



News Letter

1/2001

Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe

Services of general interest and quality in a social Europe

In Germany, non-government social welfare associations significantly contribute towards ensuring that a nation-wide network of high-quality and universally accessible social services is in place. For Germans, the term "Daseinsvorsorge", or services of general interest, implies the guaranteed provision and ongoing improvement of a pluralist array of services by non-profit entities that affords anyone seeking assistance the maximum choice. In recent years, discussions on the application of the provisions governing the Single Market have shown that the special status of the non-governmental social welfare associations in Europe is not unchallenged. Apart from the alleged or actual effects of European law, a major prerequisite for safeguarding the special status of non-profit providers lies in responding to the challenges associated with the term "quality". An even more client-oriented definition of quality, one that would render the specific values underlying a charitable philosophy comprehensible and tangible, could decisively contribute to securing their future.

In all Member States, social services are largely local and integrated in a system with a background in the country's history. They are subject to the jurisdiction of the individual Member States or their regional authorities. In addition to national tasks, social ser-

vices also take on European functions. The Member States are obliged to pursue the aims and tasks of the European Union as enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty.

These include a high level of social protection, equality between men and women, the raising of the standard and quality of living and economic and social cohesion. Social services are predominantly regulated by national policies. In addition, they are directly or indirectly affected by a number of community policies in other areas of responsibility.

These mutual dependencies and relations lead me to state that social protection systems, including social services, will only be able to deliver what Europe expects of them if individual Member States are free to organise their national services of general interest. In Germany, this leeway must necessarily also be granted to municipal authorities and state governments. Strengthening economic and social cohesion is one of the central tasks of the European Union. The EU already has significant instruments with which it contributes to fulfilling this task. The main responsibility for social policy, however, continues to lie first and foremost with the individual Member States. But because EU-wide social policies are increasing in significance, and because a number of other EU policies can have indirect but nonetheless important impacts on the social players in the Member States, a clear-cut and

co-ordinated European policy is of utmost importance. As partners of the national governments and European institutions, social organisations are important social policy players that take part in shaping both national and European welfare state structures. They have a right to expect predictable policies and legal certainty at national and European levels.

The quality and peculiarities of the products delivered by providers of social services are closely connected to their political classification. The competition-centred debate on services of general interest must be complemented by a pan-European specialist debate that will clearly demonstrate the value and importance of social services for all population groups. This is precisely what the Commission has been saying on the subject of quality in its Communication on Services of General Interest. This Communication explains that the Treaty must be applied in such a way as to ensure the provision of services of general interest corresponding to the needs of the users and the population at large, in terms of both quality and price.

Unremunerated and voluntary commitment as a central element of the activities and services of non-profit agencies is by no means a negligible side effect but indeed a constitutive element of our national system of general interest services. This is also true of the role of the federations of non-government social welfare associa-

Editorial

DEAR READER,

2001 IS THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF VOLUNTEERS. ACCORDING TO A REPRESENTATIVE SURVEY COMMISSIONED BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS, SENIOR CITIZENS, WOMEN AND YOUTH, SOME 22 MILLION PEOPLE IN GERMANY ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN A VOLUNTARY OR HONORARY CAPACITY FOR VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS, CLUBS, SELF-HELP PROJECTS OR ACTION GROUPS. IN THE SOCIAL FIELD – ONE OF THE MANY AREAS WHERE VOLUNTARY WORK TAKES PLACE – THE STATUS OF NON-GOVERNMENT SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS IS, TO A LARGE EXTENT, SHAPED BY THE MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES OF THESE VOLUNTEERS. VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT ALSO PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY. BUT WHERE IS THIS CIVIL SOCIETY HEADING TO? THIS IS A QUESTION EXAMINED BY GISA HAAS IN THE GUEST COLUMN, WHERE SHE TAKES A CLOSER LOOK AT THE POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF TODAY'S VOLUNTARY WORK. THE OBSERVATORY SEES VOLUNTARY WORK AS A HIGHLY VISIBLE SEGMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO EXPLICIT ACCOUNT IN THE OBSERVATORY'S WORK. (CF. MAIN REPORT).

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

tions as advocates of the disadvantaged, a role which in Germany has its roots in the country's history.

They afford an indispensable framework for civic commitment. This is something the Commission must also take into account as it fulfils the mandate of Nice to provide for greater legal certainty in this area.

High-quality services can never be had at dumping prices. Moreover, they are politically desired in the Member States. This must be acknowledged by the European Union.

Unfettered liberalisation is not a proper means of securing quality. Human affection, involvement, quality of life and human integrity are what I consider the essential dimensions of a future-oriented definition of quality. It goes without saying that the time input this involves cannot be had for free. Economic considerations are intended as a way of conserving ever tighter resources while quality focuses primarily on the professional character of the services. Politics has the task of connecting these two poles. Against this background, social work must urgently be made the subject of an aggressive quality debate. What we are looking for is an accepted and transparent definition of the necessary quality benchmark. The quality debate thus has the important function of supporting the political discourse as a corrective element against a course of one-sided cost-cutting.

If we want to give non-profit providers of social services the possibility of asserting themselves by way of high quality in Europe as well as at their own national level, then we must also ensure that they retain fair framework conditions, even though continuance cannot be guaranteed (in the context of German corporativism – ed.). The national freedom to organise services of general interest may neither be shifted to a European level nor be sacrificed to pure cost considerations. Let us take the debate on the quality

of our social services towards Europe!

Peter Haupt
State Secretary of the Federal Ministry
for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth

Guest column

Quo vadis civil society?

The risks and prospects of voluntary work today

Voluntary work is defined as one of the central components of political action. Consequently, the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 hopes to encourage, on a lasting basis, all social groups to support voluntary work and self-help.

Late in 1999, the German Parliament decided to establish its own "commission of inquiry on the future of civic commitment". The commission's mandate is to explore fields of political action which will lead to improved conditions for civic commitment.

Is this public interest an expression of the state's desire to trim the ostensibly no longer affordable costs of the welfare state at the expense of voluntary work? Or is it the sign of a emboldened civil society, of a new civic awareness?

Voluntary work today substantiates the existence of a social ambit distinct from the concepts of market, competition and globalisation, and this not only in the German discussion. We may be witnessing the evolution of a new set of socio-political goals, a consensus-oriented, pluralistic world where mature, self-assured citizens live and work according to Hegel's motto: "If I further my end, I further the ends of the universal, and this in turn furthers my end." Besides expressing a strong emancipatory ethos, Hegel's words also have overtones of nostalgia for an ideal civil society, and it is all too easy to see the volunteer as a post-modern social revolutionary and bearer of salvation.



Honorary work can be a tricky issue to discuss, and it is a good idea to begin by asking volunteers how they see themselves.

Viewed from inside by the protagonists themselves, civic commitment is the self-determined expression of a person and of his or her individual interests. The autonomy of this person's actions should not be monopolised in any one direction: the volunteer wants to maintain his or her independence vis-à-vis government, industry, associations and large organisations. It is the individual who takes on honorary or voluntary work; to stay with Hegel, it is particularity expressing itself and expecting from universality – society, the state – nothing more than a framework and recognition.

Nevertheless, voluntary work also feels the impact of increasing diversification in our modern pluralist society. The differences between the various realms of life within any one society are already greater than those between different nationalities. Voluntary work, in its contentual substance and organisational forms, is a reflection of this development.

The forms taken by voluntary work in the individual EU states range from models closer to the traditional forms of honorary involvement (such as in Belgium) to the establishment of new, flexible and highly autonomous forms, as has been the case in the Netherlands. What has been particularly conspicuous has been the dynamics and the immediacy with which the structures of civic commitment in Europe have been evolving.

Voluntary work is the place where civil society is born, where society renews itself. New forms of voluntary work create a future in society.

As a result, voluntary work finds itself at the overlap of the debate on the third sector and the economisation of social services, of the re-examination of the role of civil society and the re-structuring of the welfare state. In spite of and indeed because of its very autonomy, civic commitment is related and linked to all social areas – but the views being expressed in these various discussions should be weighed carefully.

Now that the term "civil society" has become a buzz word, it is used as an umbrella by many: all kinds of associations, trade unions and social institutions who hope that the label will secure their social influence describe themselves as the pillars of organised civil society.

Nowadays, no praise of voluntary work is ever without a certain element of self-interest.

Using honorary and voluntary helpers has become a central element in the model concept of social institutions and welfare associations. Welfare organisations depict voluntary work as a bulwark against economisation and competition – as evidence that welfare systems are indeed part of the third sector, of civil society. For example, one prospect which could affect both the central federations of welfare organisations and social services institutions and which is growing out of the EU debate on services of general interest is a potential separation between economic activity and social advocacy/civic commitment.

At the same time, growing cost pressures resulting from the economisation process will undoubtedly force social services to increase their efforts to attract volunteers. They will also, however, have to create conditions under which these efforts can succeed, as volunteers do not see their activity as a means of reducing the

cost pressures of a social institution.

Professionalisation in the area of social services has, on the other hand, often caused social institutions which had been supported largely by voluntary work to lose this honorary potential: as institutions become better established, voluntary work turns into gainful employment.

The increased import of competition in the social services also means that innovation becomes a more and more significant factor. This is a responsibility which could increasingly be taken over by volunteers. Voluntary commitment creates new social services (women's refuges, action groups for foreigners, the hospice movement) and changes the profile of social services as a whole.

It is essential to develop this potential without falling prey to the danger of instrumentalisation. At the same time, the autonomy of voluntary work should be strengthened so that this type of activity can flourish for the enhancement of social services.

Gisa Haas
Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband
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For additional information please see www.freiwillig.de

Main report

Shaping Europe's social characteristics – opportunities and challenges

Review of the 75th German Welfare Conference

"Shaping Europe's social characteristics" – this was the motto of the 75th German Welfare Conference, which took place in Hamburg between 14 and 16 November 2000. This high-calibre congress, organised every three years by the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, was attended by some 1,500 experts from Germany, central and eastern Europe. Workshops, working groups and the plenary session gave politicians, scientists and social workers an opportunity



left: Karin Roth/ Senator for Work, Health and Social Affairs of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, right: Dr. Christine Bergmann/ Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

to discuss the prospects opening up for social work as a result of the European challenge. The underlying idea of the event was to see the European Union not only as a monetary and economic union, but also as a "social Europe" realised as a collective venture of equal partners.

"The peoples of Europe, in creating an ever closer union among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values. The Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity." With these words from the preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (EU), the



Opening ceremony

Photographer: H.U. Deicke

Chairman of the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, Dr. Konrad Deufel, opened the "social work summit" in Hamburg in November 2000. He called the current draft of Social Charter for the European Union the possible vision of basic social rights within a European constitution.

German President Johannes Rau described the welfare state as a major accomplishment in the history of civil communities in Europe, but an individual, he said, needed more than the help guaranteed under welfare state legislation. "He needs personal willingness to help, personal care." President Rau stressed that social work meant helping and sharing. "Person-to-person care remains decisive for a humane world."

Hamburg's mayor, Mr. Ortwin Runde, criticised EU attempts to open up services of general interest to competition. Reflecting the experience he had gathered as Hamburg's social senator, he summed up by saying "European standards or not, the issue here should not be one of levelling down". If there are social problems to be solved, it is the people at local level who really know what is needed.

Dr. Christine Bergmann, German Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, stressed the need to give Europe a social character – with people and for people. What Europe needed, she said, was a return to the principles of welfare state and social justice. Dr. Bergmann under-



from left to right: Ortwin Runde/Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Dr. Christine Bergmann/Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Dr. Johannes Rau/President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Konrad Deufel/Chairman of the German Association for Public and Private Welfare

lined the changes in work relationships, in the contract between the generations and in family and gender relationships. She stressed that the state was not able to establish social justice on its own, and that all relevant social protagonists should shoulder their share of this responsibility.

Will there be a European welfare state?

The Welfare Conference took place amid special suspense surrounding the upcoming EU summit, which was to be held some three weeks later in Nice. In addition to topics such as



the influence of individual states and the speed of expansion, the Nice agenda also included discussions on the future of social security in Europe. On the issue of whether there would ever be a European welfare state, Prof. Dr. Hans F. Zacher of the Munich-based Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Social Law outlined the forms taken by the welfare state concept in the various countries of Europe. Europe's multi-level policy should, he said, be taken seriously in its reality. European developments had made social policy more exciting, but also more strenuous.

Ten discussion topics covering the multifaceted range of social work in Europe

As always, the second day of the German Welfare Conference offered a broad spectrum of topics to encourage even more intensive discussion on the range of social work being offered. Fundamental issues on the future of social work and social security in Europe were divided into the following areas:

- Contours of European social policy and European social legislation
- Poverty and social security
- Children, adolescents and families in Europe
- Youth unemployment as a European challenge
- European policy on people with disabilities
- On the road to an intercultural society
- Socio-spatial approaches to elderly care
- Motives and conditions of voluntary commitment
- Quality development and quality standards: a European comparison
- Social development in central and eastern Europe

Municipal and non-profit social services as a component of general-interest services in Europe

In a special event hosted by the Observatory, participants discussed the development of social services in Europe. Within the scope of a joint project of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, of the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and of the Institute for Social Work and Social Education, experts from several EU member states and candidate states discussed the significance of social services and their prospects for further development.

Fundamental social rights and social protection for Europe

The conference closed with a discussion on the current situation and future prospects of social protection in Europe. Prof. Dr. Dieter Grimm of Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin made a presentation on the problems involved in creating and standardising fundamental social rights in Europe.

The possibilities offered by a unified Europe will also play a role at the next "social work summit". The 76th German Welfare Conference is due to take place in Freiburg im Breisgau between 7 and 9 May 2003.

The collected papers of the 75th German Welfare Conference are due to be published

in April 2001. This documentation will include papers read in plenary sessions as well as papers and reports from the ten discussion groups. Advance orders may be placed at the following address: Eigenverlag des Deutschen Vereins für öffentliche und private Fürsorge, Am Stockborn 1-3, 60439 Frankfurt am Main, Phone: +49-69-9 58 07-01, Fax: +49-69-9 58 07-1 63.

Sabine Moray

European integration as a challenge: role and reform of social services in Germany

On 7 and 8 December 2000, the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe at the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (ISS) hosted a scientific colloquium attended by social scientists from various disciplines – sociologists, political scientists, economists, educationalists and social workers. The 35 participants also included officials of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and representatives of welfare associations.

Interest in this topic has intensified since the establishment of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) with the Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam. EMU has been and continues to be a factor bringing EU members ever closer together. And although the Treaty of Amsterdam has left social policy and social legislation under the control of individual member states, it can be assumed that Europeanisation will soon be felt in these areas as well. As a result, the EU legislative framework will also affect the provision of social services and, in the near future, give increased significance to the issues of freedom of competition and establishment and economisation of social services. One thing is certain: in future there will be different national systems competing against each other. And as Europe grows closer to-

gether, the relationship of public and private welfare institutions to the market will be redefined. But increasing Europeanisation has not been the only factor drawing social services into the limelight of public discussion. Discussion on the role of social services in shaping the welfare state, their significance and organisation as an element of the service society and their function in a vigorous civil society has also been gaining momentum.

The objective of the colloquium was to discuss the sometimes very different role descriptions, reform conditions and reform expectations with regard to social services. Discussion was structured around three main themes: "Welfare society", "Service society" and "Civil society". The intention was to take a critical look at the present and to outline the challenges and needs for reform in the future.

The following paragraphs will review some of the important aspects discussed during the colloquium.

Prof. Rudolf Bauer of the University of Bremen began his introductory paper by giving a definition of social services (cf. also the more detailed presentation in Newsletter 1/2000, p. 6). The question of whether the term "social services" could be used only where such services are provided by gainfully employed, full-time professionals led to particularly controversial discussion in connection with the debate on civic commitment. Prof. Bauer sees European integration as an opportunity, especially when the discussion of how to shape welfare society, service society and civil society is broadened to include the issue of democratic society. This normative demand must also find an expression in the development taken by social services. The question of democracy often comes up in debates on concepts surrounding the issue of civil society. The ambiguities contained in this concept were the subject of the talk by Prof. Ruth Simsa of the Vienna University of Economics and



Business Administration. In spite of the democratising effect of protagonists who are not organised along government or market lines, ideas about civil society should not be functionalised to legitimise a dismantling of the welfare state. The state would therefore have to create or foster conditions favouring the development of civil society activities and their impact.

Prof. Micha Brumlik of the University of Frankfurt also dealt with the topic of civil society. He focused on a discussion of the American concept of communitarianism and had a critical look at whether this concept could be transferred to a European or German context.

Prof. Antonin Wagner of New School University in New York examined the question of whether there is a typical European welfare state. He observed that a basically recognisable "communitarian" welfare state was in the process of emerging, particularly when contrasting Europe and the USA. Prof. Wagner formulated the task facing European states as being the urgent need to release the necessary reform forces through decentralisation of their administrations, reinforcement of the subsidiarity principle and co-operation with intermediate institutions.

Prof. Pankoke of the University of Essen drew parallels between the development of the welfare state after the establishment of the German Empire in 1871 and the evolution of a European social union. Whether the European Charter of Fundamental Rights sub-

stantiated the existence of a European community of values was one of the questions he examined; he contrasted the historical demand for the creation of an Empire from within with the necessity of effecting what is also an internal European social union and the importance of not leaving it to law dogmatists and government penny-pinchers to cope with this question.

Prof. Susanne Schunter-Kleemann of the Bremen University of Applied Sciences looked at gender-specific effects of European employment and social policies. She criticised the fact that most EU social security systems fail to offer sufficient protection for a large and growing group of persons, and in particular, that they fail to prevent poverty among women. She said that promotion of employment should be given priority over policies fostering stability and demanded an overall increased sensitivity to gender-specific issues within the discussion on shaping the welfare state.

Prof. Mariele Karsten of the University of Lüneburg focused on the development of qualification and manpower requirements in person-related service professions, here again from a gender-specific point of view. She noted that with person-related services being highly dissimilar in name, description and statistical classification, a uniform employment market would first have to be created. In view of the lack of uniformity in Germany alone, the situation could be described as significantly complicated by the variety of different systems in Europe.

Prof. Schaarschuch of the University of Wuppertal also dealt with the concept of the service society, looking particularly at the user/demand side. He also examined issues of participation and democratisation, e. g. complaint management. An important research topic which he saw as emerging is the question of the direct practical value of social services for their users.

The colloquium concluded with a discussion critically examining the various role descriptions and reform potentials. An important issue here was the "question of democracy", which focused on aspects such as participation in and access to social services. The overall conclusion was that dialogue on the topic of social services should be encouraged and that the bonds between politics, work in the field and research should be strengthened.

The papers of the colloquium will be published in book form in the spring of 2001. Next year's scientific colloquium will continue the discussion at European level.

Dr. Georg Albers

Social services – a driving force behind social development

At the International Conference on Social Welfare in Cape Town/South Africa, the German Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Dr. Christine Bergmann, emphasised the special role of social services for social development in Europe.

Between 23 and 27 October 2000, more than 750 participants from over 80 countries took part in the conference on "Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Development: Challenges for the 21st Century" held in Cape Town/South Africa and organised by the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW). As one of its main topics, the conference examined the positive and negative impacts of globalisation and of diverse econo-

mic policies on social development. In her address, the Federal Minister made it clear that real economic progress in a globalised world could not be achieved without progress in the social area as well. She explained that part of a knowledge-based economy involved the new goal of strengthening employment, economic reform and social cohesion in our societies. Europeans, Dr. Bergmann said, could achieve this goal by modernising the European social model, increasing investment in people and combating social exclusion – all issues where social services have a particular role to play. Social services are an essential factor to secure social integration and participation and prevent social exclusion. They also help increase the productivity of employment, cut unemployment, and promote the equality and the status of women. In the overall development process, social services thus represent a vital element of every country's social development. In an effort to take this importance into account, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has established the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe. This institution's main tasks are to offer comparable empirical data and information in the field of social services in Europe, to focus exchange of opinions and experiences, and to ensure that the results of such exchanges reach policy-makers in Germany. The overall aims and initial findings of the Observatory were presented by Beatrix Holzer at the workshop on "Social Services and Transformation", which was attended mostly by representatives of western, central and eastern European countries. All in all, the conference offered experts from NGOs, the academic community and government circles an excellent platform to face the challenging issues of social development in the early 21st century. Additional information and papers can be found at www.icsw.org.

Beatrix Holzer

Social services in Europe

Range and organisational forms of social services

Social services are a relatively new area of comparative research into the welfare state, having only recently opened up to this type of observation.



As a result, institutions providing care for the elderly and for children and offering their services to large population groups have come into the limelight of researchers' interest.

Social services for the elderly are now well established in their own right in nearly all European countries. By and large, providing care for the elderly is seen as a task for society as a whole. As more and more old and very old people need care, providing and financing nursing services will constitute an ever growing problem. Some European countries have developed like strategies to cope with rising demand: diversifying the range of services offered, developing mobile services, privatising services, etc. Nevertheless, the range and organisation of social services continue to vary from country to country. In Scandinavia, social services for the elderly are broadly available on both in and out-patient basis; in Southern European countries, the range of services offered is quite small, while other EU countries are somewhere in between, with Great Britain and the Netherlands offering a relatively high degree of care. Child care is not considered to be a public task in all coun-

tries; the range of services offered is good only in terms of institutions focusing on socialisation, or in countries with high numbers of working women. Services for children under three vary substantially from country to country. The Scandinavian countries, Belgium and France offer a relatively broad range of services for this target group, other countries much less. For children between three and six, Belgium, France, Italy and Spain offer the broadest range of services, particularly with regard to nursery schools; the Scandinavian countries somewhat less. Other countries, particularly Ireland and Great Britain, do not offer much. The differences in this age group are less marked than for younger children.

The increase in child-care services and services to the elderly has been accompanied by growing pluralism in provider structures. Seen in a historical context, voluntary organisations were mostly the ones to take on pioneer functions in the provision of social services, often paving the way for publicly funded programmes. In countries like Germany, Belgium and France, non-profit organisations have established themselves as partners of the public entities financing such services, while in others, e.g. England, they are less closely integrated into the public system and offer complementary functions in problem-group care. In the Scandinavian countries, where most services tend to be offered by public authorities, non-profit organisations have concentrated on lobbying activities. More recently, commercial providers have been increasing their activities in the field of social services. In many countries, commercial providers have become more numerous in the area of simpler forms of assistance, e.g. household services for persons in need of care. There are also increasing numbers of commercial providers of in-patient facilities for the elderly – in England and Germany for instance. However, data on current trends in the area of commercial service providers have not

yet been fully recorded for statistical purposes.

According to our analysis of the forms of services provided and of their financing structures, there are four types of systems in Europe: the Scandinavian countries with their highly developed public systems for children and the elderly, the southern European countries with less developed systems, a liberal regime providing basic services for the elderly, and a middle-European conservative regime characterised by the relatively high, institutionalised participation of non-profit organisations. The countries where this conservative regime prevails, however, are quite different from each other in terms of the level of social services for children and the relative significance of non-profit organisations.

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News from the Observatory

Project report: ESSIS

One of the Observatory's ongoing tasks is to carry out basic research on social services in Europe – examining aspects such as organisational forms, financing, legal basis, range of services provided, numbers of employees, and many other quantitative and qualitative factors. The problem is that there is hardly any comparable, reliable and systematic information on social services in Europe. There are plenty of statistics and data on individual aspects, but no Europe-wide comparison.

In an effort to build a foundation upon which concepts can be developed and social policy decisions based, the Observatory at the ISS has launched the ESSIS project. The acronym stands for European Social Services Information System. The basic task of the ESSIS project is to establish a user-friendly information system on social services in Europe which will enable researchers

to make statements on central elements.

The problems of such a venture are obvious: first of all, arriving at a uniform definition of what is meant by social services and what exactly they involve is difficult even the level of the individual countries. At a European level, the problem becomes even more complex. It would therefore appear that developing shared definitions and classifications is true pioneering work, and we see it as being essential not only for scientific reasons, but also to guarantee adequate political communication and facilitate decision-making.

Of course, a project of this type must adopt a European approach right from the start. We have therefore set up a consortium covering the various regions and welfare state systems. The following institutions are working on this project:

- Sweden, National Board on Health and Welfare,
- Czech Republic, Charles University, Prague,
- Italy, Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale
- France, Université IX Dauphine Paris
- Great Britain, London School of Economics and Political Science,
- Germany, Mannheim Centre for European Social Research.

The project is run and co-ordinated by the Observatory at the ISS in close collaboration with Prof. Helmut K. Anheier of the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Two conferences held to get the project off to a good start took place in the year 2000. The first, which was held in April, focused on developing a concept and formulating the basic orientation of the project. The second conference was already able to tackle issues of actual content.

Important contributions were made by Prof. Tridi Knijn of the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands – "Privatisation and marketisa-

tion" – by Prof. Jane Lewis of Oxford University – "Family services" – and by Prof. Martin Knapp of the London School of Economics – "Mixed economy of care".

In addition to these fundamental topics, the participating countries submitted reports on the development of their social services and on their assessment of the availability and quality of existing data.

The conference papers will be published in book form in spring 2001 as the project's first report. The Newsletter will cover the project's progress and results on a regular basis.

Dr. Georg Albers

Conference: "Social Exclusion and New Social Risks in a Changing Society"

On 31 May 2001, the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the German Association for Public and Private Welfare will be hosting a conference on the topic of "Social Exclusion and New Social Risks in a Changing Society – the Future of Social Services in Europe". The conference, organised within the scope of the activities of the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe, will be taking place at Bank für Sozialwirtschaft in Berlin.

Even in Europe, social exclusion resulting from any of several factors is a serious, continuing problem for which no solution has yet been found. This was explicitly acknowledged by the Council of Europe at its Lisbon meeting.

Knowledge society, technological progress, globalisation, service society, high mobility and an employment market changing at breathtaking speed – these are factors which for individuals and for specific groups in Europe mean not only remarkable opportunities but also new risks both in terms of work and in various aspects of their personal lives. Battling social exclusion with

various means is one of the main tasks of the EU and its member states. Institutions providing social services are among the main sources of measures and ideas to prevent social exclusion and encourage the reintegration of affected individuals or groups. Experience has shown, however, that these goals are not being fully attained and that there is great need for innovative approaches. The future of social services in Europe is closely linked to the continuing problem of social exclusion and to the new social risks evolving in a rapidly changing Europe.

The aim of the conference is to discuss with top-ranking European experts various exclusion mechanisms from the point of view of those they affect and to examine new risks and their interaction with social services. The conference language will be German. Invited speakers will include experts from the central federations of non-governmental social welfare organisations and from other associations working in the sphere of social services, representatives of municipal organisations, the Bundestag, government ministries and other bodies involved in social policy and social administration as well as academics and researchers. The conference will also be attended by german-speaking experts from other European countries and by representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament and selected member states.

After the conference, the Observatory will publish the conference papers together with statements and discussion contributions.

Additional details are available from Verena Hausen, office of the co-ordination group, German Association for Public and Private Welfare, Am Stockborn 1-3, D-60439 Frankfurt a. M., E-mail: hausen.observatorium@deutscher-verein.de

Verena Hausen

D a t e s t o r e m e m b e r

May

3-4/Braunschweig:

2nd socio-economic congress on "Strategische Unternehmensentwicklung in der Sozialwirtschaft" (Strategic corporate development in the social economy), Bank für Sozialwirtschaft, Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege.

Information: AWO-Akademie Helene Simon, Bonn
Phone: +49-2 28-66 85-0
E-mail: woy@awobu.awo.org

18-19/Göteborg, Sweden: "European NGO Forum" on the occasion of the Swedish presidency of the Council; seven topics including "NGOs and Social Welfare".

Information: www.ngo-2001.org

31/Berlin:

Conference on "Soziale Ausgrenzung und neue soziale Risiken in einer sich wandelnden Gesellschaft – die Zukunft der sozialen Dienste in Europa" (Social exclusion and new social risks in a changing society – the future of social services in Europe).

Information: Verena Hausen or Dirk Jarré, German Association for Public and Private Welfare
Am Stockborn 1-3
D-60439 Frankfurt am Main
Phone: +49-69-9 58 07-1 33

June

6-8/Göteborg, Sweden:

9th annual European Social Network conference on "European Social Services".

Information: European Social Network, Southpoint, 8 Paston Place, GB-Brighton, BN2 1HA, Great Britain,
E-mail: info@socialeurope.com

7-9/Lodz, Poland:

Conference on "Theoretical Approach in Social Work Education", organised by the European Association of Schools of Social Work.

Information: spolecz@krysia.uni.lodz.pl (e-mail), or www.uni.lodz.pl (web page)

29-30/Berlin:

Congress on "Bürgerschaft, Öffentlichkeit und Demokratie in Europa" (Civil society, the public sphere and democracy in Europe), organised by Arbeitskreis Soziale Bewegungen in der deutschen Vereinigung für Politische Wissenschaft im Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung.

Information: www.zivilgesellschaft.de/archiv/Kongress%202001.htm or ansгар.klein@snaufu.de

August

27-30/Vienna and Bratislava:

European seminar of the

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) "Managing Conflicts in social Work – Dealing with Contradictions".

Information: Austrian Association of Social Workers,
Phone: +43-15-87 46 56
E-mail: oebds@ins.at
Internet: www.sozialarbeit.at

September

15-20/Exeter, UK:

Conference on "Social Capital: interdisciplinary perspectives", European Science Foundation.
Information: www.esf.org

20-21/Frankfurt:

"Das Konzept der Zivilgesellschaft – ein Reformweg für den Sozialstaat? – deutsche und europäische Perspektiven" (The concept of a civil society – a reform path for the welfare state? – German and European perspectives), Institute for Social Work and Social Education.
Information: Dr. Georg Albers
Phone: +49-69-9 5 78 9-1 75
E-mail: georg.albers@iss-ffm.de

20-22/Mainz:

Federal Congress of Social Work, "Die Gestaltung des Sozialen – eine Herausforderung für Europa" (Social planning – a challenge for Europe).
Information: IGfH- Geschäftsstelle
Phone: +49-69-6 33 98 60
E-mail: tagungen@igfh.de

25/Berlin:

Conference on "Osterweiterung und Sozialunion: Chancen und Risiken der EU-Erweiterung für soziale Dienstleistungen" (Expansion to the east and social union: chances and risks of the EU expansion for social services); Diakonisches Werk der EKD and the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.
Information: Dr. Katharina Erdmenger, Diakonisches Werk der EKD e.V., Berlin office
Phone: +49-30-8 30 01-4 58
E-mail: erdmenger@diakonie.de

October

6-11/Kerkrade, Netherlands:

"European Societies or European Society? Conference on European Welfare States", European Science Foundation.
Information: www.esf.org

25-26/Berlin:

Conference on "The role of social services for sustainable social development"; Observatory/ISS, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Council of Europe.
Information: Beatrix Holzer, Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe,
Phone: +49-69-9 5 78 9-1 73
E-mail: beatrix.holzer@iss-ffm.de

Conference preview: "The Role of Social Services in Sustainable Social Development"

On 25/26 October 2001, the Observatory at the Institute for Social Work and Social Education, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Council of Europe, will be hosting a conference in Berlin on "The Role of Social Services in Sustainable Social Development". The main objective of this two-day event will be to expand the exchange of information and experiences in the field of social services (excluding health and education) so as to include central and eastern European countries (members of the Council of Europe) – and thus gain an overview of the discussion at a pan-European level. In addition, the conference will make a contribution to the work of the "European Committee for Social Cohesion" (CDCS), a steering committee of the Council of Europe which has been developing pan-European strategies for social cohesion since 1997. The two-day event will also offer an excellent opportunity to create dialogue structures and networks among eastern and western European countries as well as within central and eastern Europe. Participants will include representatives of the national governments of member states of the Council of Europe, representatives of regional and local authorities, relevant NGOs and organised civil society as well as scientists and researchers. The conference is planned to have three workshops working simultaneously on the following topics: "Structures, Actors and Responsibilities in Social Services Provision", "Concepts and Forms of Social Services Delivery – Experiences" and "The Role of Users in Social Services – Possibilities for Participation". Additional information can be obtained from Beatrix Holzer at the Institute for Social Work and Social Education.

Beatrix Holzer

Current events

Publications

Publications of the Observatory:

- "Literaturübersicht über soziale Dienste in Europa" (*Social services in Europe – an annotated bibliography*), edited by Helmut K. Anheier/ London School of Economics and Political Sciences in collaboration with the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe. May be ordered from: Institute for Social Work and Social Education, Dr. Georg Albers, Am Stockborn 5-7, 60439 Frankfurt a.M., E-mail: georg.albers@iss-ffm.de.

Conference papers:

- Research colloquium on "Europäische Integration als Herausforderung: Rolle und Reform der Sozialen Dienste in Deutschland" (European integration as a challenge: role and reform of social services in Germany), 11/12 December 2000. May be ordered from: Institute for Social Work and Social Education, Dr. Georg Albers, Am Stockborn 5-7, 60439 Frankfurt a.M., E-mail: georg.albers@iss-ffm.de.
- In preparation: Special event of the Observatory for the Development of Social Services in Europe on "Daseinsvorsorge in Europa heute und morgen – die Zukunft der kommunalen und frei-gemeinnützigen sozialen Dienste" (Services of general interest in Europe today and tomorrow – the future of municipal and non-profit social services) within the scope of the 75th German Public Welfare Conference organised by the German Association for Public and Private Welfare and held on 14/15 November 2000. Information: Ms. Alma Amrhein, German Association for Public and Private Welfare, Am Stockborn 1-3, 60439 Frankfurt a. M., Phone: +49-69-9 58 07-1 34.

News update

New staff member in the office of the co-ordination group

The office of the co-ordination group at the German Association for Public and Private Welfare has a new staff member:

Verena Hausen, scientific officer since January 2001.
Phone: +49-69-9 58 07-1 33
Fax: +49-69-9 58 07-1 61

E-mail: hausen.observatorium@deutscher-verein.de



Ms. Hausen completed a "Diplom" degree in social pedagogy, where she specialised in social management. The focal points of her interest are social work seen from a European point of view and social security systems in Europe.

Her diploma thesis was an empirical study entitled "Situational analysis and estimate of requirements with regard to social work on Mallorca. Implication of German migration". She was previously employed in the field of European voluntary services. Office of the co-ordination group German Association for Public and Private Welfare Am Stockborn 1-3 D-60439 Frankfurt am Main



Observatory for the
Development of Social Services
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