

ERIS Annual Report 2013

I ERIS meetings

In 2013, two meetings involving representatives of universities associated with the European Research Institute for Social Work (ERIS) were held. At the first meeting, which took place in Ostrava on 18 April 2013, the research and publication activities of the Institute were discussed: the preparation of the book 'Research in Social Work in Europe' (ERIS Monograph Vol. 3, eds. Hämäläinen, J., Littlechild, B., Špiláčková, M.); the plan for other ERIS publications for the period 2014-20, including the contents of the monothematic issues of the ERIS Web Journal; and the content and organizational arrangements for the 7th international ERIS conference *Identities of Social Work – Academic and Professional Debates*, to be held from 10–11 October at the University of Trnava in Slovakia. The nomination of the new Vice-Director of ERIS Alice Gojová was approved by all members. Two new associate members were approved: Kolping University of Applied Sciences, contact person Ramune Bagdonaite-Stelmokiene, and Individual Member Monika Pfaller-Rott from KU Eichstätt. The participants of this first ERIS meeting in April were O. Chytil, A. Gojová, J. Petrucijova, E. Lindovska (University of Ostrava), P. Erath, M. Pfaller-Rott (Catholic University of Eichstätt), C. Fedke, S. Borrmann, V. Knauer (University of Applied Sciences Landshut), R. Puhl (Katho NRW Cologne) B. Littlechild, (University of Hertfordshire), E. Jovelin, S. Toulotte (Catholic University of Lille), M. Slaná, A. Kallay (Trnava University), and M. Kostrzynska (University of Lodz).

The second meeting, held in Trnava on October 9, 2013, was attended by O. Chytil, D. Sýkorová, I. Tichá, (University of Ostrava) E. Klimentová (Palacky University in Olomouc) P. Erath, M. Pfaller-Rott (Catholic University of Eichstätt), C. Fedke, V. Knauer (University of Applied Sciences Landshut), J. Hämäläinen (UEF Kuopio), B. Littlechild, (University of Hertfordshire) M. Slaná, A. Kallay, O. Botek (Trnava University), R. Bagdonaite Stelmokiene (Kolping University of Applied Sciences in Kaunas), M. Kostrzynska, A. Gulczynska (University of Lodz).

The participants evaluated the content and quality of the 7th international ERIS conference (see above) and discussed the topic of the next (8th) international conference, which will be held on 13 -14 October 2014 in Hertfordshire, United Kingdom, entitled *Research and Social Work Practice – Mutually Beneficial Endeavour or Uneasy Bedfellows?*

Participants also agreed on the date, framework programme and organization of the International Spring School of Social Work 2014.

II Educational activities

The core of the educational activities undertaken by ERIS was once again the International Spring School of Social Work – held for the 7th year in Ostrava on 16–19 April, 2013 and featuring 67 academics and students from the University of Ostrava's Faculty of Social Studies and its partner universities. Besides the Spring School's regular guests from Eichstätt, Cologne and Landshut (Germany), Hertfordshire (UK), Kuopio (Finland), Trnava (Slovakia), Poznań (Poland) and Lille (France), this year's event also featured representatives and

students from the Dutch Christian University of Applied Sciences in Ede. The main focus of the agenda was the presentation of students' papers, based on their diploma theses or doctoral dissertations. The program included a lecture given by P. Niemelä (UEF Kuopio) on *Case Studies in Social Work Research* and a workshop on *Ethnographic Approaches in Social Work Research* coordinated by M. Pfaller-Rott (Catholic University of Eichstätt). The academics from the partner universities appreciated the excellent quality of the theses and dissertations presented by the students. Students welcomed the highly beneficial 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: P. Erath taught at the University of Ostrava, Trnava University and the Catholic University of Lille; J. Hämäläinen and G. Kostrzynska taught at the University of Ostrava; M. Pfaller-Rott taught at Kolping University of Applied Sciences in Kaunas; S. Borrmann taught at the University of Eastern Finland in Kuopio; and E. Jovelin taught at Katho NRW Köln. Three academics from the University of Ostrava's Faculty of Social Studies were also involved: O. Chytil taught at the Catholic University of Eichstätt, A. Gojová in Kuopio at the University of Eastern Finland, and K. Cilečková at Trnava University.

III Publication activities

ERIS Web Journal

In 2013 two issues of the journal were published: 1/2013 (*Social Work and Social Space*), and 2/2013 (Open Issue – 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 has been agreed: 1/2014 will be on *Welfare States and Social Work in Central and Eastern Europe - 20 Years after the Fall of Communism*, and 2/2014 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 to compare specific aspects in his/her country with aspects in other countries – or, perhaps even more importantly, to recognize "meta-developments" across Europe, e.g. marketization of social work, tendencies towards managerialism, risk management and de-valorization of social work and the social.

ERIS publications

In 2013 the third in the series of monographs *Research in Social Work in Europe* was prepared for publication in 2014.

IV Conferences

On 10 - 11 October the 7th international ERIS conference took place at the University of Trnava in Slovakia: *Identities of Social Work – Academic and Professional Debates*

<http://eris.osu.eu/index.php?kategorie=35130&id=11995>, involving guests from Slovakia, Germany, the United Kingdom, Poland, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, France, Austria, Lithuania and Finland. Young researchers were given the opportunity to share and discuss their hypotheses with a broader international community during the Young Academics conference. A group of 6 students from the University of Ostrava attended the conference and presented their work. The topic of this year's conference was more specifically focused on the professional identity of social work, both as an academic discipline and as a professional activity. The impacts of globalization, marketization and economization have had a strong influence on the public sector and the professionals working within this sector. During the last twenty years, opinions on how the public sector and the professionals within it should work have changed significantly. As a result of these changes, professionals have to face multiple challenges.

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* (VEDTYM project).

The Horizon 2020 project "Towards a Solid, Dynamic and Cohesive City" (SOLID@ITY) (coordinators P. Erath, S. Schieren, B. Wasner) was developed further, with meetings taking place in Landshut, Bratislava and Eichstätt. The aim is to complete the project draft by June 2014 and then to apply for a grant.

VI ERIS website and promotion

Gradual improvements of the ERIS website continued (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.