

## MINUTES from the 2.meeting of the WG5 in KAUNAS, LITHUANIA 16.-17. May 2003.

Hostess for the meeting: Universitas Vytauti Magni

### **Present:**

Carsten Otte (Germany), Julija Eidukeviciute (Lithuania) and Jolanta Pivoriene (new participant from Lithuania), Vincenzo Fortunato (Italy), Rina Masoch (Belgium), Michel Veevaete (new participant from Belgium), Eduardo Marques (Portugal), Andres Arias (new participant from Spain), Anne Karin Larsen (Norway). Alessandro Bernazolli (Parma, Italy) from the administration of the EUSW-prosject joined the meeting.

Carsten Otte informed that he received an e-mail from Paulina Chiwangu in which she told that she was unable to attend the meeting.

### **16. May:**

#### **Part 1 of day 1:**

The meeting started at 09.00 with a short visit to the Rector of Vytautas Magnus University, where we got information about the history and the programs delivered by this institution.



The group work started with a presentation of all participants. Carsten Otte as the leader of WG5 set the program for the work.

Some written material had been delivered to the participants before this meeting. That was: Proposals for the content of one of the items suggested in our last meeting: *Ethics, methods and basic principles in social work*, by Anne Karin Larsen. A written reflection from the Belgian team about the items suggested for ethics, methods and principles of social work, by Michel Veevaete. New written materials were presented at the meeting: Suggestions for the item: *Laws and organization of social work in different countries and regions*, by Andre Arias. Two other written suggestions: one about the *Welfare state and law*, and a second about *skill training in social work education* by Anne Karin Larsen.

The main purpose for WG5 is to plan and create student activities and a summer school in 2005. And the year 2004 will be an important year for planning.

According to the application for 2003/04: “*the launch of the school is foreseen for the third year of the project but this second year will be crucial for its set up and definition. This period will be used to define the institutions directly involved in the School development, the core courses, the credits and the procedures for the recognition at European level. Important steps will be taken towards guaranteeing the presentation of the School at all levels (Ministries of Higher Education, institutions, associations, professionals’ bodies, third parties)*”

Anne Karin was asked to start the presentation of her suggestions for the item  
**Ethics, methods and working principles in social work**

The suggestions from Anne Karin were:”

- **Oppression as a phenomenon in Europe in the societies in general and amongst people individually and in groups**
  - *The ethics of social work towards oppression*
  - *Methods of social work and working principles*
- **Poverty as a phenomenon in Europe. Economical differences in the European countries and amongst people in each country.**
  - *The ethics of equality and living standards*
  - *Methods of social work and working principles in prevention of poverty*
- **Ethnic diversity in Europe**
  - *Ethical aspects and dilemmas in social work concerning work with minority groups*
  - *Methods of social work and working principles connected to social work with immigrants and refugees.*

*Joining one of the work shops students can be asked to exchange information about curriculum, social work methods and the situation in each country. It is also possible to have a case to discuss and ask the students to propose methods and principles of social work related to the case.*

*Students joining the Summer School have to prepare themselves beforehand and to decide which workshop or core item they will join. Some of the preparations can be to read the book of social work in Europe (vol.1) and to have discussions on the internet (the virtual classroom) on particular items presented on the web.*

*Students will work in multinational groups and the result of the Summer Course will be a group presentation for a bigger audience and a short written summary of their applied knowledge. This will be the assessment of the course and the student’s participation.*

*One teacher will be responsible for following up a group of 6-7 students, and if possible there will be 3 or more teachers responsible for the sub-group of ethics and social work methods and principles of work.*

*Lectures will be given in each subject about 4 – 8 hours? Lecturers can be special invited professors, not necessarily the same teachers following up the groups.”*

The suggested items were discussed by the group members and from the discussion there was an agreement on both focus and items with some changes in the formulations. The new proposals decided by the group are as follows:

### **Main item 1: Ethics, methods and working principles in social work**

Three sub-items:

- **Discrimination and Oppression as a phenomenon in Europe in the societies in general and amongst people individually and in groups**
  - *The ethics of social work towards discrimination and oppression*
  - *Methods of social work and working principles*

- **Poverty and social exclusions as a phenomenon** in Europe. Economical differences in the European countries and amongst people in each country.
  - The ethics of equality and living standards
  - Methods of social work and working principles in prevention of poverty and social exclusion.
  
- **Ethnic diversity in Europe**
  - Ethical aspects and dilemmas in social work concerning work with minority groups
  - Methods of social work and working principles connected to social work with immigrants and refugees.

The term ethnic used in the last point were discussed. The group did not manage during these discussions to make some changes in this proposal, but still this is to be regarded as a proposed skeleton that has to be worked out more properly during the next year, and not a definite formulation.

There was a discussion in the group about these very wide concepts and whether there was a need for more precise and limited definitions of the concepts. From another view it could be a part of the learning process for the students to define the concepts during their study.

The next focus discussed in Parma was:

**Law and organization of social work in different countries/regions.**

To this item the member from Spain; Andres Arias presented a scheme as an example that can be used in purpose of comparisons of social services and laws in different countries. This can be used as an instrument for the students to make their comparisons between commonalities and differences concerning social laws, rights and organisation of social work.

(The scheme will be attached the minutes). In connection to this the suggestion from Anne Karin about connecting law and organisation to the welfare state were discussed.

The group agreed on changing the name of this second main item to:

**Main item 2: The Welfare State – social law and social policy: implications for education and practice of social work** were approved by the group.

Suggested sub items to this focus could be:

- 1) Organization of the welfare system in different countries
- 2) The definition, status and importance of voluntary work in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector
- 3) Social law –benefits – social security
- 4) Social policy in different countries: Political implications for social work and the equality of living conditions.

This focus will include the impact of policy, law and economy on social work. The role of social workers in different countries, the living conditions of inhabitants, the labour rate and so on. By this second main focus the idea from the Parma meeting about comparative studies of social problems and the transformation process in European countries can be applied.

Another option for this focus will be challenges for social work: In what way can social workers make their influence on these aspects and what methods in social work can be used? The group started a discussion about community work as a method of social work, and there seems to be an agreement that this method has a low priority amongst professional social

workers. In Belgium social law has an impact that these kinds of methods are going to be used by social workers, but still there seems to be difficulties by social workers to use this method. There seems to be an agreement in the group that in the European program of education we are now constructing, this method should be a part of the educational program. This could lead to a discussion about the New Role of Social Workers in the future, as suggested by Andres Arias.

A third focus suggested by Anne Karin Larsen was the following proposal:

**Main item 3: Social Work Education: skill training – Theory and methods used in education of social workers in Europe.**

Sub items or questions to this focus could be:

What do we mean by social work skills?

What are the theoretical aspects of skill training?

In what way are skill training done in the different institutions of education?

Content of literature used, writers and books

Presentation of different methods of skill training

Commonalities and differences in skill training of social work in Europe.

This focus could be especially interesting to teachers of social work methods and skills and supervisors for students during their placement period.

All the suggestions made above include very wide items and students will need to study and discuss these items before they meet in the summer school. This is where the idea about “the virtual classroom” fits in. Through this instrument for learning and communication information can be shared. If this can be done, the work in the summer school will be discussions and presentations, summery and comparisons of the different aspects and subjects in minor groups and perhaps also between groups.

**Part 2 of day 1:**

After an excellent and traditional lunch the director of the social work education in Kaunas joined the meeting for a short while and expressed his approval of the work of the Project. After that the working group continued to work.



A lot of aspects are included in the preparations and planning process for the student activities and the summer school. This includes decisions about the structure and organisation of this program of education, the level of education, the financial aspects and a lot of minor aspects. Anne Karin had prepared a “project plan” with a detailed list of tasks to be done and decisions to be taken at different times. This was shared with the participants the first day of the meeting, but discussed closer the second day.

After lunch Alessandro Bernazzoli was asked to present some concerns about the summer school:

The budget for the following year 2004 concerning the “summer school” activity will be 16 000EUR. Of these; 7.500 EUR for mobility purposes, 2.000 EUR for translation, 6.500 EUR for staff costs.

According to Alessandro the budget could be decreased or increased depending on the activity and need of money and the award from EU according to the money requested.

Alessandro draw some other aspects to be taken into consideration by WG5:

- What school will it be?
  - A single school that will be resident in one place where all interested students and involved teachers from Europe will meet?
  - A school that will exist in different places at the same time, although having the same structure and core courses and awarding the SAME final title?
  - An itinerant school, able to offer the same model in different places and hosted by the various EUSW partner institutions?
  - Independently from what school it will be, which level will it be addressed to?  
(to whom will the school be open: undergraduates, postgraduates, professionals, a mix?)

Connected to these questions Alessandro presented some pros and cons.

Other aspects presented were:

MASTERING EUSW: WG5 should define precise lines of intervention for EUSW partners active in other WG's. As who to contact, how to stimulate other partners interest and suggestions.

Our decisions will be published in the "MASTERING EUSW" information package that will be delivered at the next annual meeting.

Further considerations were about:

- Accreditation
- Title awarded by scholars
- Agreements among institutions actively involved in the school,
- The study level,
- On-line learning development

(The PowerPoint presentation by Alessandro will be attached the minute)

All these considerations became at once somewhat overwhelming, and WG5 continued with discussions about the on-line learning aspects and the level of education.

#### **According to the online-learning idea:**

In the end of April, a questionnaire about the virtual classroom idea was distributed to the partners of EUSW. At the moment of this meeting, 12 institutions have responded. By the response it seems that 4 institutions have used a distance learning program as a part of the training program of social work (question 1). Two of these are using the program called "blackboard", the two others are using programs called "ping pong" and "its-learning" (question 2).

8 institutions are interested in joining an international virtual classroom of social work, one says no, and 3 can't answer at the moment (question 14).

10 institutions answer yes to the question if there will be staff interested in joining and developing the virtual classroom of social work, one answer no and one have no answer (question 15).

The date for answering the questionnaire was the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, but there has been sent out a new reminder by Alessandro to those who still have not answered the questionnaire.

Connected to the discussion about the idea concerning on-line learning, Andres showed an example of some material on social work collected on a CD that easily could be a part of a program of social work. This CD included books and literature on social work methods, lectures, and a video of an interview between social worker and a client.

Similar kinds of materials will probably be available from different institutions and can with permission be translated to English and be a part of the materials for a distance learning program.

Anne Karin presented a rough idea for the structure of the school and this idea started a discussion among the group members and made it possible to present a more distinct model for the structure of the school the next day.

The European School of Social Work (EUSSW) starts with an e-learning study from January 2005 and ends with a residential period of 14 days in Parma in summer 2005.

Students who join the EUSSW will be asked to be part of one of the proposed items and will be part of a group of students doing the same, both on the e-learning program and during the period of the residential period in summertime.

The basic literature for all courses will be the new book on social work in Europe (EUSW), and then there will be proposed literature to the different subjects/items/focus areas of the Program.

Partner institutions involved in the development of the EUSSW will deliver material for the e-learning program and will be responsible with at least one teacher for the technical and professional part of the program during the e-learning period. During the period of e-learning students can be asked to deliver some written tasks.

At the residential period lecturers and professors will be asked to give lectures on an advanced level connected to each subject/items/focus area.

Students will be working in the groups according to their choice of subject and teachers will coach and give supervision to the groups.

The ending session of this program will be a presentation from each group to all students joining the program. This will make it possible to draw links between the different items and to increase the level of understanding of the commonalities and differences of social work in Europe. Each group/student may be asked to give a short written report on the chosen subject.

## **17. May**

### **Second day discussions:**

Second day discussions started about 0900 and continued till 1300.



The meeting this day started with some short Celebrations of the Festival of Kaunas and the Constitution Day of Norway, with gifts from our hostesses and a small flute to each participant from the Norwegian for the purpose of making festival noise not to make her homesick.

- After this joyful start, Anne Karin presented the program “it’s learning” on the internet. If there is no other program that seems to dominate the market and are commonly used by the participant institutions, her suggestion will be that this program will be the instrument for the distance learning program of EUSSW.
- Then the discussion about the level of the School started. It seems to be an agreement that the level should be postgraduate and professional level, but with possibility to access the study also for undergraduate students. The structure presented above in this minute was discussed and concluded. With the new proposed structure, we thought the use of the word summer school became misleading. We decided to call the school: **Advanced Study of European Social Work**. This study will have an ODL-period and end with a residential period going on for about two weeks in the late July in Parma.

Alessandro made a proposal that the first arrangement of the educational course in 2005 might be defined as a PILOT project. This could give us a year more time to make final adjustments and to include the evaluation of the program in suggestions for making a better product. WG5 did not make a decision on this proposal at the moment.

- Next on the program was to create an agreement on the list of tasks and progress as pointed out in the “project plan”. This list will be presented as an attachment to this minute with the decisions about the date included. This is a preliminary list and the group members have to be aware of changes that have to be done.
- At last we made a decision about our next meeting that will take place in Dornbirn the 25<sup>th</sup> of June about 15.00. Members of WG5 will try to arrive in Dornbirn in time of the meeting. According to the program for the annual meeting in Dornbirn, there will also be time for a group-meeting the next morning, if necessary.



Before finishing this minute it’s important to give our appreciation to Julija and Jolanta who have arranged the meeting. We are grateful for the possibilities to get to know the Lithuanian culture and to have excursions to a very beautiful area. Thanks also to the students who met us when we arrived in Vilnius. And thanks to Julija for her contribution to this minutes.

Bergen, 23.05.03  
Anne Karin Larsen  
Referee