



# News Letter

2/2004

Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe

## The civic added value of voluntary social services

This is the title of a memorandum published this October by the German Federation of Non-Statutory Welfare Services (BAGFW) (available in English from the English homepage <http://www.bagfw.de/bagfw.asp?l=en&c=publikationen>, cf. Publications, then Opinions).

It is being published just in time to coincide with the discussion process leading up to a Communication of the EU Commission on social and health services, which has been announced for 2005. It also fulfils important functions in terms of self-definition and stocktaking.

Again and again, the EU discussion on social services within the context and as a part of services of general interest has stressed their inherent specificity. What had been lacking until now had been an adequate presentation of what these specific features are. The memorandum now attempts to close this gap by describing the specific characteristics that set social services apart from other services "of general interest". It is based on the example of the German system.

The following contribution will examine the central points made by the memorandum and illustrate its statements by means of a few examples taken from the work of the German Red Cross.

### Civil society character

Though they are often provided "in a market", social services offered by welfare federations are also grounded in the fabric

of civil society. Part of their specificity consists of this relationship to civil society: they are the expression of social commitment and of participative democracy. The yardstick of their successful provision is not profit maximisation, but rather the fact that the persons and groups involved in them see their involvement as a way of participating in civil society within an environment of civic commitment and social advocacy. In spite of the haziness surrounding the concept of civil society, it is indeed the environment of social NGOs such as the German welfare federations, even though these organisations may (be forced to) act along economic lines. It is an environment involving specific forms of content that hardly, if at all, fall under the definition of terms such as "third sector" or "social economy".

### Orientation to public interest and commitment to values

This characteristic of non-profit social services generates a significant added value for civil society, transforming them into something more than a mere service delivery activity. In their social work, the welfare federations act in accordance with their respective values and objectives, their philosophy. For instance, principles of humanity and impartiality (non-discrimination) determine the work of the German Red Cross with migrants. There is an orientation to the "most vulnerable", a desire to provide assistance to persons and groups who find themselves in particularly difficult situations and who are hardly cared for by anyone else, for instance migrants without proper legal status.

This commitment to values gives providers of non-profit services a special kind of credibility. The person seeking help may choose from a variety of value orientations, all of them being values that come together at particular "vertices" – for instance humanity. In other respects, there are significant differences in expression, for instance the principle of neutrality, which is specific to the Red Cross.

But this does not hinder these organisations from acting as advocates on the basis of institutional and legal principles. One component of non-profit social services that is a particularly good example of added value for civil society is social advocacy, an element that represents a clear differentiating factor between non-profit organisations and private commercial service providers.

Advocacy is something that takes place at various levels and in various forms ranging from EU lobbying activities to personal involvement in individual cases. Certain areas – for instance work with migrants – are so delicate that it is downright impossible to do any social work in a welfare institutional context without "political" action. Non-profit orientation and commitment to values also provide a specific basis for the participation of the persons seeking help, creating relationships that go beyond "customer friendliness" or "customer surveys" and similar activities: relationships calling for civic commitment, where the beneficiaries participate both in the definition of the services and in the social services themselves.

## Editorial

DEAR READER,

ON 1 MAY 2004, THE EU WELCOMED TEN NEW MEMBER STATES – TWO FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA, EIGHT FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE. IN OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER FOR 2004, WE TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS OCCASION TO EXAMINE THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN POLAND, SLOVAKIA, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND HUNGARY, AND WE LOOKED AT THE CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN ESTABLISHING AND IMPROVING DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION STRUCTURES BETWEEN NON-PROFIT AND PUBLIC PROVIDERS OF SOCIAL SERVICES FROM THESE COUNTRIES AND THEIR GERMAN COUNTERPARTS. THIS ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER TAKES A DOUBLE LOOK AT THE LATTER ASPECT, PARTICULARLY IN THE SECOND MAIN REPORT. OUR MAIN FOCUS, HOWEVER, IS ONCE AGAIN THE TOPIC WHICH HAS BEEN DOMINATING OUR PROFESSIONAL DISCUSSION AT BOTH NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS – "SOCIAL SERVICES AS A CENTRAL ELEMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN THE FIELD OF TENSION BETWEEN OBLIGATION TO SERVE THE COMMON GOOD AND COMPETITION". THIS IS ALSO THE DIRECT OR INDIRECT POINT OF REFERENCE FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THE QUALITY OF PERSON-RELATED SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECTOR, ON THE PARTICIPATION OF USERS (ON THIS SUBJECT, PLEASE SEE OUR GUEST COLUMN), ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, ON PUBLIC UTILITY STATUS, AND ON A EUROPEAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THIRD-SECTOR ORGANISATIONS. THE LATTER ARE CALLED UPON AND ENCOURAGED TO CLEARLY DEFINE THE "CIVIC ADDED VALUE" OF THEIR SOCIAL SERVICES OF GENERAL INTEREST, A TASK WHOSE OBJECTIVES AND POINTS OF REFERENCE ARE OUTLINED BY DR. MANFRED MOHR IN THE EDITORIAL ARTICLE. THE FIRST MAIN REPORT PROVIDES AN OUTLINE OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS OF A CONFERENCE HELD IN JUNE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PLATFORM OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL NGOS AND THE EU COMMISSION. THIS ISSUE'S COUNTRY REPORT FOCUSES ON FINLAND.

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

## Mandate and framework conditions

Non-profit social services have their foundation in basic human rights, in a specific, complex manner that – once again – keeps them apart from other services of general interest (such as electricity and water services). This applies particularly to social rights, to the welfare state principle of art. 20 of the German Basic Law and to the right to access to services of social protection and social services pursuant to art. 34 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. In the words of a high-ranking Commission official in the course of the EU discussion: social NGOs, with their social services, are more “compatible with human rights” than (purely) commercial providers.

The overall legal framework as specified in the German Code of Social Law (SGB) and elsewhere is complemented by special regulations – both in terms of international law (e. g. psycho-social rehabilitation measures as a corollary of the international ban on torture) and at the level of national legislation (e. g. asylum and residency laws). Here, as everywhere, the challenge of advocacy is that it should influence the design of the legislative framework, encourage improvements and prevent changes for the worse.

Mandate and framework conditions are also often linked with political programmes. For instance, they affect areas such as non-discrimination and integration, and they may take both national or EU forms.

And finally, we have to examine the competition framework. Here, efforts have been made to reach pragmatic and flexible solutions (case C-280/00 “Altmark Trans”, ruling of the European Court of Justice of 24. 7. 2003, cf. press release, URL <http://www.curia.eu.int/en/actu/communiqués/cp03/aff/cp0364en.htm>; the “Monti package”, the EU Commission’s Directorate General for Competition IP/04/235 of 18. 2. 2004, URL [http://europa.eu.int/comm/competition/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/competition/index_en.html), there the menu item “press releases”). Of course, a certain amount of further clarification is needed (for instance regarding the concept of “entrustment” within the meaning of EU state aid laws); otherwise, however, the frequently heard call for more “legal cer-

tainity” will also lead to additional regulatory arrangements, which implies extensive EU competences.

In an analogous manner, German laws on the public utility status provide a reasonable, largely suitable framework for action. Here too, there can be no talk of distortion of competition.

## Cooperation with volunteers

One characteristic of non-profit social services that generates civic added value is the involvement of volunteers. The forms of this involvement are extremely diverse: neighbourhood help, visiting services, clothing depots, volunteer advisory services, volunteer teaching and interpreting services. The creation of the hospice movement is solely the result of the volunteer commitment of the people involved.

More and more, volunteer work involves activities requiring a high degree of qualification and responsibility, for instance work as a volunteer guardian for unaccompanied refugee children. Volunteer commitment needs appropriate framework conditions in terms of instructions and qualification, but also in terms of favourable conditions and recognition. Special measures and projects have been devised to strengthen these civil society structures that are indispensable for non-profit social welfare work. One example is the German Red Cross concept of a (volunteer) migration commissioner to support and coordinate this field of work in the individual structures of the federation.

Volunteers also act as social advocates, for instance when volunteer refugee advisers dealt with the immigration authorities or when a (volunteer) member of the advisory board of a deportation detention centre pushes for improved conditions of imprisonment.

## Quality and sustainability

The civic added value of non-profit social services has a very special quality. This is expressed in the quality requirements formulated by the German Federation of Non-Statutory Welfare Services (BAGFW) (“Grundanliegen der Wohlfahrtsverbände zur Erreichung ihrer spezifischen Dienstleistungsqualität”, 18. 3. 2003, cf.

<http://www.bagfw.de>, menu item “Publikationen” – available in German only), which state specific requirements in the relevant categories (e. g. orientation to a mission statement, orientation to users, orientation to society and orientation to citizens).

Another prerequisite is quality management, which is to be guaranteed by the implementation of quality requirements in social services. They are, e. g., currently realized in the framework of the work of the German Red Cross with migrants. We are assuming that, in the sense of civic added value and its elements as presented here, Red Cross homes and reception centres offer significantly better “care” for migrants.

There is a higher degree of public acceptance for such institutions (until now no German Red Cross institution for asylum-seekers has been the target of violence). And speaking more generally: the advisory and integration services offered by the German Red Cross are uninteresting for commercial providers.

Quality means sustainability, and one of the ways of achieving this is through local networking.

Other factors are reliability and continuity. A special quality feature is the holistic approach of our services, the manner in which these services address people and their entire social environment. A specific aspect which is relevant in this context is the intercultural character of social services, i. e. offers explicitly taking into account and tailored to specific needs of migrants.

“Modernising social protection” must be seen within the context of such a quality development, and not from the point of view of cost-cutting and reduction of services alone.

Here too, as in the overall process, it is important to take into adequate account the interests of the German welfare federations at European level.

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## Guest column

### User involvement in personal social services

Social services do a great deal to promote social cohesion. Over the last years, one of the key developments in their provision has been to make them more client-oriented, thus improving their quality and empowering the users to participate in society as a whole. Accordingly the Council of Europe’s (COE) Committee on Social Cohesion set up a Group of Specialists in User Involvement in Social Services in 2003. The main results of their work will be presented below.

Firstly it should be noted that social service users are a heterogeneous group, living in different cultural contexts. Thus generalizing from particular examples is rather difficult. In the field of personal social services (PSS) it proves to be helpful to distinguish between *universal* and *targeted* services. The former ones are PSS that respond to a dependency due to old age, disability or young age (children). The latter respond to an individual (social) problem or need. Universal services normally have clearly defined criteria for access to services while targeted services are discretionary, based on needs or means-testing by social workers and others professionals, e. g. care managers.

The users of targeted services tend to be disadvantaged, poor people whose voice is weak and political weight small. In contrast many of the mainstream services are for people who can more easily demonstrate their needs and therefore can be seen as middle class services. The role of users can approach that of *consumers* who mobilise and act politically with a strong and effective involvement. Consequently the need to define the formal position, rights and obligation of the users is especially urgent in services where the user’s competence is weakest because of status or tradition, such as in institutional/residential care.

When it comes to the form of user involvement, there are five different strands to come across

in the present debate. Even though they will be described separately below, they are to be found simultaneously, as mixed solutions, in many fields of social services. The concept of *welfareism*, an old style approach, is associated with rather rigid, inflexible, mostly state-controlled welfare bureaucracies that allowed little opportunity for user involvement. The most extreme and negative examples were found in the former communist regimes where users had virtually no say at all. Within the second strand, *professionalism*, strong and mild forms of paternalism evident in the development of attitudes and practices of welfare professionals can be contrasted. The former one sees professionals working *for* rather than *with* their clients, whereas the latter one is likely to show an up-to-date concept of professionalism that emphasizes openness, consultation and cooperation with users as co-producers of services. *Consumerism* aims at introducing markets or quasi-markets into public services in order to produce benefits to both producers and consumers. Means to enhance user involvement are the introduction of vouchers and the creation of personal budgets. As already seen in this strand, *managerialism* imports business concepts and practices into public services, including social services, too. But here the focus is on the interest of the provider, preserving existing power relations between service producers and their customers, while using information gathering methods such as market research, user satisfaction surveys and customer care programmes to bring the provider closer to its customers. Finally, the concept of *participationism* emphasizes on the one hand users as co-producers of services, cooperating fully with professionals and their agencies in planning, providing and evaluating these services. On the other hand users act as collectives, taking co-responsibility together with others. This is particularly evident in the campaigns of both disability and mental health user groups and to some extent with older people (e. g. in an advisory council in a home).

As manifold as the possibilities of user involvement in PSS may be, so numerous are the barriers to it. Among them, obstacles in the political, legal and administra-

tive fields might be the best-known problems, but nevertheless areas such as those of language and resources also have a considerable impact. For instance might the first language of social workers and service users differ or the professional language be over-technical; from the point of view of resources, user involvement costs providers staff time and the users money, time and energy.

Although still being in need of promotion, there already are examples of good practice worth mentioning. Below three of them shall be presented: personal budgets for users, social care councils and ombudsmen systems.

Possibly the most significant, tangible innovation in user involvement in social services in recent years has been the introduction of some form of *personal budgets for users*. Such schemes entail a fundamental shift in aspects of the funding (and power) of social services by placing some cash into the hands of users rather than concentrating funding completely in the services themselves. Personal budgets were first introduced in the Netherlands in 1996, the basic idea being to change the focus from supply to demand, thus giving the user the lead in organising his/her own care. Following initial assessment, the amount of the personal budget is agreed for the individual who requires long-term care. He/she can then purchase care services he/she chooses. The user always has the initial choice of care as concrete services or as a personal budget. The latter is not suitable for all users because of the administration and book-keeping required.

The second model mentioned, the *social care council*, can be understood as a formally constituted group set up to work closely with most residential institutions in social services, fully involving service users themselves. Its tasks are such as to coordinate the internal rules of procedure of the institution, review conflicts between clients and the administration of the institution and participate in the quality assessment of the services provided by the institution. Latvia is an example of a country where this type of good practice exists. There social care councils

consist of persons living in the institution, their relatives, employees or the head of the institution, and representatives of the municipality.

The *ombudsmen system*, as the third and last model to be presented, provides citizens with an instance to appeal to when they consider that they have been wrongly dealt with by a particular service. These systems are normally generic and not specific to a particular service. It is, e. g., in Finland, where such a system exists at the municipality level. A complication in this context is that the ombudsman is employed by the system that provides social services.

For more information see the COE's site on social services. You will find it by surfing to <http://www.coe.int/T/E/social%5Fcohesion/social%5Fpolicies>, then click on "Access to social rights", then on "Social Services". On the homepage there are, e.g., B. Munday's report on characteristics and trends of social services, A. Evers' paper on current strands in debating user involvement and M. Heikkilä's and I. Julkunen's contribution on obstacles to an increased user involvement.

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## Main report

### Social services between public service obligation and competition

Social services are an important element of social protection that has developed in line with national traditions, structures and concepts of solidarity and of a just distribution of benefits. They also belong to the "services of general interest" – a term that has meanwhile found its way into German ("Dienstleistungen von allgemeinem Interesse") since the publication of the EU Green Paper of the same name in 2003, and that refers to services dedicated to the welfare of the general public. Current EU law stipulates that the organisation of these services is in the responsibility of the member states.

On 28 and 29 June 2004, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe, and the Platform of European Social NGOs (*Social Platform*) hosted a conference on "Social Services of General Interest in the European Union – Assessing their Specificities, Potential and Needs" with the support of the European Commission/Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs. This event provided a link to the results and recom-



Working group 2 was chaired by Carlotta Besozzi (second from left), Director, European Disability Forum (EDF), at her right Albert Brandstätter, General secretary, Eurodiaconia, and Dr. Stephanie Scholz, European affairs officer, Diakonisches Werk der EKD (both rapporteurs).

recommendations of the conference that had taken place in Berlin in September 2003 on "Social Services as Services of General Interest in the EU – Objectives, Responsibilities and Conditions"; it was also closely related to the White Paper on services of general interest published by the European Commission in May 2004 (COM (2004) 374 final).

The conference brought together some 180 participants from all 25 EU member states: representatives of the relevant government ministries, of the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, of national civil society organisations working in the social area and their European umbrella organisations and/or networks, and of central associations of local and regional providers of social services. The high number of participants and the lively interest shown in the content and results of the conference bear witness to the fact that this topic continues to be of central significance for a wide range of organisations.

The main objective of the conference was to define the role, the efficiency and the conditions of operation of social services of general interest in the enlarged EU with an eye to achieving a more effective and efficient provision. A further objective was to identify the specific characteristics of the provision of non-profit social services and the special elements identifying their users as compared to other services of general interest, in order to do justice to these specificities in both the national and European context, particularly in the interest of the users of non-profit social services. In addition, concrete proposals were made regarding the modernisation of social services on the basis of criteria such as "access", "quality", and "effective and efficient use of resources"; in this respect, quite contrary opinions were expressed on both the content and the implementation of the EU policy objective "modernisation of social protection". The results and "recommendations" of the conference were published in a conference documentation that was discussed in the final plenary session.

In particular, the conference offered non-profit providers of



*Dirk Jarré, Vice-president of the Social Platform, presents key issues and requests of participants during the concluding plenary session of the conference.*

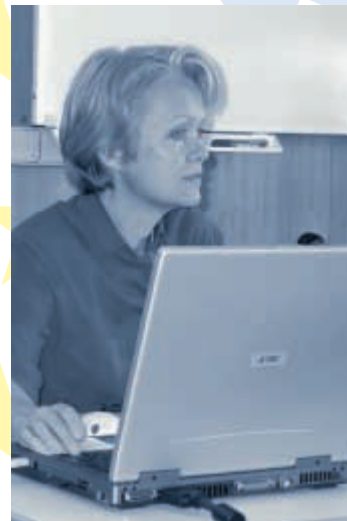
social services a forum to present the beneficial implications and "added-value effects" of their own social services (cf. also our editorial article, for instance) for society as a whole, and thus for the common good. It also helped to clarify the importance of social NGOs as providers of social services and as partners in the civil dialogue. In addition, the conference offered an opportunity for the preference felt by most of the organisations represented in favour of the adoption of a sector-specific communication to be explicitly articulated to the European Commission.

We can expect that the central results of the conference will mark the policies of both national decision-makers and the EU Commission in the elaboration of the communication on social and health services of general

interest – the final document has already been included in the questionnaire sent to the various member states – and in other related processes. And finally, the conference generated important impulses for the continuation of a dialogue at European level between all the parties involved and for the efforts to improve knowledge on social services.

A documentation drawn up in the three working languages of the conference will be published in November.

*Mathias Maucher*



*The plenary sessions of the conference were chaired by Dr. Chris Lange, Berlin.*



*Project presentations and discussion, on the panel (from left to right): Prof. Dr. Erika Steinert, University of Applied Sciences (FH) Zittau/Görlitz; Janusz Hoppe, Child and Youth Welfare and Social Assistance Office, City of Frankfurt am Main; Dr. Helmut Ohme, Managing director of the regional association Sachsen-Anhalt of Der Paritätische; Dr. Werner Veith, Director Caritas Association of Darmstadt; Jan Deco, Director Caritas Association of the Diocese of Košice/Slovakia.*

## Report on the special conference on the "Social dialogue in Central Europe – an exchange of experience on social services and related issues"

From 6 to 10 June 2004, the German Association for Public and Private Welfare in Frankfurt am Main hosted a conference on the "Social dialogue in Central Europe – an exchange of experience on social services and related issues". It was attended by representatives of the relevant ministries, of public administration bodies in the social services area and of social NGOs and their associations from Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, Romania and Germany. The conference was funded and supported by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) as well as by the social services department of the city of Frankfurt am Main and the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband Frankfurt am Main.

The Frankfurt meeting marked the close, for now, of a series of meetings started by the German Association for Public and Private Welfare in 2001 and held with the cooperation of partners in Central and Eastern Europe. Following the initial conference in Kraków in October 2001 ("Das Subsidiaritätsprinzip und soziale Nichtregierungsorganisationen im Kontext der Erweiterung der Europäischen Union" in: SOCIUS: Deutsch-polnische Zeitschrift für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpolitik No. 14, December 2002, Warsaw/Salzgitter), which was run jointly with the Advisory and Coordination Office for German-Polish Cooperation in the Social Area, the scope of subsequent meetings broadened, both geographically and in terms of subject matter. Whereas the exchange of experience was initially limited to Germany, Poland and Slovakia, it was rapidly expanded to include other neighbouring countries: Hungary, the Czech Republic and Austria. In autumn 2002, a conference was held in Bratislava, Slovakia (on this topic, see <http://www.deutscher-verein.de/portal/verein/7-arbeitsfelder/pdf/sozialerdialog.pdf>); in autumn 2003, another

conference took place in Nyíregyháza, Hungary.

The objective of these conferences was to encourage the exchange of professional experience with regard to the shaping of social policy in the participating countries, and to stimulate discussion on the role and development of non-profit organisations in the social sector, as well as to elaborate proposals for concrete joint projects. At the same time, recent

day, a series of cooperation projects was presented. It was noted that particularly a project promoting self-help and implemented in cooperation between the Central Welfare Office of Jews in Germany and the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland as well as the project jointly designed and organised by Caritas Darmstadt and Caritas Košice had got underway as a result of the meetings in Kraków, Bratislava und Nyíregyháza. In this part of the pro-



View of the opening plenary session of the conference at Frankfurt.

years have witnessed the growth – as a natural development, so to speak – of a network and pool of competence among social organisations in the participating countries. Of course, it is hoped that this valuable development will continue beyond the provisional end of the conference series. It was one of the positive results of the Frankfurt conference that the exchange of experience will also continue – possibly in the Czech Republic in spring of 2005.

Following the official opening of the conference and the words of welcome by Maria-Carola Bürkner of the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and Michael Löher, Managing Director of the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, the conference focused on the following topics. In an introductory address, Jürgen Lilischkies of the local association of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband at Frankfurt am Main gave listeners an overview of the German welfare system, explaining the meaning of the subsidiarity principle and the role of the welfare federations. His contribution was followed by a podium discussion on the current state and future prospects of social legislation in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. At the end of the first

programme, reports were also presented by Janusz Hoppe of the Youth and Social Services Office of the City of Frankfurt on cooperation and exchange on social matters in the framework of the town twinning with Kraków, by Dr. Helmut Ohme of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband of Saxony-Anhalt on the cooperation of his organisation with organisations in Romania, and by Prof. Erika Steinert of the University of Zittau/Görlitz on cross-border partnership projects in the triangle formed by the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany.

The early part of the second day consisted of talks and group work dedicated to the problem of social exclusion. The first speaker, Geert Freyhoff of "Inclusion Europe", spoke about the relevance of European social policy for people with disabilities; he was followed by Joachim Krauss of the Institute for Research on Anti-Semitism, who presented a report on the situation of Roma and Sinti people in Europe. After these talks, two working groups delved into these topics at greater depth while a third group discussed the *inclusion* strategy of the EU. The afternoon of the second day was reserved for visits to social institutions in Frankfurt. These were of great interest, particularly to the guests from the new EU member states.

On the third and last day of the conference, participants focused on the work of social institutions and the quality of training in social professions. Prof. Franz Hamburger of the University of Mainz presented the results of an international comparative study on training requirements in the social professions, and Dr. Arkadiusz Zukiewicz of the Kraków Pedagogical University spoke on the situation of social professions in Poland. In further talks, Walter Wolf of the European Commission provided an overview of the participation of the new EU member states in measures to combat poverty and social exclusion, and Susanne Knäpper of Bank für Sozialwirtschaft spoke on the principles of EU action programmes and project funding, particularly for social NGOs. Dr. Armin von Ungern-Sternberg of the Hertie Foundation focused on project sponsoring and the possibilities of foundations in general and of the Hertie Foundation in particular. Following these talks, participants divided into two working groups that explored the topics of training and financing in greater depth. In the final plenary session, Beatrix Holzer reported on the results of a survey conducted by the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe on the demand for cooperation and consultation among providers of social services in four new member states (cf.: Working Paper No. 11 – [http://www.soziale-dienste-in-europa.de/Anlage25406/Arbeitspapier\\_Nr.\\_11.pdf](http://www.soziale-dienste-in-europa.de/Anlage25406/Arbeitspapier_Nr._11.pdf) – and No. 14 – [http://www.soziale-dienste-in-europa.de/Anlage25409/Arbeitspapier\\_Nr.\\_14.pdf](http://www.soziale-dienste-in-europa.de/Anlage25409/Arbeitspapier_Nr._14.pdf)). The results of this survey reflect the conclusions drawn at the Frankfurt conference. Due to the continuing broad gap in affluence levels in the new and old member states, and as a result of the to some extent only recently developed, incomplete social protection structures and circumstances affecting NGOs in many of the new member states, all participants stressed the urgent need for a continuation of the exchange of experiences of this type. Participants from the old EU member states showed great interest in exploring potential new solutions in designing social policy in the new member states. From this point of view, the conference in Frankfurt was also characterised by willingness to learn from one another in efforts to face the challenges involved in the creation a social Europe.

An abridged text of this contribution will be published in the December 2004 edition of the Nachrichtendienst des Deutschen Vereins (NDV).

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## Social Services in Europe

### Social services in Finland

Social services in Finland rest on the principles of the Nordic welfare state, which require universal services and adequate social protection. All residents in Finland are by law guaranteed access to social services. The right for social services is guaranteed by the Constitution and it is in the responsibility of public authorities, state and the municipalities. The organisation of social services is arranged by each of Finland's 448 municipalities. The government sets the general objectives, enacts legislation and issues guidelines and recommendations regarding the provision of services. The social policy system is individual-oriented, based on individual and universal social benefits and rights, and safeguards gender equality regardless of family relationships. It emphasizes prevention.

### Areas of activity

Social services include child day care, childcare allowances, child welfare, services for the disabled, elderly care services and care for substance abusers (mainly alcohol).

All children below school age are entitled to receive municipal day care either at a day care centre or in family day care. Day care costs are calculated according to the size of the family and income. Day care services are free for low income families. In 2001, some 200,000 children, i.e. 42% of the children below school age, attended municipal day care centres.

The main policy aim is, that as many elderly people as possible should be able to live independently in their own homes. Living at home is supported by profes-

sional social and health care services. Residential services and different forms of institutional care are provided to people who can no longer manage to live at home. Each municipality is expected to have an up-to-date policy strategy concerning care for elderly people, that safeguards their social rights. The strategy should include a service development programme. The main types of services for the elderly are home help and home nursing care, meals, cleaning and other services, service accommodation, support for informal care, the pro-

legislative amendment that came into effect in April 2001. The purpose of preventive social assistance is to enhance the social protection and independent coping of a person or family and to prevent social exclusion and long-term dependency on income support. Such assistance can be granted for instance to pay rent in arrears, for participation in activating measures, and to alleviate difficulties caused by overindebtedness or a sudden deterioration in the person's or family's financial situation.



vision of rehabilitation and assistive devices and institutional care.

The aim of social services for people with disabilities is to eradicate obstacles for the participation of disabled people, provide services and rehabilitation. The principle of the organisation of services is the primacy of universal services. For disabled people, however, special services for housing, assistive devices, transport and interpretation are available. The Finnish Services and Assistance for the Disabled Act has helped disabled persons to live and participate equally in society. The number of clients using services provided under the Act increased throughout the 1990s. The main reasons for this were the ageing of the population, a policy favouring outpatient care and independent coping by the disabled and the elderly, and an increased awareness of the need for better services for the disabled. The challenge here is to ensure equal availability and quality of services and support measures, regardless of the applicant's place of residence, type of disability or age. The scope of preventive social assistance was expanded with a

### Funding social services

Social services intended for all are mainly tax-funded and guaranteed equitably to everyone, regardless of domicile. Local authorities, which have a high degree of autonomy, are responsible for providing these services. They are financed out of local tax revenues, service charges and central government grants. Municipalities receive grants from the central government in order to enable them to arrange services they are obliged to provide. The criteria for state grants depend mostly on the number of children under the age of 7, people over 65 and the unemployment rate of the city. Since the 1990s the role of municipalities and of clients in funding social services has increased. The role of the state has decreased, causing problems for the municipalities that are not economically well off. Clients pay fees for the services they use. About 10% of the total costs are financed by the clients. Client fees are means-tested and they have a ceiling.

### The role of NGOs and the market sector

Non-state organizations in the social welfare and health care sectors have their role to play in producing social services, as do private companies in these sectors. The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland also plays a role in social welfare and health care policy. NGOs have had a key role in developing the services for special needs. In terms of overall cost, private companies provide about 5 per cent of social services and 16.5% of health care services. The figures for third-sector service providers are 17% and 3.4%, respectively. Local authorities are the main purchasers (about 80%) of privately provided social services. Other private welfare services supplement public services and bring special expertise to the service area.

The Slot Machine Association is an important source of funding for NGOs. Every year, over 1,100 organizations receive financing from the Association, covering over 1,000 development and experimental projects and some 400 investment projects. In addition to helping population groups requiring extensive support and help, NGOs also pay particular attention to the living conditions and safety of children and to the promotion of parenthood and helping families to cope in their work against social exclusion. Regional and local inequality trends are being monitored. Grants are allocated particularly to socio-economically weak areas, where problems have escalated.

### Present problems and future challenges

Finland's population will continue to grow for a couple of decades. The growth- and funding-related pressure on public expenditure caused by an increased demand for welfare services varies greatly by region due to the different age structures of their populations.

The socio-economic states of municipalities cause different choices for a strategy. Municipalities in trouble have three kinds of strategies to choose from: conscious combination of various resources, letting things go as they will, and a strategy based on the market. It is important to note that weak economy does not mean the existence of only one alternative. Municipalities at the crossroads have had the clearest tendency to

develop functional welfare-mix strategies with many actors. Progressing ones seem to favour a market-based system with strong public responsibility. Most producers of public services have many on-going development projects. The greatest benefit of such projects has been achieved in improving services qualitatively and in relation to their ability to respond to the users' needs. More and more often, public service producers evaluate their own work systematically. Such systematic evaluation is done least at social offices and health-care centres. About one third of social offices and 57% of health-care centres have systematic arrangements for facilitating user participation in their area<sup>1</sup>.

The National Development Programme for the Social Welfare Field is an important new programme from the Finnish government. The aim of the programme is to safeguard the availability of core services, issues of labour and working conditions in the field, and the development of service structure and functions. According to the objectives of the National Development Programme for the Social Welfare Field, the availability and quality of social welfare services must be improved, and social work reinforced. The number of personnel in services for the elderly will be increased with a view to achieving the level required by the quality recommendations on care for elderly people. Quality recommendations will also be drawn up for other special groups, and their implementation will be monitored.

The use of social and welfare centres of expertise is a further recent development in Finland. The main aim of the centres is to set up an active and permanent cooperative structure in all provinces of Finland, involving all municipalities, between the research and training activities and the practical work of local authorities.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Sociobarometer by the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health (2004).

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## News from the Observatory

### Evaluation workshop on the need of welfare partners and local and regional authorities for cooperation and consultation in four states of Central and Eastern Europe

This event, once again organised by the Diakonisches Werk of the Lutheran Church in Germany in cooperation with the Observatory, was a follow-up to the conference held by the same organisations in September 2001 on "Die EU-Osterweiterung: Chancen und Risiken für soziale Dienste. Eine deutsche Positionsbestimmung" (EU Enlargement: Chances and risks for social services. Defining a position in Germany). The objective of this workshop was to link the basic results of the earlier meeting to a concrete and topical practical reference, taking into account the results of the Observatory survey on the need for cooperation and consultation felt by providers of social services in EU accession countries, which was held in mid-2003. The event offered an opportunity to define the focal points of a desired cooperation, to uncover gaps in cooperation and consulting structures, and to create or expand a network involving the central organisations and their members in the non-profit and public area in Germany and in the countries that joined the EU in May 2004. As in other meetings – for instance the series of meetings called "the social dialogue in Central Europe", organised by the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth – the Berlin workshop in December 2003 was also able to contribute to establish or strengthen dialogue structures for the improvement of cross-border cooperation – and thus indirectly for the support of the civil society in the EU accession countries. A documentation of this event has been available since August 2004.

### Survey on the demand for cooperation and consultation among providers of social services in EU accession countries

Working Paper No. 11 "Befragung zum Kooperations- und Beratungsbedarf mit Trägern sozialer Dienste in den EU-Beitrittsstaaten Polen, Slowakei, Tschechische Republik und Ungarn" ("Survey on the demand for cooperation and consul-

tation among social service providers in the accession countries Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary") by Beatrix Holzer of the Monitoring Unit, written in German, has meanwhile been supplemented by Working Paper No. 14 "Inquiry about the demand for cooperation and consulting among social service providers in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia" – edited by Kathrin Komp, Monitoring Unit and reflecting and summarising, in English, central passages of Working Paper No. 11. Both papers describe the concept and implementation of the 2003 survey of the same name conducted by the Observatory in close cooperation with the German federations of non-statutory welfare associations and a number of selected local government authorities together with their partner organisations and/or cities in the four countries mentioned. They report on the main results of the survey by comparing the countries involved as well as various types of providers; they also formulate conclusions and outline possible steps towards more cooperation, consultation and networking.

### Open method of coordination in the field of health and elderly/long-term care

Supplement 33 (2005) of the Zeitschrift für öffentliche und gemeinwirtschaftliche Unternehmen (ZögU), which will be published in May 2005, will include an article by Mathias Maucher of the Monitoring Unit entitled "Die Offene Methode der Koordinierung als neuartiges Verfahren der Politiksteuerung und -koordination in Europa und ihre Ausgestaltung für das Feld 'Gesundheit und Alten-/Langzeitpflege'" (The open method of coordination as a new process for governance and policy coordination in Europe and its application to the area of 'health and elderly/long-term care'). The open method of coordination (OMC) represents a new instrument of policy coordination in the European Union. In a dynamic process, this instrument of governance has – since the beginning of 2001 – been applied to an increasing number of areas; since 2003 its application has been extended to also include the field of 'health and elderly/long-term care'. The article describes the concept and central issues involved in the OMC in general as well as with a special focus on the above-named policy area. It explains the basic features of the system in its practical imple-

## D a t e s

December

### 2/Berlin, Germany:

Conference of EU family ministers on "Family means Future – Joint Family Policy Thrust in the EU" Information: Dr. Martina Gräfin von Bassewitz, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) phone +49-30-2 06 55-16 12 E-mail: [martina.bassewitz@bmfjsfj.bund.de](mailto:martina.bassewitz@bmfjsfj.bund.de)

### 7/Brussels, Belgium:

Conference on "European Social Insurance Systems" Information: European Social Insurance Partners (ESIP), <http://www.esip.org>

### 9-12/Florence, Italy:

2nd conference within the scope of the series "From Immigration Politics to Migration Management – Changes in Migration Management": European and National Management of Immigration Flows, EUROFOR (European Research Forum on Migration and Ethnic Relations) in collaboration with the European Commission Information: Bastian Vollmer, Berliner Institut für vergleichende Sozialforschung (BIVS) phone +49-30-44 65 10 65 fax +49-30-4 44 10 85 E-mail: [bastian.vollmer@emz-berlin.de](mailto:bastian.vollmer@emz-berlin.de) <http://www.emz-berlin.de>

### 10-11/Berlin, Germany:

Congress on "The Future of Justice – Challenges and Guidelines for the Social State in 2020", organised by the Heinrich Böll Foundation Information: E-mail: [zukunft@boell.de](mailto:zukunft@boell.de) <http://www.boell.de/arbeits>

January

### 26-31/Porto Alegre, Brazil:

World Social Forum; Information: <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/home.asp>

April

### 21-22/Hanover, Germany:

"Europäische Perspektiven – Kontext Europa", 12th annual conference of the German Society for Quality Management in Healthcare Provision (Gesellschaft für Qualitätsmanagement in der Gesundheitsversorgung), organised jointly with the European Society for Quality in Healthcare (ESQH) Information: <http://www.gqmg.de>

May

### 23-25/Nicosia, Cyprus

European seminar on "social work 2005: Social Work Challenges for Social Cohesion", organised jointly by the Cyprus Association of Social Workers (CyASW), the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the European Association of Schools of Social Work and Social Work Educators (EASSW); Information: phone +357-25 72 05 54 E-mail: [socialwork2005@congresswise.com](mailto:socialwork2005@congresswise.com) <http://www.socialwork2005.org>

June

### 1-3/Lucerne, Switzerland:

Conference on "The Future of the European Social Model", organised by the Swiss Conference for Social Welfare (SKOS) and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)/European Region Information: <http://www.icsw.socialswitzerland-socialurope.org>

mentation and the role of the significant members at EU level as well as in the member states. It formulates an initial evaluation of the current challenges involved in the implementation of the OMC, both in terms of contents and themes.

## Current events

### Conference proceedings

The documentation package for the 76th German Welfare Congress, which took place in Freiburg i. Br. in 2003, includes on pp. 306-352 the proceedings of the international segment of the conference, which was held as a special Observatory event in collaboration with the Council of Europe under the title "Forms of user participation in planning, delivery and evaluation of Social Services".

The publication (in German) is available in PDF form at <http://www.deutscher-verein.de/veranstaltungen/012-kongresse/fuersorgetag/pdf/fuersorgetag.pdf>.

Workshop on "Neue Partnerschaften in einer erweiterten EU: Voneinander lernen – Soziale Infrastrukturen stärken. Ein Auswertungsworkshop zum Kooperations- und Beratungsbedarf von Wohlfahrts-Partnern und Kommunen in Polen, in der Slowakei, in der Tschechischen Republik und in Ungarn/New Partnerships in an Enlarged EU: Learning from one another – Strengthening social infrastructures. A workshop analysing the needs for cooperation and consultation as perceived by the individual bodies of social services in the accession countries Poland, Slovakia, the

Czech Republic and Hungary”, 8 December 2003, Berlin

Workshop on “Gemeinwohlbezogene soziale Dienste in der Europäischen Union – ihre besonderen Charakteristika, ihre Leistungsfähigkeit und Rahmenbedingungen der Dienstleistungserbringung/ Social Services of General Interest in the European Union – Assessing their Specificities, Potential and Needs/Les services sociaux d’intérêt général dans l’Union européenne – leurs particularités, leurs performances et les conditions cadre de leur prestation”, 28-29 June 2004, Brussels

### Working papers

**Working Paper No. 14:** “Inquiry about the demand for cooperation and consulting among social service providers in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia”. Beatrix Holzer, Kathrin Komp. September 2004

*All Observatory publications can be downloaded as PDF files from <http://www.soziale-dienste-in-europa.de> under the menu item “Veröffentlichungen”. If available, hard copies may be ordered (address information in the imprint section).*

### Other new publications on topics of interest to the Observatory

Within the scope of the international project on “Training for the social professions in Europe”, the first volume, including nine country reports in German or English, was published in May 2004: Franz Hamburger/Sandra Hirschler/Günther Sander/Manfred Wöbcke (eds.): *Ausbildung für soziale Berufe in Europa*. Vol. 1 with contributions about Iceland, Estonia, Lithuania, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Serbia, Turkey and Portugal. Reports on the structure of training for the social professions, on the contents and disciplines involved, on the study areas and possible fields of specialisation. ISS-Pontifex 1/2004, 240 pages, ISBN 3-88493-186-5. May be ordered for € 12,40 from ISS (address information in the imprint section).

Proceedings of the hearing of the Federal Association for Workers’ Welfare (Arbeiterwohlfahrt, AWO) on “Soziale Dienste und Wettbe-

werb in Europa” (Social services and competition in Europe), 13 May 2004, Frankfurt am Main, published in September 2004 in the series “Theorie und Praxis”. The hearing was about solidarity-based services of public interest and a) their civil society and social function, and the guarantee of welfare and quality of social services, b) market and competition, legal and financial conditions. The event, which was attended by social scientists and other professional experts, serves as a basis for the further development of the AWO federation and for contributions on the evolution of discussions on social services in Europe. The proceedings include an executive summary in English; they can be ordered from AWO, FB Internationales, Ms. Kampmann Phone: +49-2 28/66 85-2 30 [http://www.awo.org/pub/soz\\_pol/europa/soz\\_wettbewerb/view](http://www.awo.org/pub/soz_pol/europa/soz_wettbewerb/view)

The 5th Framework Programme of the European Commission launched several projects that are relevant for the work of the Observatory, amongst them PROCARE and SOCCARE. The “Providing Integrated Health and Social Care for Older Persons” project was coordinated by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna. It considers long-term care with a focus on the interfaces between different kinds of health and social services. To gain a European perspective, partners from nine countries were involved, among them Germany, France and Italy. The respective publication, edited by Kai Leichsenring and Andy M. Alaszewski, February 2004, centres on successful and long-lasting innovations in modes of organisation, finance and professional collaboration observed in Europe over the last decade. Further information is available under [www.euro.centre.org/procare](http://www.euro.centre.org/procare). The second project mentioned, SOCCARE, compares informal and formal social care arrangements for young children and older people. Coordinated by the Department of Social Policy and Social Work of the University of Tampere (Finland), it examined the situation in five different countries. The final report “Families, Work and Social Care in Europe – A qualitative study of care arrangements in Finland, France, Italy, Portugal and the UK” can be accessed at <http://www.uta.fi/>

[laitokset/sospol/soccare/report6.pdf](http://laitokset/sospol/soccare/report6.pdf).

Adalbert Evers/Jean-Louis Laville (eds.), “The Third Sector in Europe”, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2004.

### News update

#### New address for ISS and the Monitoring Unit

On 1 October 2004, the Institute for Social Work and Social Education – and with it the Monitoring Unit of the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe, moved into new premises. We are still in Frankfurt. Our new address is Zeilweg 42, 60439 Frankfurt am Main. Our telephone numbers and e-mail addresses have remained unchanged.

#### Maternity leave substitute for Beatrix Holzer

Since February 2004, the Monitoring Unit at the Institute for Social Work and Social Education has been receiving the support of Kathrin Komp. She has been replacing Beatrix Holzer, who currently is on parental leave.



*Ms. Komp has a degree in home economics and is currently studying political science. She has studied i. a. at the universities of Giessen, Leipzig and Smolensk (Russia). Her work focuses on the areas of health, long-term and palliative care as well as on the civil society.*

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