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European Social Work

Commonalities and Differences

Edited by Annamaria Campanini and Elizabeth Frost



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Introduction

by Annamaria Campanini and Elizabeth Frost

“Social work addresses the barriers, inequities and injustices that exist in society. It responds to crises and emergencies as well as to everyday personal and social problems.” This definition of Social Work, officially adopted by IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work) in Copenhagen in June 2001, clearly sums up the role of Social Work and its aims.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the new Europe has to face many problems of a different nature. Some of these arise from the integration of people from non-European countries with different cultures, habits and backgrounds, and other problems are the result of economic poverty appearing in new forms. Social change has brought new pressure experienced personally and in different ways: substance abuse, depression, eating disorders, alienation and relationship breakdowns may be the outcome for some individuals. Further problems may simply arise for families and individuals in their life cycle in relation to a post-modern complex society.

Furthermore, in recent years, European countries have faced different experiences: Germany had, for example, to deal with problems related to immigration, to the economic integration of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) and to people of German origin returning from Russia, Romania and other eastern countries. Italy had to concentrate on problems deriving from the high number of immigrants coming from North Africa, former Yugoslavia and Albania. The United Kingdom has seen increased rates of drug use and suicide. These different experiences have necessarily required different approaches, forcing social work educational and professional structures to tune their expertise in accordance to the national needs. Today's result is the presence of institutions and operators who are able to respond successfully to their regional needs and demands but are less able to respond to needs in a European context. That may limit the transferability of knowledge and the mobility of social workers across Europe. There is therefore a need to develop connections among the various European actors in social work in order to develop common approaches to key issues in social work education and equality in social rights and treatment.

The European Union offers support for developing such connections in education via specific programmes, for example Socrates/Erasmus. This book is the product of such an EU funded initiative designated a “Thematic Network”. Essentially the Thematic Network is an opportunity for universities across Europe to network together to advance knowledge and educational practice in a particular subject area. The authors of this book mainly represent their countries within this thematic network.

The goals of the Thematic Network

This Thematic Network, in European Social Work, is striving towards the following aims:

- to involve academic and professional bodies in Social Work across Europe to establish a shared knowledge base;
- to compare and develop European social work curricula in order to disseminate successful approaches to common problems;
- to help students develop a European perspective and approach to social work issues;
- to encourage the use of new information technologies to support exchange of information within a European context;

Additionally the Thematic Network has proposed the following core objectives:

- to identify commonalities and differences in social work education across all European states;
- to develop sources of reference for social work teachers, students, institutions and practitioners to enable them to compare and develop European social work curricula;
- to access European practice and placement opportunities;
- to access information about pre- and post-professional social work courses all over Europe;
- to access information about social work research opportunities and projects to facilitate new initiatives;
- to create international courses, organised by member institutions, delivered across Europe. These courses, open to all European students and social work actors, will also draw upon contributions of experts from outside the EU.

Until now very few steps have been undertaken towards developing a European dimension in social work education or building educational links across the EU to inform and enhance practice developments. This Thematic Network is the first real Europe-wide initiative of this sort, although there have been some useful attempts at smaller scale initiatives, involving fewer partners in Europe. It seems to be the most

suitable instrument to develop a shared knowledge base, with which to strengthen Social Work both as a discipline and as a profession. It also offers opportunities for partners to engage in a productive and meaningful debate in relation to teaching methods and curriculum contents. This has the potential to drive forward positive changes in each of these areas. In this context the Network will aim to facilitate greater student participation in their own education, more reflexive learning and sustained personal growth as practitioners.

As well as the aims and objectives outlined above, the Thematic Network is committed to concrete outcomes to benefit exchange and enhancement of social work knowledge across Europe. A website for accessing information on pan-European issues has been established, www.EUSW.org, and regular newsletters are available in paper and electronic form. A summer school for students and professionals is also being planned.

History of the Thematic Network

The Thematic Network which has produced this volume has evolved from a longstanding set of partnerships involving a core group of European Social Work Courses.

Gothenburg, as much as anyone, can be identified as one of the initial driving forces behind establishing an early Erasmus network, one of the educational funding initiatives encouraged by the EU. In 1993 overtures were made to the University of the West of England and to the University of Parma in Italy by Gothenburg University Social Work Programme, Sweden, to become involved in what were then designated Erasmus Networks. The network at this point was co-ordinated by Gothenburg, and also contained Swansea in Wales and Mannheim in Germany. (The University of West of England - UWE immediately took up the opportunity for involvement, Bergen in Norway joined one year later, and Athens in 1996). The purpose of the network was essentially to provide placement and learning opportunities for social work students. However the ongoing links of the network itself also provided a stable and consistent basis for all our future developments. Although an unintended outcome, the consistency of the group in itself was invaluable.

The first two network meetings produced considerable energy and enthusiasm for not just staff and student exchanges but other kinds of co-operation, and in 1995 curriculum development work was funded by Brussels to be undertaken, primarily by Gothenburg and Bristol, to develop shared interests in social work with minority ethnic groups into a joint module called "Ethnic Diversity and European Welfare

Practice". The module could be taken in England or in Gothenburg, by students from these and other European courses. The curriculum content was primarily concerned with commonalities and differences in social work policy and practice relating to service users from ethnically diverse backgrounds, whether refugees or "guest-workers", immigrants or second generation inhabitants. Erasmus staff exchange arrangements facilitated lecturers from all partner courses to contribute to the module's teaching. This worked well in Gothenburg and indeed the module is still offered and undertaken by their national social work students, visiting students and students from their International Masters in Social Work Programme.

Parma University incorporated aspects of the diversity module into the normal curriculum, by organising seminars on multi-ethnicity and drawing on contributions offered by University teachers and guest lecturers coming from institutions which are members of the network. In May 1998, a congress on "Social work in a multi-ethnic society" was also organised, whose proceedings have been already published. Through these experiences, several modifications were introduced in the syllabi. New contents were included in Social Work education which aimed to develop both theoretical and operational educational paths in relation to the new challenges and opportunities that the presence of foreign immigrants may pose for the profession.

Staff from the network helped to teach on the Gothenburg course. However not all countries found the joint module easy to instigate. For example from the English perspective two problems arose: at this stage there was insufficient interest from the students to recruit numbers to keep the module afloat, and also very few students were able or willing to undertake the course in Sweden (despite its being taught in English language) or in Italy, due to language difficulties.

By 1996, then, when the notion of an Erasmus network was dismantled by Brussels and individual Socrates bilateral agreements introduced instead, firm relationships between the seven social work programmes mentioned above were established, some staff and student exchange was being productively developed and an inter-European module had been established. Perhaps, even more importantly, there was also a shared sense of potential for further development. The grouping decided to harness this potential by continuing to meet as a network once a year for evaluation, planning and instigating new initiatives.

But also by 1996 the network were becoming aware that for some countries one of the major frustrations of the current arrangements focused around the issue of being unable to persuade their students to undertake periods of time abroad, for placement or academic studies. A range of factors were preventing students participating in exchange

opportunities with European partners. Lack of language skills, which probably also effects student's confidence in travelling abroad; the minimum period of student exchange visits of 3 months, increasing numbers of mature students with families and/or part-time jobs to consider, and financial hardship, may militate against the student's travelling.

There was, then, a sense that a change of direction might be needed. The network had done much thinking and planning and curriculum development; it had ironed out differences in expectations and difficulties in establishing common standards; via popular staff exchange systems professors were developing areas of comparative knowledge and bringing this to their teaching. The benefits were clear. But for all this dynamic change some countries had a sense that students and staff were missing opportunities to develop a truly European outlook on social work, and to focus on comparative approaches to the work.

It was as a response to this that the grouping of countries began to generate ideas and stimulate initiatives in relation to a different aspect of the Socrates/Erasmus scheme: the "Intensive Programme". Briefly, an Intensive Programme is a course of study which includes staff and students from several partner institutions, with emphasis on pan-European perspectives and shared learning opportunities. Unlike student exchange programmes, they can be of limited duration, for example 10 days or so. This in itself opened up the range of students able to participate, as mature students, for example, could attend with far less likely disruption to family life than 3 months exchanges caused. The IP system seemed to be able to allow for the development of the European dimension to the curriculum, with guaranteed student participation.

At a "network" meeting in the summer of 1996, a comprehensive programme of IPs was agreed. This was based on the interest and subject specialism of each programme, and the belief of the other programme representatives that their students and staff would find the particular theme relevant and useful. Content and presentation of bids were worked on collectively, although remaining specifically the responsibility of a single programme. Four IPs were submitted to Brussels for funding, of which two were funded. By the academic year of 1997-98, the network had successfully acquired EU funding for two IPs, each involving between five and seven of the European social work programmes.

From 1997-2000, UWE co-ordinated an IP entitled "European Mental Health Social Work", and "Professional Social Work in Europe" was co-ordinated by the partners from Gothenburg University in Sweden. A third IP on "Supervision in Social Work", co-ordinated by Par-

ma University, was funded in 2000, and a fourth was also funded in 2002 on “Service User Involvement in Social Work”, which has now also been funded for 2003-2004.

By 2000 then, this grouping of universities had added two successful IPs to its list of joint achievements, but still had a sense that there was considerable potential within the Socrates scheme to further develop their knowledge and understanding of pan-European social work, and to help other European countries’ lecturers, practitioners and students participate in the development of, and access to, such knowledge. From just such a discussion at a group meeting in 2001, the initial proposal for the Thematic Network was developed.

Forming the Thematic Network

The hypothesis formulated by the group was discussed with the staff of the International Relations Office of the University of Parma and then subjected to the approval of the academic bodies who recognised the importance and welcomed the idea that the University of Parma would be the voice to express a need commonly shared by all the group that had been cooperating together for so many years.

A short analysis of previously approved Thematic Networks indicated that a project co-ordinated by the Fachhochschule Koblenz (DE) had just finished: this project, anyway, was more addressed to the study of social professions in Europe. Therefore it was established that there were no previous experiences of initiatives dedicated to Social Work education.

The pre-proposal, prepared on the basis of the agreements taken with the original group, was sent to Brussels in November 2001, even though the number of participating partners had not reached the level set out in the Commission’s guidelines. It proved more difficult than expected to get information on, and make agreements with all the eligible countries.

Despite all this, the approval of the pre-proposal was confirmed in January 2002 and the words of encouragement offered by Marianne Hildebrand, the head of the DG Education and Culture, convinced us that we should go on with the preparation of the final application, sent to Brussels on March 2002.

A relevant moment for the broadening of the partnership was our presence at the IASSW International Congress in Montpellier (FR) in July 2003: participants from Parma and UWE presented the initiative to conference delegates from a wide range of European countries. This raised the profile of the initiative and encouraged others to join. The final approval arrived in July 2003 and the activities started with the first annual meeting in Parma from 30th October to 2nd November 2003.

Structure of the book

In this book every Thematic Network participant country will chart the most important features of social work in their state. It will offer readers the opportunity to discover what social work represents in the various areas of the European continent. Each chapter will explore facets of the work and educational context, professional issues and policy matters. By reading individual chapters a fundamental appreciation of social work in any of the member countries can be gained, and by reading the whole volume it is possible to develop an awareness of some of its commonalities and differences across Europe.

This volume will address some key themes in social work in each European country. It is intended that any reader could pick up this book and gain an introductory understanding of social work in the countries of his interest. Clearly this is ambitious. In reality only some facets of the general picture have been selected.

First of all each chapter will consider the background of social work in its country, including historical, political, social and cultural issues of significance. For example it might consider how social work activities gradually evolved. In some countries this may have been through the church and notions of charity. Alternatively a national commitment to poverty relief may have stimulated the growth of social work. It is also the case that in some countries particular tragic events created the need for social intervention. The chapters will then address how and when the state became involved in providing welfare services.

Next each contribution will consider the issue of social work education, looking first at how social work education emerged historically and into what kind of institutional context. Issues such as how and when the identification of need for a specialist education arose will be considered. Whether the existing university system has been accepting of the academic status of social work education and at what academic level, may form part of this discussion. There are considerable national variations in the relationship between the academic establishment and social work education and the chapters will highlight these differences.

As well as the status of social work education the chapters will discuss the curriculum. Many countries have differences in relation to their ethos, philosophy, subject areas and the importance they give to social work practice. In each chapter the issue of theoretical underpinning will be given consideration and the relative influences of disciplines such as psychology, sociology, social policy and psychoanalysis will be traced. In some countries social pedagogy is considered a distinct discipline. The ratio of practice focus within courses and what this suggests about the status of such activities will also be discussed.

The issue of the meanings of the term “social worker”, in each country, and how it is different from other “social” professions, will form the next section of each chapter. In different countries social workers have very different roles which may render the term problematic. In some countries there are for example social pedagogues, social educators or care managers undertaking locally defined activities. Each chapter will attempt to clarify the definition and activities of these kinds of categories. This will underline which activities are considered to be the provenance of social work and which are not. For example whether workers who deal primarily with the relief of poverty via administering state benefits would or would not be considered as social workers, is subject to national variation.

Professionalism is the next concern of each chapter. They will illustrate issues of status relative to professionalism generally in their countries and discuss the process of becoming professionalized and the extent to which this has been achieved. The mechanisms which indicate and reinforce professional status will be explored. Professional registers, associations and professional codes are some of the aspects which may be considered. In many countries the professionalism of social work has been and continues to be somewhat ambiguous. Factors such as its traditional female orientation may be implicated in this, as is the profession’s own some times ambivalent attitude towards the whole issue of being a profession.

The next aspect to which each chapter gives attention is the question of what kind of role and what kind of activities does national and local policy and law define for social work. This context clearly dictates not just the activities of a social worker but the kind of agencies within which this work is carried out. In some countries the voluntary or non-governmental sector is primarily responsible for such welfare delivery whereas in others the state provides most social services. Where social workers are employed, as well as the statutory and policy orientations of their activities leads to much differentiation across Europe.

In the last section of each chapter authors were asked to highlight what they see as the most significant contemporary issues in social work and the challenges their countries currently face. As the reader will see, there are both significant commonalities and differences in the European picture. The book’s conclusion will address the most important of these themes.

It is very important to keep in mind that the authors of this book present their particular view of their country’s situation. In almost every case the author is the representative of one teaching institution which is part of the Thematic Network. Clearly they have attempted to

capture the essence of social work in their state. However it may be that a different emphasis may have been given by another author. Within the network some countries are represented by more than one institution. Where this is the case, liaison has resulted in agreement as to the content of this chapter.

In a changing Europe striking differences in social work exist due to federalism, regionalism and the emergence of forms of political independence. Rules, laws, roles and less tangible but important aspects of social work education and practice demonstrate considerable variations. For example it is worth noting that even though the UK now consists of the political entities of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, currently only England and Wales are represented in the network and England contributed the chapter. Similarly in relation to Belgium separated contributions were made by Flemish and French authors and were joined together by an independent editor. The limits of space available within the volume have had to occasionally impose some restrictions on the breadth of contribution.

Who and what the book is for

This book about social work and its different regional applications should help teachers, students, and professionals to develop a comparative approach. It will also be useful for both associations and professionals because it offers an insight into practicable issues and social problems within different regions of Europe.

This book represents a fresh attempt at developing a general overview of basic information about social work in 24 European countries. Although this is not the first book dealing with such a topic, it is the most comprehensive and inclusive so far. Not only does it include virtually all European countries, it explores the various different sectors of intervention of social work and it attempts to facilitate comparison of the same themes across different countries.

This book should be included in the curricula of all European establishments, as tangible evidence of the desire to build a common vision of European social work and, at the same time, to offer its readers the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge of commonalities and differences.

Austria

by Answin Weissenborn

Background and history of social work in Austria

In Austria, the social work profession and the education of social workers have a long and interconnected history. From the beginning social work was a profession devised exclusively for women, and the Fürsorgerin (female welfare assistant) supported legal guardians by providing counselling and guidance for unmarried mothers. In 1912 the first social work training facilities were established by Ilse Arlt. This was followed by the Roman Catholic "Caritas" organisation in 1916, and the City of Vienna developed its own facilities in 1917. The charitable women's colleges and the professional academies accepted only women students. It was only in 1948 that the first men were admitted. Looking back into the history of the profession and of professional training we can see various processes of change taking place, and the restructuring has often paralleled societal, political, social and economic change.

After First World War the Austro-Hungarian monarchy broke down and the First Republic was established. In Vienna, the capital of Austria, the Social Democratic Party implemented what we would now consider to be progressive and advanced concepts of social welfare. For this reason the city was known as *das Rote Wien* or Red Vienna. In contrast the federal states developed concepts more based upon the administration and control of poverty. These were combined with paternalistic charity and were generally offered by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1934 the Austrian civil war resulted in the so called *Ständestaat*, an authoritarian regime, which ended in 1938 when Austria was occupied by Nazi Germany. At this point, social work and social work education became more of a health profession which was strongly influenced by the ideology of eugenics. Neither the Ilse Arlt School of social work nor the Caritas School were allowed to continue.

In 1945, after Second World War, the Second Austrian Republic was founded, and in 1955 Austria became an independent, democratic and neutral state. During the fascist period, social work and social work education had been cut off from international development in methods, research and good practice in social work. So the schools

and welfare administration continued with the programmes which had been developed before 1938. At this stage, social work professionals (still *Fürsorgerin*) were inefficiently trained, and their incomes were low, as were professional standards and prestige.

How social work and social work education emerged from the background

In the 1950s Austria became a prosperous country, both in terms of economics and in terms of its welfare system. The so called *Sozialpartnerschaft* (social partnership) between employers, industries and employees guaranteed a development without considerable social conflicts. State welfare was based upon a system of social insurance which was restricted to those who were part of the labour market. The more one contributed, the more support one could expect. The system was mainly financed by those involved in the labour market but running parallel to this there was also a tax financed transfer system which operated mainly for the benefit of families. Social assistance in this sense was organised on the principle of subsidiarity.

During the 1970s the welfare state began a process of modernisation and new social movements emerged, for example the youth movement and the women's movement. Lifestyles became more diverse, and social work and social work education started to attract many young people. There was a new curriculum, based on a two year study programme, and the professionalisation of social work began. The schools of social work were over-run. At this time sociological approaches were the most popular. However in the 1980s social work education moved from a two into a three year diploma programme in the tertiary sector. Social work at this time became more focused on psychological, individualistic theories and praxis.

The term "social work" in Austria

Social work in Austria mainly deals with counselling for individuals and families. Although there are approaches to social group work, community work is not very well established. Social workers are also working in a broader sense as social pedagogues, because in Austria there is no equivalent education in social pedagogy. At the formal level and in terms of prestige, social work is the highest of all the social professions. We find so called social professionals without academic training in the field of social welfare, offering social services for households and families and – as a separate branch – services for the elderly and nursing support. There is also an education system for therapeutic/special pedagogy.

Challenges for social work in Austria

Nowadays welfare systems face many new challenges, and not only in Austria. These challenges include globalisation (financial competition, social dumping, brain drain), Europeanisation (political integration, “social tourism”, Fortress Europe), a changing labour market, changing family demographics and so on.

Social workers do need better skills, a science grounded theory and an international perspective. Also, to ensure comparability with EU member states, in 2001 social work education in Austria became founded on a four year diploma based at universities of applied sciences. The programmes share a core curriculum. Almost all universities take part in Erasmus programmes and students from abroad are welcome.

A short description of the study programme for the Diplomstudien-gang Sozialarbeit at the University of Applied Sciences GmbH Vorarlberg provides an example of social work education in Austria. This social work programme offers a degree in social work that qualifies graduates to work as general social workers in all social services areas. Graduates have a comprehensive understanding of legal, ethical, psychological, sociological, economic, and medical issues as they relate to social work.

a) Length of study:

- 8 semesters including 15 weeks of general professional practical training in the fifth semester.
- During the sixth and seventh semesters, 1 day per week is given to practical training in an area of specialisation.

b) Degree breakdown:

- Introduction to social work: 13% (history and theory of social work, philosophy and ethics).
- Subjects relating to social work: 12% (medicine, psychology, sociology, economics, political science, social politics, jurisprudence, pedagogy).
- Areas of application for social work: 20%.
- Methods and practices of social work: 15%.
- Professional practical training and projects: 32%.
- English: 8%.

Admission is decided on the basis of secondary school grades, a written entrance examination, and an interview, and the number of new admissions is limited to 33 each year.

Graduates of the social work programme work in the areas for integration, general counselling, youth welfare, youth centres, marriage counselling, family counselling, immigrant counselling, probation, intercultural social work, assistance to the homeless, community social

work, drug prevention, crisis intervention and “street work”. Within the next few years the social work curricula will be standardised in accordance with the “Barcelona Agreement”, and social work education will be based on three year undergraduate study programme (Bachelor of Arts), and a two year master’s study programme.

Within the social work profession itself, the biggest challenge lies in ensuring that welfare does not become workfare, and in advocating human rights and active citizenship.

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Belgium

by Rina Masoch and Michel Veevaete

Belgium: a Federal State

Decision-making powers in Belgium have been organised in a very particular way. Belgium gained its independence in 1830, and in recent years the country has developed, through five sets of institutional reforms (in 1970, 1980, 1988-89, 1993 and 1999), into a federal structure. Now, the management of the country falls under the jurisdiction of several partners, each of them exercising their responsibilities independently and in different fields. Nevertheless, there are problems regarding the precise distribution of authority amongst different levels of government. The Federal State maintains particularly significant responsibilities such as those connected with foreign affairs, defence, justice, financial policy, social security, important sectors of public health, and domestic affairs.

Alongside the Federal State, there are three language-based communities, namely the Flemish, the French and the German. The communities are independent with respect to issues such as culture, education and social welfare. As well as this division into "communities", Belgium is also divided into three economic regions: the Flemish, the Walloon, and that of Brussels. However, in Flanders, the one regional parliament represents the Flemish community as well as the Flemish region. Each region is responsible for its own economic, employment and housing policies, town and country planning, and environmental matters. In addition, regions and communities are entitled to run foreign relations themselves within the remit of their respective legal jurisdiction. With regards to more local organisation, Belgium is made up of 10 provinces and 589 municipalities, and these play the role of local authorities.

The history of social work in the Flemish community

Poverty, social deprivation and disability are universal. Yet how society deals with these problems can vary from one period to another. The history of social care in Flanders is similar to that found in other countries on the continent. Originally, social care was provided by monasteries and convents, and other religious and philanthropic organisations. However, in the 19th century social and medical scientists grew increasingly interested in the field of social welfare and disability.

During this period, local and national governments provided funds to help the socially deprived, and whilst this was relatively effective, it became clear that there was an urgent need for professionally trained workers.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, social movement organisations (e.g. trade unions and all kinds of ideologically based associations) initiated the first courses and study circles for social workers. These initiatives aimed to train leaders and executives for programmes and projects which addressed the social problems of an industrialising and modernising society. After the First World War these social movement organisations took the initiative for founding the first so called "Schools for Social Work". As a result, eight schools came into existence between 1920 and 1922. After the Second World War, over a relatively short period of time, the Ministry of Education acknowledged twelve new institutions. In line with the structure of the education system in Belgium, they included official, public schools on the one side, and private schools of a Christian or liberal tendency on the other. During its first decades, social work training was classified as secondary level education. By the Royal Decree of February 28, 1952, the study programme became recognised as a higher technical training, and it was organised to cover three years. The government thus recognised a need for both practical orientation and a scientific approach.

A similar trend of professionalisation was developing in another area. Ever since the Middle Ages, care had been provided for disabled people, and for children and youngsters with learning difficulties. Initially it was merely charity work. The professionalisation of social work became apparent in the 19th century, however it was not until 1956 that courses for "supervisors for children with cerebral palsy" were organised. This was the first step towards what is now known as orthopedagogiek (Social Education). In 1965, these courses were organised at an academic level, and within universities, consequently it was possible to earn the title of licentiaat in de orthopedagogiek (social educator). The study programme was spread over five years, and it still is today.

Higher professional education has undergone several reforms since the 1960s. In 1962 training programmes were classified into three degrees, subsequently, in 1970, they were organised into two strands, a so called "short type" (=non academic) and a "long type" (=academic level). Initially, social work training and the non academic training for social education were classified as the short type, i.e. the lowest degree. In 1995 the Flemish government restyled its higher education and organised professional training courses into hogescholen. These hogescholen offer one-cycle as well as two-cycle programmes for professional training. Along with two other study programmes, i.e. special educa-

tion and psycho-diagnostics, the study programme for social work belongs to the one-cycle higher education. Socio-educational work has two branches: a one-cycle education parallel to social work, and a two-cycle, academic education which is still organised within universities.

As a result of this reform, social workers and social educators became based in the one institution, and the courses for both social workers and social educational workers were gathered in the one department called *sociaal-agogisch werk* (applied social studies). Initially, social workers and social educators viewed each other with some suspicion but this new organisation will certainly result in greater co-operation between the two disciplines.

The history of social work in the French community

The history of social work in the French community of Belgium is similar to that in Flanders. Historically, individuals, private institutions, and in particular the Roman Catholic Church, have taken responsibility for caring for the poor. However the State has also played a traditional role in social welfare. As early as 1791 the Constitution organised a measure of public assistance, and it was formally recognised that society had an obligation to assist those who were out of work. Furthermore, in 1796 civil hospices and municipal welfare offices were created. Following the revolution of 1789, the laicisation of society obliged the state to play an even more active role towards those in need.

During the 19th century, the laicisation of society combined with social pressure from a growing working class to produce a set of social laws. Following the working class revolt of 1886, Léopold II accepted the legal obligation to assist citizens in distress; as a result, social laws were inaugurated to protect the working class. As both socialist and Christian labour movements developed, they began to organise the training of welfare officers, the predecessors of modern social workers. Formal schools of social services were established in 1921, following a royal decree, and in 1925 the state created commissions of public assistance at the communal level. These commissions aimed to rationalise public health and their aims were essentially twofold. Firstly, they aimed to provide social assistance to those in need, secondly they tried to ensure that the entire population had access to all relevant services such as hospitals, dispensaries and hospices.

In 1946, the title of social worker was legally recognised, and the following subjects dominated the approved programme of study:

- philosophy and deontology;
- social history;
- social economy;

– rights, social rights and the institutionalisation of the economy.

Within this framework two currents developed. Certain schools focused on casework, either of the Freudian or the post-Freudian school. Others remained committed to the initial objectives of the profession, namely the development of social assistance, and the provision of information and training for the working class.

Profile of the social worker

Social workers are mediators between people and society. They offer professional services in order to improve people's personal, interpersonal and social functioning, and to remove the obstacles that may occur in these spheres. In 1946, when the title was created in the French community of Belgium, social workers were defined as agents of assistance and agents of social action, their role was to organise society so as to support human progress.

Core tasks

In Flanders, social workers practise their profession as employers of specialised organisations. They work in many sectors of the social system, including health care and welfare work, justice, education, social-cultural work, industry, trade unions, and health insurance companies. Professional profiles differ depending on each sector or even sub-sector, nevertheless, one can determine the following "core tasks":

- social workers deliver services of a social-judicial and/or social-educational kind to people, groups and organisations;
- social workers adopt a shared responsibility for the functioning and often for the policy development of the organisations which employ them;
- in society at large, social workers aim to identify social problems, and to advocate on behalf of individuals and groups.

In the French speaking community, social work is a generic term used to indicate the various tasks which are carried out within the field. Each discipline keeps its specificity, for example there are those who work in psychological-medico-social centres (PMS), those who work in youth protection, special education and so forth.

Differentiation

As we have already said, social workers operate in a variety of areas. The "number of highly differentiated roles.

Consequently, the basic training programme offers professional specialisation in a number of fields: social counselling, social work, personnel management and social-cultural work.

A brief sketch of these specializations gives some idea of the extent to which the professional profile can vary.

The social counselling degree course is focused on social-judicial help because social counsellors usually work for organisations such as trade unions, health insurance companies, social secretariats, public agencies and so forth. The work load includes the application of social law, and the administration of files on wages and social benefits. Social counsellors also familiarize people with their rights and duties, and mediate between people and agencies. In such social organisations, assistance is connected with advocacy and with action intended to influence policy.

The social work degree course aims to train students for the many autonomous or incorporated social services offered by the welfare state. Social workers can intervene in people's lives and can offer psycho-social guidance. They also offer advice to the decision-making authorities. Social workers focus on the social background to problems and, by doing so, play a preventive role as well.

Those who graduate in human resources management will have received a comprehensive training, including both personnel administration and personnel management. Personnel managers need to familiarize themselves with the entire career pattern of all the staff members within an organisation. More specifically, they deal with personnel planning (selection and recruitment of staff), personnel development (training and continuing education, and career coaching), terms of employment, labour conditions, industrial relations and organisational development.

Finally, social-cultural workers are trained to organise and to deliver educational programmes, cultural activities and processes of social activation in the broad social-cultural field. This field consists of youth work, social-cultural work with adults, community work, cultural centres and so forth. Professionals in this field are also assigned to work with some aspects of organisational administration and policy development.

From this enumeration it is clear that social workers exercise a broad range of occupations. It is worth noting, however, that the reality of a social worker's task can be more complex than this categorisation implies. Social workers often operate in more than one area, for example, in the anti-poverty struggle, and when providing care for immigrants.

Social work and values

Before elaborating the profile of the basic training programme, we first have to highlight the socio-ethical aspects of the profession because the involvement of a social worker is never value-free. Some of the fundamental values and principles, which guide the actions of social workers, are:

- social justice;
- democracy;
- a respect for identity;
- a recognition of the dignity and equality of all people.

These values and principles have consequences for professional activity, which in the end should further emancipation. In other words, in the eyes of a social worker, people in need should be regarded as partners. Clients are not mere recipients or objects of benevolent intervention, but subjects who make personal choices – at ethical as well as other levels – and who co-determine the goals and the interaction process.

Profile of the socio-educational worker

The social educator helps people from all age groups with their personal development: children, as well as youngsters, adults and older people. He or she often works with people who have physical, mental or sensory disabilities. Equally, he or she may well be involved with children and young adults with behavioural problems, or with those belonging to deprived families. Social educators differ from other professional care workers in that they do not utilize one specific set of skills only: their main instrument is their own personality. This personality, and its development, is not a given fact but is the result of an ongoing process of continuous reflection and experience.

Core tasks

A social educator is not a therapist. He or she offers counselling on every aspect of life, and so can be considered as an expert on daily life. As people do not live in isolation, this work is also directed towards others in the neighbourhood. The social educator can be involved in almost every aspect of a modern household. Responsibilities range from the atmosphere in the house to the household budget, they also cover food, clothing, how to spend leisure time, contacts with schools or employers, relationships with parents or the broader social network, stimulating contacts with the neighbourhood, etc. However, more fundamental than “what” the educator does, is his or her pres-

ence and the resulting participation in the client's everyday environment. Social educators have to contribute to the quality of life and the wider community, in real terms. With regards to society they have the responsibility to recognize issues and problems, and they must ask questions about the essence of issues.

Many social educators work with children and adolescents in residential institutions. A social educator works in a team which looks after the education of a group of seven to twelve disabled children. Most social educators are "team workers". That is the common practice. But social educators can also work in reception and advice centres, in children's day care homes, in day release trainings, and in psychiatric institutions. They can support people to live independently, they can act as a child's ward, they can supervise deprived children and their families, and they can help the homeless or the elderly. Other fields of employment include primary care, and neighbourhood or immigration services.

Socio-educational work and values

The work of the social educator is based on a number of ethical imperatives:

- the principle of equality, namely that every person should be treated according to equal standards;
- the principle of freedom, which implies promoting a maximum of freedom to others;
- the principle of emancipation, which implies the largest degree of independence when deciding on the nature of commitment to society;
- the principle of truthfulness, which implies telling the truth to others;
- the principle of the inviolability of life, considering all living creatures as intrinsically valuable;
- the principle of self-development, encouraging the increase of mental, physical and social well-being;
- the principle of privacy, implying respect for the individual and the well-being of others.

The future of social work in the French community of Belgium

The state has gradually given up many of its obligations, and at the moment, social assistance is provided by both public services and private organisations. Authorities are prepared to finance private organisations because by doing so they can meet social needs without taking full responsibility for them. At the same time, the universal right to so-

cial aid, which was legally recognised in 1974, is still maintained. Since the laws of regionalisation, social work has been organised on a federal basis. So, for example, within the French community, the federal state is responsible for co-ordinating issues such as the fight against poverty.

Currently, the most significant problems occur in sites of obvious social dysfunction. Homelessness is one such issue, as is the rise of pockets of absolute poverty, whether on an individual or a family basis. Other serious current problems include access to housing, security measures against young delinquents, single-parent families and the specific difficulties facing immigrants and political refugees.

Internationalisation

In the Flemish community, the fields of education and social welfare do not have a great deal of involvement with the international community, nor is there a great emphasis upon the international perspective. This is in stark contrast with the commercial or scientific sector, where there is already a long history of international co-operation. In education, things change slowly. Ever since 1985, the European Community (later the European Union) has been stimulating the exchange of students and teaching staff in hogescholen, universities and higher education institutes. This has been facilitated through specific programmes such as Erasmus, Tempus or Leonardo. Departments of applied social studies have increasingly turned to these European programmes too. Since 1988, departments have been increasingly involved with EU programmes such as Grundtvig (adult education) and with European Social Fund based transnational projects.

Those in the French community hope that the Erasmus programme should encourage the exchange of students at a European level. Some schools have taken part in receiving students from other member states, and we have also participated in student exchanges. However, semestrial organisation is still incomplete and this poses problems in terms of the organisation of courses and examinations; also for financial reasons, these exchanges are not universally accessible. We do not know whether or not we have employed many social workers from other countries, and although our graduates have had access to employment throughout Europe since 1988, they still have to pass leveling tests. We are firmly committed to making our students aware of the process of European integration, and for this reason our European social rights course is an essential part of our social work curriculum.

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Cyprus

by Maria P. Michailidis

The background to social work in Cyprus

Cyprus, the island of Venus, is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, after Sicily and Sardinia. It encompasses an area of 3,572 square miles and a population of about 725,000, of whom approximately 80% are Greek-Cypriots, 19% are Turkish-Cypriots, and the remainder are predominantly Lebanese, Maronites, Armenians, and British (Thurmond et al., 1997). Tourism continues to be the most important industry in Cyprus, despite the monumental and irreplaceable losses caused by the Turkish invasion of 1974, including Nicosia International Airport, and some of Cyprus's most beautiful beaches and archeological monuments. In 2002, more than 2.5 million tourists visited free Cyprus, a number that more than triples the entire Cypriot population. The annual per capita income in Cyprus is estimated at about 13,000 euros (1999), which gives the island a fairly high ranking among middle income countries (The Speros Basil Vryonis Centre for the Study of Hellenism, 1999).

Greek culture, language and the development of philanthropy (the most ancient precursor of today's social welfare practices) were introduced to the island of Cyprus by the Achaean Greeks, who settled during the second millennium B.C. Examples can be found in Plato's work, which urges that orphans be brought under the care of the government in order to be loved and nurtured. Christianity also contributed greatly to the formation of early philanthropic trends in Cyprus. It was introduced to Cyprus after the persecution that followed Stephen's stoning, and the scattering of Christians throughout neighbouring countries. By the 4th century A.D., Cyprus had gradually become Christian, as it came under Byzantine rule, which reflected a marriage of Christianity and Hellenism.

The strategic location of the island, at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East, made it a target for foreign invasion throughout history. The island's pure humanitarian spirit was often disrupted by Arab invasions, which brought unrest, destruction, distrust and instability. In a similar way, the Frankish and Venetian occupations "led to the almost total disorganisation of the island's life and the dissolution of educational, social, and philanthropic activities. The persecution of the Orthodox church

posed a threat to its survival during which time philanthropic and other similar activities had to be abandoned" (Triseliotis, 1977, p. 8).

To add to the suffering of the Cypriots, the period of Turkish rule (1571-1878) was one of poverty, desolation and depopulation. "By 1600 there were only 28,000 male Greeks left, many others having fled the island because of the persecutions, the harshness of taxation and the general insecurity" (Triseliotis, 1977, p. 9). It was during these years that the first Ottoman Muslim settlers were brought to the island. These new inhabitants formed the basis of what is today known as the Turkish-Cypriot community of Cyprus.

Cyprus was a British colony from 1878 until 1960 when the island gained its independence. During this period, "all the services, with the exception of education, were developed for the use of both Greek and Turkish communities. Even education was run from within the same department but with the schools, inspectorate etc. separate for each community" (Triseliotis, 1977, p. IV). However, following independence, the Turkish community withdrew from mainstream government and initiated its own administration as well as some of its own health and social welfare services.

Nevertheless, the Turkish invasion which took place in 1974, inflicted many wounds on the lives of Cypriot citizens. The government focused its attention and resources on to the task of re-housing over 200,000 displaced Greek-Cypriots who had been relocated to the Southern half of their own land. These refugees suffered from severe psychological shock, as well as the loss of their families or friends. Not only were there a large number of displaced individuals, many institutions were lost too. These included, schools, hospitals, the School and Training Centres for the Deaf, the Reform School, children's homes and hostels, homes for retarded children, several youth centres and day nurseries. Even after 28 years the after-effects of the 1974 Turkish invasion, still affects the lives of Cypriot citizens today, creating a continual need for social welfare interventions.

Social welfare services in Cyprus since the 1940s

Cypriot social welfare policy was first implemented in 1946, when legislation was enacted to regulate the supervision of juvenile offenders, the after-care of reform school boys, and the protection of deprived children (Solsten, 1991). However, following independence in 1960, social welfare became the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare Services under the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance.

In 1952, public assistance was introduced in order to minimize poverty by offering economic assistance to very poor families, the aged,

and the disabled. Thus, by 1973 every Cypriot was eligible for financial assistance for the maintenance of a minimum standard of living, and had access to social services when dealing with personal problems and when trying to improve living conditions (Solsten, 1991). By 1987, when the economy was finally fully restored (following the devastating impact of the 1974 Turkish invasion), there were only 5,087 beneficiaries of public assistance, half of whom were aged or disabled (Solsten, 1991). After the Turkish invasion the structure of the social welfare system changed considerably.

Today, the Department of Social Welfare Services (under the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) is the designated body, accountable for the provision and promotion of the social welfare services. The department's policies support and complement the overall governmental policy for economic and social development, and could be described as "the advancement of social welfare and the prevention of social problems among individuals, families and communities" (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance [MLSI], 1993, p. 3). Cypriot social welfare programmes are administered through four distinct service divisions which are described below: the Family and Child Welfare Division; the Public Assistance and Services for the Elderly and Disabled Division; the Staff Development and Programme Planning Division; the Community Development Division.

Education and curricula

The rapid transformation of Cypriot society in general provoked many changes within its social institutions. Their economic and cultural outlook is undergoing rapid progression, and development. The family as a social institution became a special agent of change and has created new social demands on society as a whole. The entire structure of Cypriot society has been transformed as a result of the following social changes: the demographic shifts; the fertility decline; the gradual ageing of the population; the low infant mortality rate; the changing roles of women; the growing divorce rate; the increasing number of single parents; the increased incidence of spousal abuse, child abuse, mixed marriages; the increase in social mobility; the development of tourism; the influx of foreign labour; the decline of the extended family and the increase in drug, tobacco and alcohol use.

There has been a compelling social demand for more social workers to be educated in Cyprus, within the traditions of their own culture. Up until 2002 Cypriots who were interested in receiving a social work education had to go overseas to study and to find training in the field. However, this somewhat favoured individuals with a higher

socio-economic standing. Some low-income students were able to study abroad as a result of loans, scholarships and family savings, but all Cypriot students were nevertheless trained in different cultures and in different social systems. The majority of students travelled to Greece where the language and culture facilitated their studies. In the 1960s, the most commonly attended schools were those of the CEN-Christian Youth Union. They offered a three year tertiary education, and granted degrees in social work. Later the KATTE schools were established, again, they were three year tertiary education institutions, and they granted a degree in social work as well as other degrees. In the past few years Technological Education Institutions (TEI) have been granting four year degrees, recently accredited by the Greek government. Very few students travelled to the UK or the USA to study social work.

In the absence of a social work education system in Cyprus, the majority of students were educated and trained in Greece. The TEI programmes were composed of 60 courses with the emphasis on theory, and individual, group, and community work, as well as practical training. Students attended twice a week for five semesters, and the last semester was devoted entirely to practice, with the option of taking this practice either in Greece or in Cyprus (the chapter on Greece, by Maria Papathanasiou, will provide more details on the curriculum).

Nevertheless, in 2002 one of the private Technological Education Institutions (Frederick Institute of Technology) started a four year Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work. This programme is taught in Greek and is composed of a total of 131 credit hours. It draws on theories of human behaviour and social systems, social welfare policy, human rights, social justice and the social environment. At the time of writing, the first programme of study is awaiting accreditation by the Cypriot Ministry of Education, and it has about 40 students. The second programme of study in Social Work also comes from a private Technological Education Institution (Intercollege). The programme has recently been sent for registration with the Cypriot Ministry of Education, and it is expected to be operational by September 2003. This is also a four year Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work, however, it will be offered in English and it aims to attract both Cypriots and international students. This programme draws on theories of human development and behaviour in different developmental and cognitive stages, on social systems globally, sound welfare systems, deviant behaviours and treatment methods. Practical training will be facilitated partly in Cyprus, and partly overseas.

The meaning of the term “social worker” in Cyprus

Taking into consideration all of the above shifts in Cypriot society, the educational institutions realized the pressing need for well-trained “social-work agents”. The intention was not that these professionals should deal exclusively or even primarily with poverty relief. Some of their roles include developing a greater responsibility for community development and preparing communities for Europeanization. They also aimed to address matters such as multiculturalism and multi-ethnicism alongside more general issues of prevention, treatment, support and care. The ambiguity of the social worker’s role is being recognized and attempts are being made to clarify it. For example, colleges in Cyprus have designed new undergraduate programmes which will emphasise the competencies required by all social workers. Thus, there exists a pressing need for the creation and recognition of social work schools on the island.

The role of the “social worker” in Cyprus is a multidisciplinary one, dependent upon the professional’s place of employment and the context in which he/she has to practice social work. In this particular field, individuals from other related fields such as psychology and sociology are employed to provide social services for clients (individuals, groups, families, organisations and communities) in order to fulfill the needs of both the private and the public sector. In addition, since 2002, the social worker’s profession has been safeguarded by government legislation, and there are also criteria for professional standards. There have been demands for a Board of Registration for practicing social workers, but this issue has been pending since 2001. Furthermore, academic standards have only been recently established. According to a recent statute, social workers must undergo specialized training at a Higher Educational Institution before they can practice the profession.

Today, the Department of Social Welfare Services (under the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) is the designated body which is accountable for the provision and promotion of social welfare services. The department’s policies support and complement the overall governmental policy for economic and social development, and could be referred to as “the advancement of social welfare and the prevention of social problems among individuals, families and communities” (Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance [MLSI], 1993, p. 3). Thus in the public social services, social workers are care managers as well as social educators. They are divided into three different levels. Social workers’ supervisors are graded at level one. These are individuals with 20 years of service or more, they

are the professionals who deal with the approval or rejection of claims, and they appraise the other professionals in levels two and three.

Social work as a profession: its role and its activities

The social work profession has been traditionally female. Moreover, the role of the social worker continues to be somewhat ambiguous and misunderstood as some believe that social workers simply provide public assistance. Social welfare programmes in Cyprus are administered through four distinct service divisions which are described below:

a) The Family and Child Welfare Division. This division focuses on supporting and strengthening the family, protecting children and preventing and treating delinquent behaviour. Some of the services which are included in this division are: counselling and supportive services; preventive services; child protective services; day-care services; post-institutional care for the mentally ill; adoption services; financial and other practical assistance to families at risk; and social defence (PIO Reports, 2000). (The issues addressed by social defence include personal and familial defence in the prospect of a military attack, and familial protection in the event of an earthquake). The Department for Children and Young People is responsible for running residential homes for a number of client groups. There are children's homes; boy's hostels; homes for the severely retarded; youth hostels for children who have been removed from their families; day-care centres for pre-school and school-age children. The department also registers and inspects non-governmental day-care centres and child-minders who look after children in their own homes.

b) The Public Assistance and Services for the Elderly and Disabled Division. This division focuses on the provision of public assistance, services for the elderly and disabled, and the preparation of socio-economic investigation reports (PIO Reports, 2000). It is also responsible for ensuring an appropriate standard of living for individuals and their families, as well as the attainment of self-sufficiency via productive employment for individuals who are dependent upon governmental assistance. In addition, this division is committed to maintaining the dignity of the elderly or the disabled individual, and promoting their reintegration into the community (services for the elderly and disabled include home-help, day-care and residential care).

c) The Community Development Division. This division focuses on the organisation of localities and communities, and stimulates participation in identifying as well as meeting social needs. Also, this division places heavy emphasis on the cultivation of citizens' interests and their active involvement in public affairs and collective action. "The depart-

ment provides professional advice, through grass-roots community work, for the organisation of communities and the development of community bodies as well as technical and financial support through Grants-in-Aid Schemes, for the establishment of social welfare services, and programmes on the local level” (PIO Reports, 2000). For example in 1997 over three million euros were distributed to community organisations for a variety of services. These included services for people with special needs, the elderly, children and other vulnerable groups.

d) The Staff Development and Programme Planning Division. This division focuses primarily on staff development and social services programme planning and evaluation issues. The programmes provide ongoing in-service training, and the department carries out surveys and research projects related to: a) existing social needs; b) programme evaluation; and c) administrative activities such as time allocation and caseload management (PIO Reports, 2002). However, the private sector also assumes a great deal of responsibility for the provision of social services in Cyprus. It carries the responsibility for running day-care centres, homes for developmentally disabled children and adults, health clinics, psychiatric facilities, family and individual counselling services, voluntary organisations, youth centres, and nursing homes.

Future challenges and the European Union

The socio-economic structure of Cyprus has changed as the island has moved from an agricultural economy to a service-based economy. It has become more labour intensive and heavily dependent on export-oriented economic activity. This transformation was accelerated after the 1974 Turkish invasion. The growth and development in Cyprus was directed and implemented by foreign demand. The rapid restructuring, technological upgrading and modernizing of the Cypriot socio-economic status has recently lead Cyprus to a successful integration in the European Union (to be fully completed in 2004). Cypriot state social policy has been rather slow but we are now a step closer to the development of a welfare state and to the redistribution of income in favour of lower income groups.

Rising out of the ashes of Cypriot dissolution, forced upon the Cypriot nation by the Turkish invasion, Cyprus is now modernizing and becoming part of the European Community. In this new socio-political arena, there are demands for growth and development in many areas of the economy, education and society. The locally developed training of social workers is one such area, and we are now in a position where we can begin to do so. We need assistance at all levels

and of all types so as to develop educational programmes, facilities and an administrative infrastructure. When we achieve this, a whole new social welfare service will be available for those Cypriots who are in great need.

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The Czech Republic

by Dana Nedelnikova

Social work in the Czech Republic

Here, just as in other European countries, the church was the first to provide services for the needy. However, the poverty of the 13th and 14th centuries ensured that municipalities were called upon to help supplement or complement the efforts of the church. During the Renaissance, individual residents and even some members of the aristocracy joined in with philanthropic initiatives, and this resulted in the development of a rather repressive form of state health care and welfare. In the 16th and 17th centuries, state involvement was overshadowed by church interests, and the church's dominant approach towards care for the needy remained the same until the reforms of the Enlightenment.

Under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, maximum responsibility was placed on the cities. In 1868, a poverty law was passed, requiring cities to take care of any citizens in need. In the 19th century, the negative effects of industrialisation, such as poverty and child labour, led to an increase in the number of private organisations dedicated to the protection of children and young people. At this time, people started to organise aid in response to the requests of those in need. There was also a growing acknowledgement of the fact that effective help can not be limited to single interventions, and that individual need must be assessed objectively and according to specified criteria (Kodymová, 2002).

Czechoslovakia was founded as an independent state in 1918, taking its social legislation from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs took place after the implementation of a host of legal norms that redefined the rights of the unemployed, and clarified questions of job protection and social insurance. The economic crisis of the 1930s led to a wave of massive unemployment and to a decline in wages. The dramatic social consequences of the world economic crisis sharpened tensions among the social classes. As a result, the Communist Party declared a "social war" on the owners of the means of production (Deyl, 1985, p. 146) and regularly submitted bills to the legislature. Even after the Communists came to power in 1948, they refused to acknowledge the existence of social problems, which they dismissed as the negative throwbacks of capi-

talism (Kodymová, 2002). In a land with no social problems, social work lost its legitimacy, leading to changes in the system of social protection, the abandonment of university schooling in social work, and the liquidation of non-governmental social work organisations. The existence of social problems was not acknowledged until the Prague Spring of 1968, when the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was established along with a new concept of social work, and in cooperation with experts from Western Europe.

Social work began to develop in several previously inaccessible areas (Chytil, Popelková, 2000). This promising development was interrupted by the invasion of the Warsaw Pact members in August, 1968. Later, during the period of “normalisation”, development again began to pick up in the field, as contacts had been made, and certain problems identified (Šiklová, 2001). Also, a large number of qualified experts from other fields had been forced to leave their positions for political reasons, and they took up new jobs in social work. These arguments, along with the revelation of new social problems in the 1970s, led to a renewed demand for social work. In 1989, the fall of socialism in the Czech Republic resulted in the need to reconstruct the existing social system, and this has led to the introduction of new bills concerning social help, and the creation of a new term, “social work”, defined as a method of social help. Efforts have been made to define the framework of social work legally. In the 1990s, non-governmental organisations were established to provide social services and to employ social workers (Chytil, Popelková, 2000). A focus was placed on problems that had been ignored under socialism (the victims of violence, women abused in the sex industry, etc.) as well as newer, previously unknown problems such as the condition of refugees.

The development of social work education

The development of social care has created a need for qualified social workers. The first school to specialize in social care was established in the same year as independent Czechoslovakia. The College of Social Care was opened in Prague in 1918, later two-year schools of social work were established in Turčianský St. Martin in Slovakia, and in the Czech Republic's second city, Brno. In 1935, the Prague school was replaced by the Masaryk State School of Health and Social Care, which offered university-level education. In the 1930s, social work education was divided into two branches. The first concentrated on sociology, pedagogy and psychology and thought of social work as an independent specialisation (Novotná, Schimmerlingová, 1992). The second branch was supported by doctors who wanted to educate social-health

workers. It was this group that triumphed in the establishment of the new Masaryk School in 1935. Ten years later, professional social studies programmes were inaugurated at the College of Political and Social Sciences in Prague, and later at Brno's College of Social Studies. But these programmes were to be short-lived; a Communist take over of the country took place in 1953. From that point on, social work education existed only in the form of a two-year post-secondary school education until the regime lost power in 1989.

In the Prague Spring of 1968, there was a renewal of hope as professionals in the field, and members of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs were reinstated. But that hope was dashed with the arrival of Warsaw Pact forces later in the year. The year 1989 marked the return of social work to the university curriculum. In 1990, new social work programmes were begun in three Czech universities, in Prague, Brno and Olomouc. The current educational system provides qualifications at several post-secondary and university levels, including bachelor's (three years), master's (five years), and recently, doctoral (post-graduate). In the framework of postgraduate course work, the Department of Social Work at the Philosophy Faculty of Charles University in Prague, offers a paid 200-hour course, entitled Supervision in Social Work. In 1993, the Association of Educators in Social Work (ASESW) was founded in the Czech Republic. It is a non-governmental organisation of post-secondary institutions and universities offering social work education programmes of at least three years in duration (Chytil, Popelková, 2000).

Curricula in Czech social work education

There are three types of accredited social work education programmes in the Czech Republic. They include a state accreditation system for secondary and post-secondary institutions, a state accreditation system for university education, and a supervisory system, the Association of Educators in Social Work. These three systems function according to differing concepts concerning social work education, and with respect to differing accreditation criteria. Just as both state systems are oriented more towards the management of new programmes, the goal of the ASESW is to improve the quality of social work education with the help of a so called minimum standard (Musil, Chytil, 2000), to provide educators with a concrete example of how to create curricula that are comparable with the best in Europe (Tomeš, 1997).

The standards come from social work practice defined as specific professional actions focused on improving the mutual acceptance of individuals, families, and groups, and the environments in which they

live. The standards aim to develop the self-respect and personal responsibility of the individual with the help of qualified people, interpersonal relationships and sources provided by society. Social work is understood as a service to clients which can be characterised by the terms help, support, and counselling (Tomeš, 1997). The minimum standards define the content of the programme in the form of a minimum number of course subjects. It stems from the assumption that the qualifications of a social work graduate depend on a minimum amount of study that should include: theory and methodology in social work, social politics, philosophy and ethics, sociology, psychology, methodology in social research, law, social pathology, problems in ethnic minorities and minority groups, and health and illness issues. An important part of any programme is practice in the field, and so this should constitute 25% of the course work (Chytil, Popelková, 2000).

The meaning of the term “social worker” in the Czech Republic

The professional structure of workers in the social services is determined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs under the title Standards of Social Services Quality. These standards reflect European norms, and in the Czech Republic today the majority of workers in the social services have not received the education which would enable them to meet such standards. It is widely assumed that this situation will last a while longer. Furthermore, the defined basic services, professional activities and specialisations that the Standards for Quality insist upon, are unclear and over-generalised. For example, terms such as social worker, social-education worker, and socio-therapist are used indiscriminately (Havrdová, Zamykalová, 2001). In “The proposal for a life-long education programme for social workers” (2001), it is understood that professional overlapping takes place. This is seen as acceptable in certain circumstances, but in many cases it is not, especially when a social situation requires a more sophisticated evaluation, and the implementation of a series of related interventions. A pragmatic social services bill differentiates the profession of social worker from that of other workers in the social services. However, registration and licensing issues remain, and so social workers have no clearly defined norms of responsibility for work quality. Such norms would raise the professional entrance bar, and subsequently, raise the status of social work in the job market (Havrdová, Zamykalová, 2001). The proposal of continuous education for social workers (2001) recommends that the social worker be accepted as a professional who has attained a high level of specialisation with a significant social impact, one who contributes to social

reconciliation by acting as an intermediary among the interests of society and the interests of marginalised groups and individuals.

The status of social work as a profession

At the end of the 1990s, social work in the Czech Republic was described by Navrátil (1999) as a profession with no professional culture and a low social status. It is now undergoing a dramatic evolution, marked especially by the search for new forms of social work, and the profession is aiming to challenge lingering paternalistic and administrative attitudes towards the client. The path to improving the prestige of social workers depends very much on the results the profession can provide, as well as on better publicity and cooperation from the government and other administrative offices (Kuchařová, 2001). Social workers feel that their work is not taken seriously among the other “caring professions”, and that it remains relatively unknown amongst the public at large. The Chamber of Social Workers describes the state of Czech social work in the following terms: it lacks descriptive methodologies and a structured framework, there is no permanent platform for discussion (about trends in social work, about definitions from the field, or language and terminology). In addition there are problems with practical training, social workers receive practically no supervision, rigid ethical beliefs endure, and there is little expert literature in the Czech language. As a result, Czech social work strives to include other theories of social work and to search for new interpretations of social problems. We aim to respect the rights of the clients, and also aim to develop and implement various work methods, these include a commitment to reinforce the professionalism of social workers, to improve the social prestige of the field and to strengthen its unique place among the other “caring professions” (Manifest Profesní komora sociálních pracovníků [The Chamber of Social Workers’ Manifesto], 2003). The Ethical Code was issued by the Association of Social Workers in 1995. It contains ethical principles, and also rules for the ethical behaviour of social workers in relation to clients, employers, colleagues, society, and the wider profession (Nečasová, 2003).

Roles and activities of social workers in Czech society

Social workers aim to provide solutions to social conflicts, and to find mutually acceptable solutions for the preservation and support of individual rights and freedoms. In the framework of research conducted in 1997, professional associations outlined the activities that social workers carry out, including specific administrative work, social support,

counselling, mediation and conflict resolution, social supervision, social analysis, conceptual activities, and social work management, as well as theory and methodology development. These activities are performed by social workers in the public service in a variety of branches, as well as in private institutions (Návrh koncepce celoživotního vzdělávání sociálních pracovníků ve veřejné správě a organizacích jí řízených [Bill for the Continuous Education of Social Workers], 2001). Social work and its practice has largely been determined by the social politics of the governments that have come to power since the Czech Republic abandoned and returned to its liberal tradition of differential redistribution. In the 1990s, public authorities maintained their traditional paternalistic approach (Řezníček, 1994). At the beginning of the 21st century, this approach is in decline, yet no great changes can be expected before the new social services bills have become law.

Basic challenges facing Czech social work

Czech social work is exposed to the challenges facing all European social work, especially those associated with globalisation and demographic evolution. However it also faces the particular difficulties shared by post-communist countries. These challenges can involve simply identifying new social problems such as unemployment, sex trade, poverty, and the like, dealing with their growth, and trying to find a way to legitimise social work in a market economy. Czech social work is also fighting with the state's unclear and limited conception of social work. In the past ten years, social workers have not been alone in waiting for a new law concerning social services. The form of social work itself is currently under discussion, the system of education is in progress, but is made more difficult by the low number of qualified pedagogues (Navrátil, 1999). Czech social work is looking for a new model that will provide a theoretical base for social workers to implement.

The most significant European aspects of Czech social work and social work education

Although the Czech Republic lies in the centre of Europe, the Communist regime managed to isolate it through the creation of an economy based on the inefficiencies of central planning. The system was also marred by a lack of personal ownership and competition. This situation lasted until 1989, when the fall of the Communist government opened the country to the world. Despite the difficulties of overcoming economic disparities with the West, the Czech Republic has managed to integrate itself with Europe without any great social dislocation

(Klvačová, 2002). The country continues apace in its efforts to join the European Union, and to harmonise its policies in the areas of unemployment and social policy.

Czech social work is also integrating with the European Union, especially in the field of social work education. A new project, The European Centre for Resources and Research in Social Work, is being carried out, with the aim of creating a database of research in social work and related areas. In the Czech Republic the project is being coordinated by the departments of social work in Brno and Ostrava. The Ostrava department is one of 11 European institutions participating in the development and realisation of an integrated Master of Social Work programme. This is an innovative programme whose goal is to prepare candidates to become experts in the management of social work on a European level. The programme respects all local and national differences and tries to integrate them into other concepts of social work. The Department of Social Work at the Medico-Social Faculty of Ostrava University is also participating in the MAFF project which is trying to create a platform for the sharing of strategies, theories and methods in the area of continuous education. It focuses on strengthening the competence of organisations offering social services through the cultivation of an environment for the development of e-learning on a European level.

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Denmark

by Tiiu Mason

Social work in Denmark

In 1849, the Constitutional Act of Denmark declared that the state was obliged to support any citizen who was incapable of supporting either themselves or their families. However, those in receipt of support had to subject themselves to a number of conditions, the most important being disenfranchisement. So those receiving aid lost the right to vote, and this led to an obvious division between the ordinary citizen and the recipient of aid. In time, further divisions developed, and the poor themselves were subject to moral differentiation: they were either the deserving or the undeserving poor. Charities concentrated on supporting the deserving poor (for example, the disabled, the ill and the elderly) while support for the undeserving poor (the work-shy, alcoholics, and so forth) was left to the state.

From 1871-92, the Danish legislature was responsible for a number of social reforms, and this process culminated in the great Social Reform Act of 1933, which created the basis of the modern Danish welfare state. During the depression of the 1930s, Denmark had a coalition government, composed of Social Democrats and Radicals (Liberals); they faced a difficult task as the recession had led to a 43.5% unemployment rate by January 1933. The government's political programme had two major objectives:

1. Developing production.
2. Redistributing wealth with the primary purpose of expanding the social safety net.

The Social Reform Act of 1933 was financed by increasing taxes and, as a direct result, the number of laws governing social issues was reduced from fifty-five to just four:

- The Public Support Act.
- The Social Security Act.
- The Unemployment Insurance Act.
- The Accident Insurance Act.

Prior to 1933 public social support had largely been limited to the "undeserving" poor. This changed after 1933 and became rather the exception to the rule. The Public Support Act covered three major categories of recipients: special support which was given to the chroni-

cally ill and disabled; local authority assistance which was given to the long term unemployed; there was also an additional system of support for those who fell outside of the other two categories. It was only this last category, which became widely associated with the so called “undeserving poor”, that continued to be disenfranchised. The major effect of the 1933 reform was to move away from social support based on charity towards social support and assistance which was based on legal entitlement, and provided by the state (Caswell, 1999-2000).

Social work education

As the public sector took on more responsibility for social services, the role of private charity diminished, and the need for a professional education system increased. Two schools of social work were established in Copenhagen during the 1930s, and both of them were based in the hospital system. In 1934, Alfred T. Jørgensen (PhD) started the first school, under the auspices of FFF, a philanthropic church union. Jørgensen was particularly concerned about the way in which the secular state was taking over the church’s traditional role as social welfare provider. At the same time he made conscious efforts to work with the public sector, the objective being to let the state take over the more demanding social problems, so that the church could concentrate its efforts in lighter areas such as visiting the elderly and organising children’s activities. FFF offered a three month course, primarily for trained nurses. It was purely theoretical and covered subjects such as biblical philanthropy, social philanthropy and social legislation. Students were taught for five hours daily, and those who completed the course were designated as social helpers. The training offered by FFF was discontinued in 1957.

The second school, the Social School, was established in 1937 by a medical doctor, Carl Clemmensen, a barrister, Vera Skalts, and Manon Lüttichau, a social helper who had become Denmark’s first paid social worker in 1934. Their objective was to establish a school for anyone who wanted an education in social issues. The course was full time and of 18 months duration, the curriculum was comprehensive and covered 3 major areas:

1. Medical subjects such as anatomy, psychology, venereal disease, hygiene, nutrition and prevention of tuberculosis.
2. Social subjects e.g. social legislation, sociology, and organisation of the penal system.
3. General subjects such as religious and ethical considerations in social work, book keeping and planning meetings.

From the beginning, the Social School aimed to establish a close relationship between theory and practice. To achieve this goal, students

spent four hours a day on practical training in different social and medical institutions, and three hours were given over to study within the school. The graduates of the course were referred to (and still are) as qualified social advisers (social workers).

In 1941, the state began to subsidise the Social School, and in 1942, the duration of the course was extended to a period of two years. The Social School later became the National School of Social Work in Copenhagen, and from 1957 the length of training gradually increased. At the time of writing, all social work education takes place over 3½ years, and graduates are given the title Bachelor in Social Work.

Today there are 5 schools of social work in Denmark. They are currently established in Copenhagen, Århus, Odense, Esbjerg and Ålborg, and have a total intake of approximately 900 students each year. The school at Esbjerg offers part-time on-line studies whilst it is possible to take a Master's Degree in Social Work at both Ålborg University and the National School of Social Work in Copenhagen. The school in Århus offers specialisation in International Social Work, while the school in Copenhagen has a separate 3½ year educational programme which confers the title of Bachelor of Intercultural and International Social Work. Denmark does not as yet offer education in Social Work at PhD level. Students wishing to take a PhD in Social Work go to Lund University in Sweden or further abroad.

The curriculum in social work education

Freud's theories did not have the same impact in Denmark as they did in the USA. Consequently, the major focus of social work teaching tended to be directed towards sociology, social psychology, social medicine and theories regarding the economic redistribution of wealth. This was largely due to the continuing links between the working class, the Social Democratic Party and the ideology behind the Social Reform Act of 1933.

At the beginning of the 1950s, the first Danish social workers were sent to England and the USA to study casework methods which, up until that time, were unknown in Denmark. As a result, teaching in casework methods started at the National School of Social Work at the end of the 1950s. Prof. Helen Harris Perlman's book *Social Casework* (1957) was translated into Swedish and became the first basic literature on the subject for many Nordic schools of social work.

In the 1960s, the booming economy, urbanisation and associated social changes created problems of adjustment for many individuals, families and other social groups. Large numbers of women entered the work force and family structures changed radically. Consequently, the

problems facing social workers in the 1960s were very different from those encountered in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. By 1964, unemployment rates had fallen to 2.4%, 1 in every 3 marriages ended in divorce, 7,000 children were growing up in one-parent families, and 1/3 of all hospital beds were occupied by psychiatric patients. Clients, patients and consumers of social services demanded individual and personal attention. This in turn ensured that social workers had to develop a deeper awareness and understanding of human behaviour, as well as better communication skills.

In 1964 the two schools of social work in Denmark adopted the Norwegian definition of social work:

Social work is concerned with regulating the relationship between individuals and their social surroundings with the purpose of providing the highest level of basic security and adjustment possible.

This meant that social work now became defined as being concerned with both personal and social problems as well as the social functioning of the individual in a variety of roles. The 1960s saw an explosion in the number of different theories and methods being taught to students of social work. These included social and psychological role theories, developmental psychology, psychodynamics, social group and family therapy, and conjoint family therapy to name a few. In addition, casework theory was extended to encompass sociology and anthropology. The end of the 1960s also saw the first attempts to discuss methods of research in social work.

The recession of the 1970s ushered in a new era, and brought great turbulence to both social work education and practice. The Social Assistance Act of 1976 resulted in the closure of many social institutions and the fusion of others. The public sector now had an absolute monopoly in providing social services and in the employment of social workers, and at the same time, the responsibility for social work education was transferred from the Social Ministry to the Ministry of Education, leading to a revision of the curriculum. The emphasis was no longer on psychology but on theories and methods in social work, social legislation and the social sciences. The economic recession had other serious consequences for social work education in the 1970s and 1980s. The Department of Social Work at Roskilde University was closed, as were practical training departments at other schools, student intake was reduced, and teachers were made redundant.

Social work education and social workers were much maligned in the 1970s and 1980s. Many municipalities saw social workers as bleeding hearts and/or left wing radicals who were more than generous in their assessment of entitlement to welfare benefits and services. In turn, social

workers often saw their employers as bureaucratic, interfering and more preoccupied with saving money than with implementing the law and alleviating social problems. In the 1980s this conflict of interests finally led to a nationwide strike by social workers, while others were locked-out by their employers. One of the consequences of this situation was that the municipalities developed their own training programme in social work for their office employees. Since the late 1970s the Public Service School has offered a two year, part-time course, which confers the title of social communicator (*Socialformidler*). In many, if not most municipalities, these are still the preferred “social workers”. The conflict between social workers and the municipalities still exists today, albeit in a milder form. It is acknowledged and incorporated into the latest legislation covering the education of all social workers in Denmark (Ministry of Education Government, Notice 154, September 1st, 2002).

From the mid-1990s the curriculum has focused on four main areas:

- Social Work and Counselling 84 ECTS-point
- Psychology and Psychiatry 28 ECTS-point
- Law 28 ECTS-point
- Social and Political Science 36 ECTS-point
- Practical Training 36 ECTS-point.

As we have already noted, from September 2002, social work education was extended from 3 to 3½ years, and graduates receive a bachelor’s degree. As part of this development, the course now includes a bachelor’s dissertation (minimum 24 European Credit Transfer System - ECTS) in the final semester.

The social worker in Denmark

In Denmark there are two distinct social work professions: social pedagogues and social workers. Social pedagogues are trained primarily to work with children in institutions (kindergartens and children’s treatment facilities), with adults with learning difficulties, and with behavioural problems such as drug or alcohol addiction.

The vast majority of social workers in Denmark are employed in the public sector, and most are employed by local councils. These deal with social welfare benefits and provide all social services, for example, child protection, the integration of refugees, disability and old age pensions, housing and child welfare benefits, etc. Approximately 5% of all social workers work in hospitals and district psychiatry while the remaining 20% are employed privately, for example by trade unions, pension funds and other special interest groups and organisations.

In Denmark, as in other Nordic countries, there is a very close link between “cash and care”. This link is not present in many other coun-

tries, such as the UK. The system is organised so that social workers assess eligibility and offer guidance services in conjunction with awarding social welfare benefits. This has advantages and disadvantages. The major advantage is that all services are under one roof, which makes for fast and effective action. This makes it possible for the social worker, for example, immediately to transfer benefits via computer to the claimant's bank account, while at the same time, planning the next course of action with the client/claimant. This might be approving (state financed) training or education, psychological treatment or the support of a pedagogue to a family with difficulties. In small municipalities social workers will find themselves doing all of the above. In larger municipalities, services are specialised and can involve several social workers working with different aspects of the same case, connected by electronic case files. The disadvantage of the "cash and care" system is that the care provider (social worker) is also the controller, responsible for making decisions concerning entitlement to benefits and services. This can create a conflict of interest between the social worker and the client, and between the social worker and his/her employer. This role makes it necessary for social workers to maintain a fine line and to have high ethical standards, an extensive understanding of social legislation, and well-developed communication skills.

Social work as a profession

The professional study of social work in Denmark has been regulated by law, and supported economically by the state since 1941. The vast majority (approximately 10,000) of qualified social workers in Denmark are organised members of the trade union for social workers (Dansk Socialrådgiverforeningen). The union is responsible for negotiating with the state to determine minimum wages and pension savings. The union is also a partner in hearings concerning changes in legislation with regards to the education of social workers and changes in social policy.

Current challenges in social work and social policy

There are two major areas of concern at the present time:

- The integration of immigrants and refugees.
- The ageing population.

The integration of immigrants and refugees has been the major focus of attention for the current Liberal government which came to power in 2001. Differences of opinion, on how best to address this issue, were undoubtedly the major reason for the ousting of the Social Democratic government in the last election.

Since coming to power the Liberal government, supported by the far right-wing Danish Peoples Party, has passed a series of legislation which has severely limited the rights of non-EU citizens residing in Denmark. These include amongst others: restricted access to family reunification, means tests and Danish language tests for applicants seeking permanent residence permits and/or Danish nationality and not least, the halving of welfare benefits for seven years to foreigners (or any Dane) who has not spent 6 of the past 7 years in Denmark. These recent changes in legislation have made Denmark a pariah amongst the other Nordic countries. Apart from directly causing poverty amongst refugees, the legislation has also led to grotesque situations for some Danes. For example, Danish citizens who live with their foreign spouses in Sweden for two years, can then apply for Swedish citizenship and return to Denmark in accordance with EU legislation! These laws have already resulted in a sharp decline (approximately 50%) in the number of immigrants entering the country, while at the same time leading to a significant increase in the numbers entering the other Nordic countries. Put bluntly, the integration problem is being "solved" by making conditions for new immigrants and refugees so unpleasant, that given any choice, they will go somewhere else.

Coping with an ageing population will be the major challenge for the coming decade. Approximately 15% of the Danish population is over the official retirement age of 65 years. This group will increase by almost one third during the next 10-12 years. A much smaller, younger generation will be left with the burden of paying the taxes, which are the financial basis of the Danish welfare state. Steps have already been taken by the government to discourage early retirement, that is retirement at 60. It is now economically advantageous to put off retirement until the age of 62, it is even better to wait until 65. Public servants are currently obliged to retire at 70 years but this is likely to be revoked in the near future.

A reform of the disability pension system was adopted in 2001 and went into effect from 1st January 2003. Instead of assessing a person's level of disability in relation to his or her capacity to work, the new system puts the focus on the individual's residual work capacity, resources and potential to work. All possibilities of obtaining employment, through rehabilitation or flexible working arrangements must be exhausted, prior to making a decision concerning eligibility for a disability pension. One of the most interesting aspects of this reform from a social work perspective is that, for the first time, the Social Ministry has developed a method in social work called the Work Capacity Method, which must by law be used in all evaluations of entitlement to disability pensions and sickness benefits. The Social Ministry has

also produced the teaching materials and has largely financed the training of social workers in the use of this method. These changes in legislation, as well as many others outside the context of this chapter, all have the purpose of keeping as many people as possible employed for as long as possible, to prevent an explosion in pension payments when the baby boomers reach retirement age.

The European dimensions of social work

Social work education in Denmark has been influenced by the Bologna Declaration, which led to the reform of social work education in 2002. We now have a 3½ year Bachelor of Social Work degree measured in ECTS-point. Two Danish schools of social work have developed undergraduate international courses that include several months of practical training in both European and developing countries. In addition to this, all Danish schools of social work have partnership agreements with other European universities and schools through the Erasmus and Nordplus (Nordic) programmes. There is also a great deal of short-term student mobility (one week visits) between students at the school in Copenhagen and other European countries. In the first six months of 2003, 85 of our students visited schools and institutions in Holland and Poland, while we have played host to 90 students from Spain, Belgium and France.

Unfortunately, none of our schools of social work offer courses in English yet. This is now being discussed and will be the next challenge that must be met, if we are to live up to the intentions of the Bologna Declaration.

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England

by Geoff Wilkinson and Elizabeth Frost

Background to social work in England

Early interventions in the lives of the poor were led either by the church or by private charitable relief donated by wealthy people. State intervention can be traced from the 1388 Poor Law Act, through the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601 and through a whole series of Poor Law reforms during the 19th century that moved welfare provision from the parish to the state, from a form that was essentially individualistic to one that is, in essence, collective (Fraser, 2003, pp. 33-60).

Prior to the middle of the 20th century state intervention in the lives of the population can be characterised as ad hoc and laissez faire, guided by the twin principles of “least eligibility” and of the “deserving” and “undeserving” poor, derived from the Poor Law of 1834. “Benefits” were set a level below that of the least well paid worker to provide an incentive to work and a disincentive to be dependant on Poor Law Relief; the poor were sifted into the categories of “deserving” and “undeserving” to target “benefits” and to avoid compounding the “faults of character” that were assumed to lead to idleness, ignorance, immorality and dependence whilst ensuring the “deserving” received some assistance (Blakemore, 1998).

Beveridge’s (HMSO, 1942) recommendations, and the legislation that followed them, called for a complete revision of the welfare system, based on an ideology of collectivism. The old Poor Law services were replaced by local authority personal social services in 1948. Social work in England thus developed as a public service profession, with an ethos of benevolence and the promotion of social justice to be achieved through state supported specialist professional interventions, expert administration and government regulation of statutory provision.

The Seebohm Report (HMSO, 1968) marked the recognition of the fragmented nature of the organisational structures for social work and helped redefine its organisational and professional dimensions. The report recommended the creation of a single social services department within each local authority. The intention was to unify the provision of services to better meet the needs of service users as well as to provide a wider range of more effectively targeted services (Adams, Shardlow,

2000). It also heralded a move away from specialist social work education and practice toward a generic model.

During the late 1970s and 1980s the welfare state was subjected to much critical attention and, in a coincidence of analyses, the radical Left and the radical Right found themselves in general agreement as to the problems with welfare provision. However the proposed solutions were very different. The Left had moved toward participation politics and greater state involvement in the 1970s; the Right went for reduced and and restructured state involvement in the form of dynamic management and market orientated public services in the 1980s and 1990s. Marketisation was to engender competition through which public services were to become economical, efficient and effective. The provision of services was separated from their commissioning in what became "quasi-markets" (Le Grand, Bartlett, 1993), and services were to be "contracted" for in a "mixed economy of care" in which private, voluntary and charitable organisations would provide services paid for by local authority social services departments. Clients were recreated as "customers" "consuming" services and "choice" replaced equity as the yardstick against which services were to be judged (DoH, 1990). Many social workers were recreated as care managers, assessing need, commissioning and supervising provision as part of the political initiative to withdraw the state from the provision of services.

The election of "New Labour" in 1997, under the banner of "the third way", has led to adjustments in the ideology of welfare provision. The agenda for social care is laid out in the White Paper *Modernising the social services* (DoH, 1998), which makes a strong case for social care services as a moral imperative but expresses dissatisfaction with current arrangements. It focuses upon raising standards, increased responsiveness to users needs and building upon their capacities for social participation whilst respecting their culture and lifestyle. The influence of the "third way" is evident in the intention to move "... the focus away from who provides the care, and places it firmly on the quality of services" (DoH, 1998, p. 8).

Social work in England can thus be understood in the context of competing social forces, oscillating between voluntary and professional and specialist and generic interpretations of its roles and it can be seen to have developed

as a hybrid in space [...] at a midway point between individual initiative and the all-encompassing state [...] the space between the respectable and the dangerous classes, between those with access to political and speaking rights and those who are excluded. Social work fulfils an essentially mediating role between those who are actually or potentially excluded and the mainstream of society (Parton, 1996, pp. 5-6).