

The results of the project should provide social work students with such values, knowledge, and skills which would prepare them to work efficiently with situations of exclusion and discrimination by seeking out natural support and using the resources of the local community. It is admitted that community development will become effective when it will be initiated and supported by community people, it will be well planned, long-term, beneficial to the community, not biased, and encouraging the participation of people, tuned with the wider context of a county, region, state, etc. These features of community work imply certain skills of a community worker and an important precondition – practical experience in the field, which has to be guided by a skillful field social work teacher.

The first steps of cooperative work have revealed, that despite similar target groups which may benefit from highly competent community social workers, encouraging community development and individual involvement (of excluded groups), certain differences in community concepts, priorities, and care models are obvious (for instance, Western European partners seek to improve their existing field practice system, while Eastern countries endeavour to encourage the development of field practice teachers' training in the area of community work).

In the current stage of the project implementation partners chose the modules which they are to develop. The body of knowledge will incorporate theoretical aspects of community work and more specific ones: political issues in social work with communities, methodological aspects of community development, organizational aspects (means and finances), issues in community development, and role and identity of community social worker. Those subjects have emerged during the discussion as the most relevant to the community social worker's needs. It is hoped that social workers' knowledge on community development will enhance possibilities of excluded groups and improve their life quality.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER AND ETHNICITY WITHIN AN EU MULTI-SITE MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Ramon Shulamit

(Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom)

Urek Mojca

(Ljubljana University, Slovenia)

The Emilia project is an action research aimed at enhancing social inclusion of people experiencing severe mental illness within eight demonstration sites, by focusing on enabling mental health service users to access education and employment opportunities. It is located within the EU Framework 6 research projects.

The sites cover Northern and Southern Europe, Western and Eastern European member states: Bosnia (Sarajevo and Tuzla), Denmark (Storstrom), France (Paris), Greece (Athens), Norway (Bodo), Poland (Warsaw), Spain (Barcelona), and the UK (London). Additional support partners are located in Finland (Tampere), Lithuania (Vilnius), Slovenia (Ljubljana), and the UK (London).

Most partners are providing mental health services, while some come from the university sector.

One of the key objectives of the project is to improve the mainstreaming of gender and ethnicity within the sites, as lack of such mainstreaming adds to the already existing barriers towards

social inclusion coming out of the stigma attached to mental illness. Enhancing mainstreaming will facilitate better participatory work with mental health service users, as well as add value to the solidarity with them. EU data highlights that this group is to be found among the poorest and most socially excluded populations in Europe.

People experiencing mental ill health have thus far attracted only low solidarity from most EU member states, both formally and informally, for reasons related to the fear of the potential harm the users of mental health services may do to others and to themselves, as well as due to the discomfort which mental ill health creates for the lay public.

In the workshop we will describe the Emilia project's staged strategy of achieving mainstreaming. The first stage entailed obtaining updated data from staff members on issues related to gender and ethnicity in their workplace and their relevance to work with service users. This was followed by a wide ranging consultation process in constructing the sites' action plan for mainstreaming.

The findings from the first stage of eighteen months of work on this issue will be presented and analysed, as well as the obstacles and opportunities identified in this process.

The targets which the different sites hope to achieve in the next phase, and the means for achieving them will be outlined.

The variability in the national laws and policies already in place, sensitivity, knowledge, and attitudes to ethnicity and gender issues within the sites poses a considerable challenge within the Emilia project, which has to be tackled while respecting the sites' uniqueness.

We will explore the relevance of mainstreaming of ethnicity and gender in the context of mental health social work.

The workshop will offer an opportunity for participants to interactively learn from the experience of different sites and that of the leaders of the work package responsible for mainstreaming ethnicity and gender.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE CROSSBORDER SERVICE IN FAMILY CONFLICTS – EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD

Sebastian Regitz

(International Social Service – German Branch)

The International Social Service (ISS) is an international non-governmental organisation dedicated to helping individuals and families with personal or social problems resulting from migration. It was found as an information network nowadays offering its service in over 100 countries by facilitating communication between social services and humanitarian organisations. The main focus of ISS work is the protection of children and families across national borders. The guideline for our work is the well-being of the child. We assist in finding best solutions for affected children around the world according to legal frameworks and in respect of the cultural and social environment. ISS works with local organisations. Our working languages are English, French and Spanish.

The ISS workshop will show and discuss different professional approaches in inter-country social work related to cross border family conflicts by means of factual cases.

As an example: A German boy is taken by his parents to Italy. This way, the parents are trying to avoid a withdrawal or restriction of their custody rights. The German youth welfare office