

PROJECT #1

Social Work Practice Education in Times of Pandemics, and Beyond. Continuities, Changes, Innovations in Europe

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Start date of project: 01/11/2021

End date of project: 31/10/2022

The project addresses the “practice education” (IASW, IFSW 2020: 13) in Social Work in Europe in 2020/2021. It offers the chance to know, exchange and cross-fertilize the strategies, methods and activities of the curricular programs that train students to professional practice in connection to social work organizations and practitioners (e.g. Field Education). The project namely focuses on the continuities, multiple adaptations, experimentations and enduring innovations in and after the current Covid19 pandemic.

The project takes into account the diversity of the Social Work Education systems and the heterogeneity of the programs of practice education in Europe. The project encompasses their complexity and tackles the continuities and changes in the perspective to strengthen collaboration, innovation and efficacy in this area of Social Work Education.

The project is based-on and fuelled-by an international and cross-cultural collaboration between 14 Schools of Social Work in 13 countries located in different regions of Europe and characterized by diverse “Welfare regimes”, traditions and levels of institutional consolidation of social work (education).

The project develops three basic activities (and further dissemination activities):

1. Background analysis focused on structural (e.g. social work education in the country) and contingent (e.g. Covid-related measures) features for each country.
2. International (on-line) survey on the programs of practice education in 2020-2021 carried out through a common questionnaire to the national Schools of Social Work.
3. At least two Webinars with presentations, analyses and discussions about the different programs of practice education in Europe in 2020-2021.

PROJECT #2

Social Work Professional Organizations and Policy Practice in Times of Pandemics. A Comparative Perspective

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The project addresses the basic characteristics and the actions of the Social Work Professional Organizations in Europe in Times of Pandemics. The investigation is aimed at understanding the strategies of these organizations in relation to the structural (welfare regimes, traditions of social work etc.) and contingent (restrictions due to the Covid19 pandemics) context in different European countries. It also focuses on the obstacles and outcomes of their action. A crucial issue of the project is the relation between Social Work Professional Organizations and social workers’ individual and collective policy practice. As typical in comparative research, the project intends to account for convergences and divergences between the different countries.

The project is conducted through four activities:

1. Building a typology and mapping the most important Social Work Professional Organizations;
2. Background analysis of the national contexts (pandemics, restrictive measures, social and political consequences, main characteristics of social work and its organizations);
3. Content analysis of the documents, websites and public communication initiatives of the leading Social Work Professional Organizations;
4. In-depth narrative interviews to the leaders of the main national Social Work Professional Organizations and focus-groups with social workers.

A multi-professional comparative perspective will be included in the project, by considering also the action of different professional organizations (eg. medical associations).