

ERIS Annual Report 2012

I ERIS meetings

In 2012 three meetings involving representatives of universities associated in the European Research Institute for Social Work (ERIS) were held. At the first of them, in Ostrava on 26 April 2012, 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. 3, eds. Hämmäläinen, J., Littlechild, B., Špiláčková, M.); the plan for other ERIS publications for the period 2013–2014, including the contents of the monothematic issues of the ERIS Web Journal; and the content and organizational arrangements for the 6th international ERIS conference ***Constructing European Social Welfare and Social Work in the Midst of Diverse Traditions, Policies and Practices*** to be held from 10–12 October at the University of Eastern Finland in Kuopio.

The participants of the ERIS meeting in April were O. Chytil, D. Sýkorová, A. Gojová (Czech Rep.), P. Erath, C. Fedke, S. Borrmann (Germany), J. Hämmäläinen (Finland), B. Littlechild, C. Meffan (United Kingdom), E. Jovelin, T. Monnier (France), M. Šramatá, A. Kallay (Slovakia), and K. Pawełek (Poland).

The second meeting, held in Kuopio on October 11, 2012, was attended by O. Chytil, A. Gojová, D. Sýkorová, M. Špiláčková (Czech Rep.), P. Erath, R. Puhl, C. Fedke, M. Pfaller-Rott (Germany), J. Hämmäläinen (Finland), B. Littlechild, C. Meffan (United Kingdom) M. Slaná, A. Kallay, O. Botek (Slovakia), D. Böhler (Austria), and D. Galesi (Italy).

The participants evaluated the content and quality of the 6th international ERIS conference (see above) and discussed the topic of the next (7th) international conference, which will be held on 10–11 October 2013 in Trnava, Slovakia. Further, they agreed on the date, framework programme and organization of the International Spring School of Social Work 2013. In December 2012 an extraordinary meeting of the ERIS partners took place in Landshut (Germany), with discussions focusing on the strategy for future activities of ERIS and the more intensive involvement of the members in joint projects and teaching and research activities.

II Educational activities

The core of the educational activities undertaken by ERIS was again the International Spring School of Social Work – held for the 6th year in Ostrava on 24–28 April, 2012 and featuring 56 academics and students from the University of Ostrava's Faculty of Social Studies and its partner universities in Cologne and Eichstätt (Germany), Hertfordshire (United Kingdom), Kuopio (Finland), Trnava (Slovakia), Poznań (Poland) and Lille (France). A representative of the University in Trondheim (Norway) accepted an invitation to attend as a guest. 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 P. Erath (Eichstätt) on *Valid Research Topics, Creation of Research Questions*, B. Littlechild (Hertfordshire) *Spe-*

cific Aspects of the Qualitative Approach in Research in Social Work, Ethics in Research in Social Work and B. Littlechild's workshop on *Creative (Expert/Scientific) Writing*. 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 meet with professionals from various countries in an informal environment, discussing ideas on how to approach or deal with the topics of their research.

Internationalization of education for students from the ERIS partner universities:

During the year the following academics actively participated in the internationalization programme: M. Slaná and A. Kallay (Trnava University) taught in Landshut and Lille; J. Hämäläinen (University of Eastern Finland) and P. Erath (Catholic University of Eichstätt) lectured in Ostrava, Trnava, Lille and Brno; S. Borrmann and C. Fedke (University of Applied Sciences in Landshut) taught in Kuopio and Trnava. Brian Littlechild (University of Hertfordshire) contributed two presentations to the Spring School 2012.

Three academics from the Faculty of Social Studies at the University of Ostrava were also involved: O. Chytil taught in Kuopio and Cologne, while M. Špiláčková and M. Chrenková taught in Kuopio.

III Publication activities

ERIS Web Journal

In 2012 two issues of the journal were published: 1/2012 *Social Work and Diversity* and 2/2012 (*Open* – for all texts on theory, research and practice in social work in Europe). (<http://periodika.osu.cz/eris/>). The thematic orientation of the volumes in the upcoming period was agreed: 1/2013 will be on *Social Work and Social Space*, and 2/2013 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

In October 2012 the second in the series of monographs 'Evolution of Child Protection and Child Welfare Policies in Selected European Countries' was published. The monograph *Research in Social Work in Europe* was prepared for publication in 2013. The first 'ERIS Materials – Book of Abstracts' (from the conference in Kuopio) was published, and is available on the ERIS website: <http://evis.osu.cz/index.php?kategorie=35156&id=10298>

IV Conferences

On 10 – 12 October the 6th international ERIS conference took place at the University of Eastern Finland, entitled *Constructing European Social Welfare and Social Work in the Midst of Diverse Traditions, Policies and Practices*.

<http://eris.osu.eu/index.php?kategorie=35130&id=10349> Young researchers were given the opportunity to share and discuss their scientific hypotheses with a broader international community during the Young Academics conference, where two students from the University of Ostrava presented their topics. A further seven academics and PhD students from the University of Ostrava gave presentations in eight thematic workshops.

V. Joint projects

UEF Kuopio has launched preparation of the project 'Learning network for research-based social work practice', and has offered participation to partners. The Faculty of Social Studies will participate with research on *Old Age and Poverty* (Project VEDTYM).

The project 'Social inclusion and social well-being of young people in Europe' (B. Littlechild, P. Erath; partners: Lille, Ostrava, Hertfordshire) was at the preparatory stage.

VI ERIS website and promotion

Gradual improvements continued to the ERIS website (content, layout and design). ERIS was promoted by the representatives of all the member universities by means of conferences and workshops, in authors' profiles in specialist journals etc.