

ERIS Annual Report 2011

I ERIS meetings

In 2011 two meetings of the representatives of universities associated in the European Research Institute for Social Work (ERIS) were held. At the first of them, in Ostrava on 28 April 2011, the research and publication activities of the institute were discussed, mainly: the preparation of the book 'Research in Social Work in Europe' (ERIS Monograph Vol. 2, eds. Hämäläinen, J., Littlechild, B., Špiláčková, M.); the plan for other ERIS publications for the period 2012–2014, including the contents of the monothematic issues of the ERIS Web Journal; the content and organizational arrangements of the 5th international ERIS conference *Transnational Convergence, Diffusion and Transfer in Social Policy and Social Work* to be held from 12–14 October at the Catholic University of Eichstätt – Ingolstadt.

The ERIS meeting in April took place in the presence of O. Chytil, D. Sýkorová, A. Gojová (Czech Rep.), P. Erath, Ch. Fedke, S. Borrmann (Germany), J. Hämäläinen (Finland), B. Littlechild (United Kingdom), E. Jovelin, (France), M. Šramatá, (Slovakia), and K. Pawetek (Poland).

The second meeting, held in Eichstätt on 13 October 2011, was attended by O. Chytil, A. Gojová (Czech Rep.), P. Erath, R. Puhl, Ch. Fedke, M. Rossa, Ch. Spatscheck (Germany), J. Hämäläinen (Finland), B. Littlechild (United Kingdom), M. Šramatá (Slovakia), D. Böhler (Austria), and D. Galesi (Italy).

The participants evaluated the quality and course of the 5th international ERIS conference (see above) and discussed the topic of the next 6th international conference *Constructing European Social Welfare and Social Work in the Midst of Diverse Traditions, Policies and Practices* that will be held on 10–12 October 2012 in Kuopio, Finland. Further they agreed on the date, framework programme and organization of the International Spring School of Social Work 2012.

II Educational activities

The core of the educational activities undertaken by ERIS was again the International Spring School of Social Work – held for the 5th year in Ostrava on 26–29 April, 2011 and featuring 10 academics and 31 students from the University of Ostrava's Faculty of Social Studies and its partner universities in Cologne and Eichstätt (Germany), Hertfordshire (England), Kuopio (Finland), Trnava (Slovakia), Poznań (Poland) and Lille (France). The main focus of the agenda was the presentation of students' papers based on their diploma theses or doctoral dissertations. The program was enriched by lectures given by I. Loučková (Ostrava) on *Research in Social Sciences*, B. Littlechild (Hertfordshire) *Social Work in India and Developing*

Countries, and E. Jovelin (Lille) *Love Research and Hate Research: Research is Adventure*. The academics from the partner universities appreciated the excellent quality of the theses and dissertations presented by the students. Students welcomed as beneficial the feedback provided by academics and the opportunity to discuss the topics of their work and how to approach or deal with these topics with professionals from various countries in an informal environment.

The postgraduate degree programme 'Social Work and Social Politics in English': the first student enrolled in 2010 continued in these postgraduate studies in 2011 in blended form, (a student from Katholische Universität Eichstätt).

Internationalization of education for students from the ERIS partner universities: In the given year the following academics actively participated in the internationalization programme: P. Erath (Katholische Universität Eichstätt), who taught in Kuopio, Lille, Ostrava and Trnava; J. Hämäläinen (University of Eastern Finland), who lectured in Ostrava, Lille and Cologne; S. Borrmann (University of Applied Sciences in Landshut), teaching in Kuopio. Brian Littlechild (University of Hertfordshire) contributed a presentation to the Spring School 2011 and had a paper at the international conference in Eichstätt, October 2011. Three academics from the Faculty of Social Studies, University of Ostrava were involved: O. Chytil taught in Eichstätt and Lille, J. Keller in Lille, and A. Krausová in Trnava.

III Publication activities

ERIS Web Journal

In 2011 two issues of the journal were published: 1/2011 *Child Welfare - A Country-specific and International Affair* and 2/2011 *Social Work in Different Countries around the World – Examples from Australia, USA and India*, including reviews of books and research reports (<http://periodika.osu.cz/eris/>). The thematic orientation of the volumes in the upcoming period was agreed on: 1/2012 (*Social Work and Diversity*) and 2/2012 will be open for all kinds of texts dealing with social work theory, research and practice in Europe. Articles will be focused on the huge variety of existing policies, theories, research results, methods, professional debates, etc., providing a comprehensive survey on tendencies and debates which each reader can use for comparing specific aspects in his/her country with aspects in other countries – or, perhaps even more importantly, to recognize "meta-developments" across Europe, e.g. marketisation of social work, tendencies towards managerialism, risk management and de-valorisation of social work and the social.

ERIS publications

A review of the first ERIS Monograph *Social Work in Europe* was published in the *(Czech/Slovak) Journal of Social Work* (December issue 2011, reviewer: K. Kubalčíková, FSS MU Brno). S. Borrmann delivered a review in English, which was published in a special on-line English issue of the *(Czech/Slovak) Journal of Social Work*. Preparation of the next monograph *Research in Social Work in Europe* scheduled for 2013 is in progress.

IV Conferences

On 12 – 14 October the 5th international ERIS conference took place at the Catholic University of Eichstätt – Ingolstadt, entitled *Transnational Convergence, Diffusion and Transfer in Social Policy and Social Work*. <http://eris.osu.eu/index.php?id=9410> Over 80 participants from around the world joined the conference. Young researchers were given opportunity to share and discuss their scientific hypotheses with a broader international community during the Young Academics conference, with six PhD students from across Europe as speakers. Their various topics and related research designs were intensively discussed in the 3-hour conference, which can therefore be seen as a great success and was received very positively by both students and professors.

V ERIS website and promotion

Both the content and formal arrangement and design of the ERIS website continued to be gradually improved. ERIS was promoted by the representatives of all the member universities by means of conferences and workshops, in authors' profiles in specialist journals etc. Thanks to the systematic promotion of the Institute, other universities expressed an interest in participating in its activities – three foreign universities have applied for associate membership: the University of Trento (Italy), Landshut University (Germany) and the University of Applied Sciences, Vorarlberg (Austria).

The ERIS website and the ERIS Web Journal were chosen by the National Library of the Czech Republic to be archived as part of the prestigious WebArchiv project. Information on ERIS has been published in the publication *Kdo je kdo v české sociologii a příbuzných oborech* (*Who Is Who in Czech Sociology and Related Sciences*) published by a renowned Czech publishing house of specialist literature in social sciences. Nešpor, Z. R., Kopecká, A. (eds.). 2011. *Kdo je kdo v české sociologii a příbuzných oborech*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství, Sociologický ústav AV ČR. (ISBN 978-80-7419-051-3).