that openly shows the "new" direction in politics. In many countries, not only in neighboring countries of Hungary the right-wing politics are successful and discrimination of many groups in society is evident. The intimidating outbreaks of discrimination and hostile attitudes against these groups is mentioned in international papers. What is lacking is the great proclamation against these events in our societies.

Atrocities against colored people, Roma people, gay people you can find in Germany, France, Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, Hungary and Austria. The Human Rights Reports draw a sad and frightening picture.

Social workers and social organisations are getting into the visir of the nationalistic and discriminating movements, being harassed, intimidated, prosecuted. In some regions they are fearing for their lives, for their families and planning to leave the country.

Europe and the European Union seems to have failed guaranteeing human rights and tolerance and peace to all groups of people.

Maybe not – but we have to speak out loud what is going on, organize a network for solidarity and a platform for information for all social workers and especially for the courageous ones opposing and getting in danger.



Maria Moritz reports on concerns about human rights issues and the rise of discrimination and racism in Europe .

Let us know about your experiences and share your views with your European colleagues send an article to europe.ifsw@gmail.com

Report to the Executive regarding the Swedish contribution to the Social Platform and Annual Conference on Care : Titti Fränkel and Yvonne Ahlström

IFSW at the annual conference on care organised by the social platform.

The aim of this conference was to establish a common ground for care that ensures the rights, responsibilities, dignity, and empowerment of both care receivers and care givers, and to identify the main challenges and opportunities in receiving and providing care.

We were asked to talk about Eldercare and our seminar was held under the theme “The Rights and Responsibilities in Elder Care.”

We had chosen to talk about a new law that was introduced in Sweden in January 2009 called “A system of Freedom of Choice in Elder Care”. This new law shows a political will to move the power of choice from the political level to the user. As a result we now can see a growth of the private sector. Our purpose by choosing this theme was to discuss and problematize the consequences for the users, the carers and care receivers.

The seminar was well-attended (full) and our impression was that it aroused a great interest with as many commentaries and questions from the audience that the very tough time limit allowed. Of course we also took the opportunity to promote the next world conference in Stockholm 2012 and wished the audience very welcome.



BREAKING NEWS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

At the BASW Annual General Meeting in May 2011, members gave overwhelming backing to the establishment of a trade union arm—The Social Workers Union.

Commenting on the move, Hilton Dawson, BASW’s chief executive said: “There is a great deal of work to do but there will be further announcements over the coming months. One key aspect will be to hold meetings with all trade unions with social workers in membership to emphasise that this is an extremely positive move aimed at giving social workers a more coherent voice working in partnership with all who share such aims.”

Update on the Connecting Members Project: Cristina Martins



This executive committee project aims to:

- help improve communication with members
- encourage members organisations to become more involved in the work of IFSW
- support exchange between members
- encourage new members

Anthea Agius	Barbara Molderings	Cristina Martins	Ian Johnston	Maria Moritz	Nicolai Paulsen
Cyprus	Armenia	Andorra	Albania	Azerbaijan	Denmark
Georgia	Austria	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Estonia
Greece	Belarus	France	Hungary	Croatia	Faroe Island
Italy	Belgium	Moldova	Ireland	Kosova	Finland
Lithuania	Germany	Portugal	Poland	Luxembourg	Iceland
Malta	Latvia	Serbia	Romania	The Former Republic of Macedonia	Montenegro
Monaco	Netherlands	Spain	Ukraine	Russian Federation	Norway
San Marino	Switzerland	Turkey	United Kingdom	Slovakia	Sweden
				Slovenia	

The first deputy Klaus Kuhne will have the role of supporting executive members who are having difficulties making contacts in those countries where we do not have contacts.

Meeting with Serbia: Cristina Martins

To help out with the process of the Serbian membership of IFSW, the IFSW European Executive Committee decided to visit Serbia in March 2011 to have a joint meeting in Belgrade with representatives of the Association of Social Workers of Serbia and the Union of the Societies of Social Workers of the Republic of Serbia.

Participants:

IFSW European Region e.V.:

Nicolai Paulsen, President of IFSW European Region e.V. and Cristina Martins, Executive Committee's contact person for Serbia

Union of the Societies of Social Workers of the Republic of Serbia:

Vukica Cukalovic, President of Union of the Societies of Social Workers of the Republic of Serbia, Dusan Tasic, Mira Kadavenda and Miljana Pavlovic as interpreter

Association of Social Workers of Serbia:

Tasic Miograd, President of Society of Social Workers of Republic of Serbia, Ana Cekerevac, Vasic Milic, Zivorad Gajic and Vojin Vidanovic

Nicolai Paulsen started the meeting clarifying that IFSW Europe was hosting the meeting that aimed to join the two different visions and welcomed all participants. He thanked both associations for being able to participate and for helping to find ways to make this meeting possible.

He explained that the executive went to Serbia not to evaluate or interfere between internal national issues or discussions but only to clarify doubts and help both associations to join IFSW, so it was explained what a coordinating body is and examples of other countries that are members of IFSW in the same way, were given.

It was agreed that the executive would provide more information about coordinating bodies and general information so both associations could discuss with their members how to organise themselves at National level.

The Executive of IFSW European Region and all IFSW member organisations are looking forward to welcome Serbian membership as soon as possible.



Two member organizations of IFSW attempt to build strong partnership - The Georgian Association of Social Workers Hosts Mira Antonyan, President of AASW

The Georgian Association of Social Workers which just recently joined IFSW attempts to build strong cooperation to neighboring Armenia, where social work similar to Georgia is in an emerging phase.

On May 19, 2011 the Georgian Association of Social Workers hosted a meeting with the President of the Armenian Association of Social Workers, Mira Antonyan. Mrs. Mira Antonyan met student members of Georgian Social Worker Association.

The guest speaker reviewed achievements and challenges of the social work profession in Armenia, whereas student members got an opportunity to share their own experience as social work practitioners in Georgia. In near future it is planned that Chairperson of GASW, Salome Namicheishvili will visit AASW and meet social workers in Armenia. This partnership opportunity is of an utmost importance to share cross country knowledge, experience and challenges of social work developments in the Caucasus Region.



- One of the many benefits of being a member of IFSW is the opportunity to forge links and strong partnerships, across Europe and indeed across the world.
- Let us know what links you are making with other member organisations.

NEWS FROM SPAIN



Infanta Cristina from Spain has given the IMERSO Award 2010 for Social Merit to the Spanish Association of Social Workers (Consejo General del Trabajo Social).

All the information is available on the Spanish association webpage:

http://www.cgtrabajosocial.es/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=535&Itemid=1

Congratulations to our Spanish colleagues!

OTHER NEWS FROM SPAIN

The Journal of Social Services and Social Policy is a scientific-technical Journal, four monthly published by the General Council of Social Work since 1984. The journal has established itself as the publication of social work and social policy with the largest circulation in Spain, reaching more than 10,000 subscribers.

The General Council of Social Work has decided to invite as international members of the Scientific Advisory Committee:

Laura Elizabeth Acotto
 Maria Luisa Ibor Arriagada
 David Jones
 Klaus Khune
 Henry Parada
 Cristina Martins
 Josefine Johanson

You can get more information through the website in the "Publications" section.
www.cgtrabajosocial.es



La Infanta Cristina, La Ministra Leire Pajín y Purificación Causapié, Directora del IMERSO junto con los galardonados

The President of Ireland attends the Irish Association of Social Workers' (IASW) 40th birthday celebrations:

John Brennan

The Irish Association of Social Workers was founded in 1971. On Friday, the 17th of June, it celebrated these 40 years that have seen important contributions to advocacy, representation, social justice and change in Ireland.

Social work in Ireland emerged from hospital based social work where the tradition of direct responses to the needs of individuals for support in the community and at home emerged. Over the last 40 years, social workers have been at the forefront of empowerment and social change, deeply involved in the setting up of patient rights and advocacy groups, bereavement counselling services, client centred mental health and disability services and childcare service and legislative reform.

The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese led the distinguished guests who honoured the Association by their presence at the celebratory function in Dublin. Along with President McAleese, we were pleased to have Gary Bailey and members of the Global IFSW Executive, Hilton Dawson, CEO, BASW UK and Lesley McDowell, Chair, BASW Northern Ireland. Also of IFSW interest, Augusta McCabe, past IFSW President and Eilis Walsh, past Vice-President IFSW-Europe and Monica Egan former member of the IFSW-Europe Executive were present.

The President of Ireland, Gary Bailey and retired Irish Supreme Court judge, Catherine McGuinness paid formal tributes to the Association on what was a joyful and for many, an emotional occasion. President McAleese gave a wonderfully thoughtful speech that provided a ringing endorsement of social work in Ireland. However, her words have echoes for social workers across the globe. See the next page for her speech...

John Brennan reports on the 40th birthday celebrations of the Irish Association of Social Workers.

The President of Ireland Mary McAleese gave a speech which has messages for social workers across the Globe.



"Yours is a profession and an academic discipline that works to address the individual and collective brokenness that in so many ways conspires to prevent the full flowering of the potential of human beings and human societies. Your field and clinical work brings practical help where it is needed.



Your scholarly analysis distils the wisdom gleaned from practice and research and develops it into the information and insight that we need to improve the quality of life for our citizens and our country.

You are acquainted with life at its most fragile, tortuous and chaotic. You deliberately choose to place yourselves into that messy arena so that with the help of your skills, experience and the tools at your disposal, some kind of workable pathway through the disarray can be found. You offer the prospect of structured, professional and effective action in situations that families, friends and communities often think are beyond their coping skills. The complexity of those situations and the high level of judgement needed to circumnavigate them are evident in the huge spectrum of work settings you operate in each day and the volume of people and services you have to engage with to get the work done...

You have educated our society about social justice and you have vindicated the need for supportive interventions in lives that are beset by great difficulties. There are systemic barriers, inequities and injustices that continue to blight the lives of some of our citizens. There are personal circumstances and calamities that impact dreadfully on lives no doubt compounded by the impact of economic recession in recent years.

There can be no doubting the difficult and attritional nature of the job that you do today, nor the complexity and sometimes intractability of the challenges that you face. The solidarity offered by this Association is part of the network of support and re-energising you need to keep on going, to persevere and to stay fresh in your enthusiasm for this profession..."

The global economic and financial turmoil continues to cause havoc for many, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Therefore, in looking to the future, the IASW renews its commitment to those who never glimpsed the so-called Irish 'Celtic Tiger' and to those who are now stranded in the wake of its collapse. During those 'tiger' years, Irish society became more unequal because the gap between rich and poor increased. Social work in Ireland, as elsewhere, is under increasing pressure on many fronts. President McAleese and the other speakers raised the spirits of all of those present at our celebration. Their words gave encouragement to all in the engagement with the economic and social challenges facing us in the next few years. We look to the Association's history in building on the experiences and achievements since 1971. We look forward to continuing our work with you, our colleagues in IFSW-Europe and beyond and hope that our contribution to the success of IFSW is as enriching as that of our predecessors in IASW.

John Brennan

International Affairs Committee

IASW

Website: www.iasw.ie



As the communications team we are always looking for ways to improve communication within IFSW Europe.

If you have any ideas please let us know.

The next edition of ESW will be out in the autumn. Please send us your articles. We hope to be able to share news from members across the region, but we can only do this with your help.

Note from the Editors: Cristina and Siobhan

The Communication team work has been specially focused in the following areas:

Website

Development is going on with more updates www.ifsw.org/europe

European Social Worker

The ESW has been published twice a year and a special edition after the Delegates Meeting.

IFSW Europe blog

On the web since 7 October 2008 www.ifsw europe.blogspot.com/

Facebook

IFSW Europe is in Facebook since February 2010 with 278 friends till the moment. A increase of 66 friends occurred after the Delegates Meeting in Brussels.

Production of an IFSW Europe DVD

A DVD focusing on Social Work and Human Rights was produced and a Song was composed and recorded for the soundtrack of the DVD that was launched at the Delegates Meeting in Brussels, April 2011.

(read full article in this edition)

Delegates Meeting

A paper has been developed to support the host country/organisation and the communication team will take up this task when there is no host country/organisation or whenever needed.

Leaflets

A leaflet containing general information about mission, work, members, partners, projects of IFSW Europe e. V. has been developed for distribution to members and the general public.

IFSW Europe Stand was set up at the ENSACT Conference in Brussels.

Connecting Members Project

The team is looking forward to help publicising all information regarding this project.

(read full article in this edition)

As plans for the coming future we aim to:

- ◆ improve and increase the use of website, blog and facebook with more frequent updates
- ◆ publish regularly ESW in a new template
- ◆ produce more media work
- ◆ be creative

Please help us to:

- ◆ be informed
- ◆ be in contact
- ◆ communicate

Thanks!

Cristina Martins and Siobhan Maclean