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Plenum Conference

Sustainable social work in times of crises

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The recalibration of formal, non-formal and informal social work during the COVID-pandemic. Neo-philanthropy or prefigurative politics? *by Pascal Debruyne*

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During the ongoing COVID 19-pandemic, not only illness but also solidarity went viral. As social services closed or had to be reoriented to retain their function, a range of non-formal and informal social work-agencies jumped the scene. Some authors would argue 'the comeback of neo-philanthropy'. (Villadsen, 2007, 2011). Especially pointing to the social practices of 'emergency' material service delivery: giving people access to food, financial means, masks and hygiene material, 'papers' (legal-administrative documents), ...

In contrast, the lens we look through is the one of "prefigurative politics" and "mutual aid networks" (Spade, 2020; Izlar, 2019). Yates (2015) states that 'prefiguration' may be understood as being based on five processes: experimentation as a community, continual and collective reproduction of the group's political framework, the creation of group norms and values that draw on the desired future, consolidation of the results of these processes into a cohesive vision, and the dissemination and diffusion of this vision within the wider community (Yates, 2015, also; Yates, 2020). Although the critique of neo-philanthropy is more than legitimate, it's based on schemes that are too often based on an anachronistical logic: historical schemes of the past are projected to the future: assuming that the historical transformation from 'charity to a rights-based approach of structural social work within the boundaries of a welfare-state regime, is now being turned back. As if history always repeats itself twice, "first as a tragedy followed by a farce"? As if relations between government, market and citizens, and social work in 'the in-between position', have not been under transformational pressure in a dialectical sense?

In this paper we argue that non-formal and informal social work practices are far more complex than theoretical schemes of social work practices caught between 'charity versus rights'. Based on participatory research and 'on the field presence' between April 2020 up to today, the formation of a network approach between non-formal and informal social work agencies is explored in Ghent. In April 2020, 'the Ghent Solidarity Fund" was established; a grassroots network of 13 small mostly volunteer-based social organizations. Instead of going through this sanitary crisis alone, this network builds strong bridges between non-formal and informal social organizations, surmounting 'the archipelago-realities' of social work in the city.

The Ghent Solidarity Fund established new practices, emerging from this network-practice. They were one of the only easily reachable social spaces that remained open, although 'all had to change in order for things to remain the same', in contrast to a range of 'formal services' and 'formal service organizations and/ or providers'. Together with thousands of citizens they assembled laptops, took care of hygienic material, distributed shopping coupons and assembled tens of thousands of euros from citizens. But more than charity or 'neo-philanthropy', the Ghent Solidarity Fund was all about politics. In several ways. Not only in the way power was accumulated by working together. But also, in the constant public interventions that 'redistributed the sensible', making the social issues at hand visible and hearable (Rancière, 2004). But what is more 'innovative' in their interventions, is the engagement with "mutual aid"-networks and practices: citizens helping other 'citizens' (or 'denizens') at risk: people who have pre-existing health conditions that make them particularly clinically vulnerable, but also includes those who are susceptible to the negative impacts of the pandemic and lockdowns (e.g. those without personal transport, individuals who are unemployed, those with history of social or psychological conditions like addiction or depression) and people with precarious and/or non-existing residency rights. The last group being a range of undocumented people that lost their informal work and thus means of income.

As such they established 'a geography of care' in the city (Springer, 2020).

In the face of the challenges that the current pandemic and post-crisis struggle pose to societies and the field/discipline of social work itself, the Ghent Solidarity Fund established a practice of "prefigurative politics", based on mutual aid-principles and autonomous social practices (Firth, 2020; Cham & Bell, 2021). They succeed in establishing a practice that challenges the status quo in times where government social services and other formal service providers were closed or were experienced as 'unreachable'.

The end of social work or dissenting social work? *by Paul Michael Garrett*

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In 2020 in the British Journal of Social Work, the Australian academic, Chris Maylea (2020), prompted a debate calling for social work's abolition. Elsewhere, including in the U.S., there have been calls to 'abolish' the profession. It will be argued that it is important to re-visit facets of the debate and to locate it within the conjuncture in which we are situated. Part of the contextual foundation for the paper is also provided by 'local' considerations and the expunging of references to 'human rights' from the Code of Ethics for social workers in Ireland. In making the case for, what is termed, Dissenting Social Work (DSW), it is also argued that there is a need to be alert to the ambiguities of 'dissent'.

Values in social work in times of crisis *by Ewa Teresa Kantowicz*

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The world of values is a special area in social work, because it is associated with both education and action, and thus the development of competences and attitudes related to professional ethics. Values in the profession of social worker are an important element of functioning, because they support: the creation of identity and integrity of the activities of social workers; professional approaches to social work; dealing with the (emotionally) demanding nature of the practice and emerging dilemmas. The process of education for social work, which should focus on the idea of shaping the axiological foundations of professional activity. Values penetrate all elements of practice, but they are not always fully taken into account in professional education programs. It is particularly important to verify the value of social work in times of crisis.

In the context of the crisis of war in Ukraine and the increased migration movement in Europe, how to promote fundamental freedoms and human rights to life, work, social security education and promoting the ideas of solidarity?

International cooperation and the exchange of experience at the level of education to the world of values and social work practices in the field of the implementation of values in the situation of these new crises can be of undoubted importance here. In this aspect, the challenge for social work is also the need to change thinking about values and to reflect on the possibilities and barriers of action while maintaining the principles of ethics.

Democracy as a Sustainable Practice: The Formation of Political Subjects in Child and Youth Welfare Services *by Zoe Clark*

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The prerequisite for sustainability is democracy. Especially the coming generations and the children and youth of the present depend on being taken into account as political subjects, because the current destruction of the environment primarily affects their interests. However, this presupposes a) that they can form themselves as a political subject and b) that there is a place for collective associations that allows their interests to be perceived. In current social movements such as Friday for Future, it is visible that participation in these movements is class-specific. It is disproportionately people from the upper classes, who participate there.

On the other hand, the latest legal reform in Germany is currently anchoring a self-representation and representation of interests of users of child and youth welfare services, thus for those who are most vulnerable. Here, too, there is a danger that primarily the "elite of the children in care" will come together in committees to stand up for their interests and that there will be a misrepresentation. New and appropriate concepts are needed to make a representation of interests a truly democratic instrument in child and youth welfare services. In the project "geste – Child and Youth welfare Services as work on the common good", funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, group interviews were conducted with young people in order to develop a participatory concept for the representation of interests of young people in residential education.

The results show that the organizational and institutional framework of residential education already poses numerous obstacles for these young people to understand themselves as a political person and to form themselves into a political subject. The contribution is dedicated to a presentation of the previous findings of the geste project and the question of democratization of youth welfare and places this in the context of equal participation in democracy as a prerequisite for the struggle for sustainability and environmental justice.

Social services for marginalized groups during the covid-19 crisis: the impact on social work profession *by Dragana Stoeckel and Marina Pantelić*

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The global health crisis caused by COVID-19 has had – and continues to have – significant implications for the lives and well-being of people around the globe. Although COVID-19 itself does not discriminate, comprehensive COVID-19 measures have made existing social inequalities even more visible and intensive. The current health crisis has developed along pre-existing socio-economic and socio-cultural axes of inequality, resulting in the greater socio-economic marginalization and exclusion of the most vulnerable individuals and groups within society. At the same time, certain professions

Thus, the aim of this paper is to review and analyze the effects of applied preventive measures, especially early COVID-19 strategies, on the position of certain vulnerable groups - the elderly, persons with disabilities, Roma and women, with overview on the specificity of their position from human rights perspective in the case of Serbia. At the same time, the objective of this study will be to understand the experience of the frontline social workers during the pandemic and to identify the innovative methods and organization of the work that has been implemented during the health crisis in order to provide the social services to the above mentioned population in the light of 'new normal'. The study will employ qualitative research design. Focus groups will be organized with social work professionals working in different settings – institutional (state-run), non-governmental and Centers for social work as integral and fundamental social welfare institution in Serbia. The study will shed light on transformation of the social work practice in Serbia as a result of faced challenges during the ongoing crisis and its impact on the professionals.

Sustainable social work: a cultural-historical perspective on the formation and organisation of frontline social work *by Hans Grymonprez*

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It is difficult to discuss sustainable social work without bringing in the 'sharpening of contradictions'; a Marxist idea. Many social work authors link sustainability to a critique of capitalism. But capitalism proves more nimble than some might hope. Contradictions do intensify but to a certain extent, they also dissolve (Michielsen, 1961).

Social work, too, rides the waves of a capitalist society. In a number of cases, it does succeed in providing a workable critique; nonetheless social work depends on how contradictions manifest themselves in concrete situations. Solutions for contradictions vary by the various agendas social work is indebted too. Such solutions may the bring the social back to the fore while many other solutions rest upon the manageability of individual problems. At the heart of the cultural-historical tradition of activity theory, solutions to contradictions become in the end, untenable again. The question is how these 'dynamics of development' manifest themselves in social work practices. In this contribution, the focus is on a cultural-historical analysis of these dynamics in social welfare practices in a Belgian City. New or 'innovative' models of frontline social work followed in quick succession. But as above described theory suggests, these models very rapidly bounce to (new) contradictions. Although there are indications of a radicalization of the social agenda, there is also much continuity in the social work discourse suggesting social work can resolve the problems produced by capitalist society, individuals have to face. Hence, this presentation does not question sustainability as an important value but questions how social work itself is 'sustainable'.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Workers at the Frontline: Challenges & Opportunities in Primary Care *by Rachelle Ashcroft*

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought tremendous changes in healthcare delivery and exposed the magnitude of existing health inequities in Canada, the United States, and worldwide. Canada and countries around the globe have recognized interprofessional primary care teams – comprised of family physicians, nurses, social workers, and other healthcare professionals - as a crucial approach to support the increasingly complex health and mental health care needs of populations. Interprofessional primary care teams that provide comprehensive and coordinated care have been integral to supporting populations most at risk of adverse health and mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The onset of the pandemic required interprofessional primary care teams to quickly transform to adhere to physical distancing requirements while still maintaining connection with patients. As a core member of these interprofessional primary care teams, social workers faced various challenges including increasingly complex patient needs, new implementation and dramatic uptake in the use of virtual care in clinical practice, and disruptions to team collaboration. Despite the many challenges presented by the pandemic as to how to deliver services, social workers and other healthcare providers in primary care continued to provide essential services to individuals, families and communities. This presentation draws on three studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic that sought to understand the impact of the pandemic on social workers, interprofessional primary care teams, and primary care patients in the province of Ontario, Canada.

Social-emotional prototype for children resilience *by Giedre Kvieskiene and Vytautas Kvieska*

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Socio-economic conditions in which students live and learn today are social and political determinants of a socio-emotional situation, including mental health and educational disadvantage. Young people today face significant challenges and weaknesses in safety stability and are more vulnerable than their peers because they are directly facing Covid-19 and war in Ukraine. The social vulnerability to the resilience of countries and communities when faced with adverse events, such as the complex and unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 outbreak (Drane et al. 2020, Kvieskiene et al. l 2021) or war in the neighboring country.

The quantitative and qualitative research was divided into several parts for this problem analysis. However, the case study method is usually attributed to qualitative research methods (Rashid et al., 2019). For a situation analysis of global trends, we use the "School Barometer" survey (in terms of response time and dissemination time) was conducted in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland to assess the current school situation caused by COVID-19. In Lithuania, the school barometer questionnaire was distributed in 2020 and repeated in 2021. The questions were answered by 451 members of school communities (N = 451), among whom teachers accounted for the largest share (68%). Other respondents also worked at the school as administrative staff and social educators. Half of the educators surveyed worked in gymnasiums. The most significant number of surveyed teachers working in the city (63%).

Results. The respondent identified that financial stability, unemployment, and social-emotional situations in the countries are the two most affected aspects of the lives of the children and youth population. Still, education and family relationships / other relationships are also strongly affected. Low social capital growing problems in social-emotional and mental health are increasing. That situation is adolescent suicide, a leading cause of death among young people aged 15-19 years in Lithuania, Estonia. (Ceesay, 2021; Dhanalakshmi et al., 2021).

(De-)Institutionalisation of youth welfare in times of the pandemic *by Martina Richter*

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Education and care in contemporary societies are characterised by processes of institutionalisation. In this respect, they are conceived and organised as legally codified, professionalised and routinised practices. At the same time, they differ along the different pedagogical fields of action and their historical development phases. The lecture discusses processes of institutionalisation and deinstitutionalisation of youth welfare in the context of schools on the basis of own research. How are youth welfare and school placed in relation to each other, how is cooperation between professionals shaped, what (new) logics in the provision of education and care become visible in the pandemic and how can these observations be placed in a context of society as a whole?

Dealing with the legacy of political conflict: Researching the views of social workers in Northern Ireland
by Jim Campbell

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Background and Purpose
Despite the fact that social workers have been dealing with the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict for fifty years, few empirical studies have been carried out in this field. A decade old study revealed the experiences of mental health social workers in dealing with violent contexts and the choices they made in helping clients (Campbell and McCrystal, 2005). More recently, ways of preparing students for practice in such contexts have been explored with a particular focus on engaging victims and survivors as educators in social work educational programmes (Coulter et al, 2013).

Methods
The aim of the study (Campbell et al, 2021) was to identify ways in which social workers were affected by and intervened in the lives of clients experiencing conflict related problems.

A mixed method approach was used to achieve this aim and recruitment to the study was achieved through stakeholders in a range of social work agencies in Northern Ireland. An online survey was launched in September 2017 designed to elicit demographic, likert scale responses and open text responses from social workers (n=103) who had practiced in the period before the signing of the Belfast Peace Agreement (1998). In addition, the research team purposively sampled respondents who were known to have particular experiences relevant to the study objectives. Follow up interviews with a stratified sample (n=30) of this population were carried out from January - May 2018. Data was analysed using SPSS to elicit descriptive, univariate and bivariate analysis and Nvivo for the qualitative responses from both populations. Appropriate ethical approval was also granted for the research.

Findings

Respondents had more encounters with bomb scares and road blocks compared to other forms of violence (shootings, bombings, sectarian abuse). A total estimate of 3645 incidents were reported.61% percent felt that they had been at moderate or high levels of risk and 48% said that their own sense of cultural and religious identity had been moderately or highly challenged. The trauma of these types of incidents became normalised as part of the job and only in later years on reflection does the magnitude and severity of this type of challenging work really strike home. The need to get on with the job always came first and often at great personal risk for many of the social workers involved.

Conclusions and Implications
Social workers in Northern Ireland have been exposed to high levels of multiple adversities where detachment from the wider violent and political milieu has been an important way of coping. Faced with such challenge, social workers in conflict situations need the support of colleagues and employers as a necessary part of coping. This is particularly important in offsetting the professional and personal impact of trauma in later years. The presentation will conclude by drawing parallels with social work experiences in other situations of political conflict (Duffy et al, 2019).

Symposium: Supporting youth in challenging times: towards inclusive crisis management. Empirical explorations from Dutch metropolitan areas *by Femke Kaulingfreks, Zulia Rosalina, Sarah Uitman, Marte Wiersma, Sharifah Redan and Lieke Wissink*
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Youth appeared in Dutch media in predominantly two ways during the corona crisis; they were portrayed as victims given their decreased wellbeing or as culprits due to their suspected reluctance to adhere to containment measures. Both depictions – passive victims or unruly troublemakers - tend to position youth outside social practices to manage the crisis rather than acknowledging them as active contributors to such practices. In this symposium, we focus on the crucially diverse ways in which various youth shaped their lives in times of crisis – corona related and beyond. Doing so, we argue, is crucial to further enhance youth inclusion in national crisis management and to offer youth adequate social support when facing adversity.

We rely on data gathered in three complementing qualitative studies between 2018 and 2021 among people between age 15 – 26. Methods used are in-depth interviews, surveys, participant observation, focus groups, and informal conversations. The projects took place in three Dutch urban areas; Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Haarlem. The views and experiences of youth facing various forms of marginalization are central in all three studies – among them homeless youth, youth dealing with psychological problems and youth disengaged from formal politics. In times of societal crisis like a pandemic, how to best account for these youth who face a heightened risk of exclusion? The first study offers insights into supportive conditions for youth when transitioning to adulthood. The second study explores how homemaking practices in lockdown months supported youth in structurally precarious situations. The third study investigates political participatory inequality among youth, addressing the gap between youth and policy making institutions that seemed to hinder corona management.

By combining these three empirical projects, each focused on different aspects of youth participation during and beyond the corona pandemic, we provide recommendations on how to better equip social workers and policy makers to support youth in navigating crisis situations; by providing individual support that is attuned to their specific needs and social environment, by offering youth a materially and socially resourceful environment, and by stimulating youth involvement in political decision making. Overall, we highlight the potential of local initiatives to meet various needs and interests that translate generalized measures as part of national crisis management into workable interventions 'on the ground'. Therein we emphasize the need to differentiate the category of 'youth' and rather look into youth inclusivity of social networks. Last but not least, our studies show the importance to rely on youth participation rather than dismissing youth actions as counter-contributions.

Sarah Uitman & Marte Wiersma
1) Resilience in times of crisis. What we can learn from the experiences of youth in the transition to adulthood (16-23)

This study explores the life-experiences of youth (aged 16-23) in transition to adulthood who make use of professional support such as youth counseling, mental health care or residential care. It was a four-year descriptive mixed methods study conducted in three cities in the urban Dutch agglomeration area, Amsterdam, Haarlem and Rotterdam. In this session we draw upon the results of 43 in-depth interviews held during the pandemic to gain insight into youth's support sources. Rather than focusing on one particular life domain, OJOV takes an integrative approach examining all life domains key to the lives of youth - such as their homes and family life, school, work and social life – and the coherence between them. We do so inspired by the ecological concept of 'resilience' understood by Ungar (2018) as the capacity of groups and individuals to, in a meaningful way, make use of available personal, relational and societal resources for sustaining wellbeing when confronted with adversity or challenges. Through our integrative approach a large variety of

effects on resilience became apparent. The worldwide pandemic has further functioned as a magnifying glass through which the inherently complex ways resilience works in the lives of young people became clearer. Encouraging professionals to acknowledge this complexity, our insights stress the importance of support that reaches across the boundaries of youth's social worlds.

dr. Lieke Wissink
2) Homemaking in times of crisis – Collaborations of hospitality, rituals and care among homeless youth in Amsterdam
At the peak of corona containment measures in the Netherlands in 2021, we looked into projects that reached out to youth with a heightened risk of vulnerability. Youth wellbeing reportedly decreased significantly under corona measures nation-wide but we specifically explored how undocumented youth facing homelessness lived through the pandemic. How did these youth shape their daily lives while national measures called to 'stay at home', therewith denying their structural precarity of lacking a house? We explored this question on participatory fieldwork in an improvised day shelter called the 'youthlivingroom', complemented by a dozen in-depth interviews with both youth and their supporters in Amsterdam. We found that the shelter-dwelling youth in our research nevertheless engaged in various ways of mobilizing 'home'. Importantly, these homemaking practices are characterized by non-disciplinary spaces where youth are invited to co-shape their daily environment and relations. The non-disciplinary space in the youthlivingroom for example enabled youth to engage in homemaking practices like; hospitality, rituals, and care. We conceptualize homemaking as a collection of collaborative practices that potentially form a care-based response to crisis. As such, we argue, homemaking practices figure as a way to negotiate local needs under national crisis measures, countering the increased feelings of nonbelonging that the latter caused among homeless youth.

dr. Femke Kaulingfreks
3) Political youth resilience in times of crisis

Socio-economic inequality and segregation are causing growing political participatory inequality in Amsterdam suburban areas (Vermeulen, Harteveld & Michon, 2020). Especially youth with a migration background and youth with an education level starting from primary school up to vocational education have little trust in institutional politics. Although the high turnout rates in the last national elections in 2021 are promising, lower-class youth vote less often than higher-class youth. At the same time, youth with little trust in institutional politics are often active through social (self-)organizations, social actions and cultural expression. This ethnographic study examines what role politics plays in the lives of these youth, what motives keep them from voting, and how social professionals can better support youth to express their (political) voices, also in times of national crisis. For this purpose, youth were interviewed and focus groups were held with social professionals who intend to strengthen the political participation of youth in Amsterdam. This study took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, a time wherein governmental institutes experienced trouble reaching youth. The lessons learned from this research are important to lower existing risks that the voices of youth who are part of lower socio-economic classes in segregated neighborhoods are not acknowledged by formal politics. Due to their lower participation rate, the socio-political issues this group experiences are not on the political agenda let alone taken into account in times of crisis.

Symposium: 'Signifying Lived Citizenship in Social Work' *by Vanessa Dermaut, Bayartsetseg Terbish, Dries Cautreels and Toon Benoot*
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Lived citizenship has emerged as a key concept in citizenship studies, with a growing number of authors having applied ideas of lived citizenship as a generative approach to recognise the embodied, relational and lived experiences of being a citizen in everyday life (Kallio, Wood & Häkli, 2020). Drawing a distinction from more formal understandings of citizenship as a legal status with associated rights and duties of those who are full members of a community (as defined originally by Marshall 1950), lived citizenship draws attention to the significance of citizenship as it is experienced and enacted in various real-life contexts. Rather than a fixed status, the lived approach seeks to account for "the meaning that citizenship actually has in people's lives and the ways in which people's social and cultural backgrounds and material circumstances affect their lives as citizens" (Hall and Williamson 1999, 2). In this conceptualization of citizenship, the embodied performance of citizenship is placed at centre-stage in accordance with how people negotiate rights, responsibilities, identities and belonging through interactions with others in the course of daily life (Lister 2007).

In this symposium we consider two applications of lived citizenship in current social work research as an avenue to understand the concept in the "thick of social life" (Appadurai, 2004) and consider possibilities for the domain of social work. The first exploration of the concept of lived citizenship takes place in the context of internal rural-urban migration in the capital city of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar. The presenting doctoral researcher Bayartsetseg Terbish engaged in an extensive urban ethnography to capture the individual and collective practices of internal migrants in their struggle to practice their lived citizenship by means of accessing various formal resources in 'ger' areas. When structural and formal resources are limited for migrants,

subjective realities and strategies of appropriating the space is at stake. Further research is underway to reveal empirical and conceptual depths of how various coping strategies and practice of agency of ger residents are leading to aspirations, which has a clear intertwined reflection of lived citizenship among participants. This research worked with the key challenge to uncover hidden social worlds and to show the rich patterns of community formation and meaning-making that takes place within them, both in facilitating and challenging ways.

For the second exploration of the concept of lived citizenship, doctoral researcher Vanessa Dermaut draws on data from a case study of a small-scale residental care facility in Flanders where disabled citizens with multiple disabilities with a 24/7 support need live. Based on a historical case study of how the residential care facility was conceived as a living environment (location, architectural and infrastructural aspects, paradigms and logics of cure, care and support), the researcher deconstructs disability as a socio- spatially concept. Location and environment and social interactions keep people with disabilities "in place" and might provoke exclusion and marginalization, in that way maintaining disabling practices and hinder experiences of being a citizen in everyday life. A process of change and socio-spatial transformation was initiated in order to open up the care facility and form an inclusive community with/in the neighborhood. It showed how non-obligatory, informal and even ambiguous "small" social interactions between local community residents with and without disabilities provide valuable opportunities for citizens with disabilities to give meaning to what makes life in that place worthwhile for them.

The point of reflection lies in the communalities and differences that research uncovers in two contexts of 'being a citizen' in a fairly new living environment: the case of building a life in the informal settlement in the ger area in one hand and building a life in a residential care setting for people with a acquired brain injury on the other. Both cases uncover elements of agency of people in vulnerable positions who reside in a fairly new living

environment by applying a socio-spatial approach. Kallio, Wood and Häkli (2020) propose a framework that encompasses four 'dimensions' of lived citizenship: spatial, intersubjective, performed and affective, to serve as a starting point to sharpen and define this emerging field.

In order to open up a scholarly discussion with other researchers who seek to define this field and to help to prevent the term from becoming an empty signifier, this symposium will build on these four dimensions. By doing so, the symposium will stimulate reflexivity by disentangling some paradoxes we face in our social work professionalism (Warming & Fahnoe, 2017). Through this shared reflection, we will establish links with both Dries Cautreels' upcoming doctoral research on professionalism in de-institutionalisation and insights from Toon Benoot's doctoral research in which a focus on autonomy as an interrelational and pedagogical notion can be an inspiring approach to lived citizenship and the paradoxes mentioned above. By connecting these four research-tracks with the four dimensions of lived citizenship (Kallio, Wood and Häkli, 2020), we aim to open up the discussion and invite other scholars to further shape and open up critical citizenship studies with the field of social work research.

Symposium: Politicisation: new term for policy practice? *By Bart Van Bouchaute, Luc De Droogh, Andy De Brabander, Hans Grymonprez, Pascal Debruyne and Jan Naert*

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Today, 'politicisation' is enjoying increasing attention in the practice of and reflection on social work in Flanders. The Social Work Conference 2018 defined politicisation as a core task for strong social work. In various sectors - from usual suspects such as youth work and community development to less obvious ones such as youth assistance or general welfare work - there is a search for an effective framework for action. From this Flemish practice development, a number of discussions have emerged about the meaning and delimitation of politicisation in social work. It is a delicate debate, because labelling a practice as 'non-politicising' can create the impression that it is less valuable.

Therefore, in this workshop we situate politicisation in relation to the 'classic' political mission of social work. We discuss three confusions between politicisation and (1) policy work, (2) any form of political action and (3) actions in the discretionary space, within social work. This is not a purely academic discussion. The point is to maintain the sharp and recruiting meaning of politicisation. For if politicisation focuses on the democratic dissensus - which is never divorced from discursive and material power inequalities - then in the context of social work this also means that this dissensus is given a specific interpretation. In social work, politicisation is not primarily a methodical framework, but an ideological one.

After the presentation, several Flemish academics will elaborate the discussion on the meaning of politicisation for practices of social work.

Symposium: The institutional rose bush: youngsters defying institutional borders in care and education *by Saan Van Elsen, Matthias Remmery and Simon Allemeersch*

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Transitional stress may be considered as hallmark difficulties with which youngsters struggle, regardless of their background and upbringing. The transition of vulnerable youngsters from institutional care or vocational education into the fields of the adult life, as e.g. housing market, job career or family life – is even more challenging (De Decker et al, 2014).

Historically, organizational prerequisites of care and education have developed independently of the need of youngsters, and therefore not necessarily add up with the youngsters' agency (de Vos, 2015). The lived experience and agency of youngsters often defy the boundaries of institutional knowledge and responsibilities (Warming & Fahnøe, 2017). Further research shows a distance between the life worlds of these young people and their coping mechanisms versus the response of the systemic surroundings (Naert et al., 2018 & 2019).

One experienced youth care manager described the youngsters within institutional care as the 'rose bushes of society' (personal communication), referring to rose bushes in vineyards which tend to show possible infections in a much earlier stage than the vineyards themselves. In this metaphor youngsters are regarded as messengers of systemic crises instead of being considered as individual problem cases.

The authors will explore this metaphor as a common point of departure to discuss their ongoing research - respectively in the context of youth care, youth psychiatry, and vocational training of youngsters in the Flemish educational system. This symposium will focus on the consequences of the opposition between the life world of youngsters and the systemic surroundings they find themselves in. The authors discuss how this opposition influences the chosen research method, and how it affects the cooperation and feedback between researcher and the institutional settings in which the research takes place.

1. Matthias Remmery / youth care

Research shows that youngsters in residential youth care in Flanders still suffer from a lack of inclusion and citizenship in society. To improve their inclusion and citizenship in society, recent research, social policy and social work practice developments focus on the development of a positive living group climate in residential youth care. However, this concept focuses mainly on the interpersonal relations between these youngsters and the social workers within the four walls of the residential youth care facility, as a stepping stone to improve the behavior and treatment motivation of the youngsters in order to become good citizens in society. Therefore, this concept approaches these youngsters predominantly as objects of care instead of subjects with future aspirations and relations that are also socio-spatially shaped within the wider social living environment (e.g. school, leisure time and home environment). Consequently, the objective of this research project is to deepen the concept of a positive living group climate by broadening the notion of interpersonal relations to socio-spatial relations, and behavior and treatment motivation to future aspirations.

Based on this objective, ethnographic research in the form of participant observations, is being carried out in a residential youth care facility for youngsters between 16 and 18 years old with a mild or moderate intellectual disability, often in combination with a mental or emotional disorder. The aim of these ethnographic research activities is to gain an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics and processes of meaning-making of the youngsters inside and outside the residential youth care facility.

2. Simon Allemeersch / child psychiatry

Recent years policy reforms in Flanders have furthered the de-institutionalization of residential care facilities. This is done in function of the pursuit of inclusion and community-based care and support. Welfare reform emphasizes the power of

commitment and warm solidarity in our society, in seeking to organize care with/in the community and society. This would enable vulnerable citizens to acquire a meaningful place within society.

In doing so, the dominant conception of de-institutionalization is mainly understood as the dismantling of the architectural and spatial carcass of institutional facilities. The contemporary transition implies a changed relationship between formal and informal care, based on the expectation that family members, neighbours and volunteers will increasingly take responsibility in providing care and support.

Yet, on the flip side of a pronounced inclusion policy, this also creates a residual group of vulnerable citizens who cannot meet the requirements of this policy, as the most vulnerable citizens with the most severe needs risk being excluded. Consequently, a significant number of vulnerable citizens with support needs still end up in residential facilities.

This research focuses on a specialized child psychiatry for children and youngsters which will have to move house in the course of 2023 - towards a new facility on a larger existing care site, within a very different neighborhood. Based on a social spatial framework this research follows the relocation of these living quarters, starting from their old location, towards the new setting. This research will use video and film-making, in co-creation with the children and youngsters, as a way to unravel the meaning the youngsters attribute to their surroundings. This material is then used as the starting point for focus groups with the professionals involved.

3. Saan Van Elsen / vocational education

We may assume that leisure time is important for all young people. But reality shows that leisure participation of youngsters is socio-economically and socio-culturally determined. In general, young people in socially vulnerable situations seem to be underrepresented in organised activities such as youth work, sports clubs or cultural academies. Especially young people in vocational education consistently score negatively on the motivational items presented, in comparison to their fellow students in general secondary education.

Since this type of adult-led activity is associated with various favourable outcomes, policy makers have tried in recent decades to lead these vulnerable (considered non-participating) youth into organised activities – but without visible success and without approaching this challenging group of young people as active meaning-making individuals. From this point of view, a shift of questioning urges: the question of how to get non-participating young people into organised activities must be shifted into the question of how leisure activities (both organised and unorganised) can actually support the participation of young people in society.

From the ongoing fieldwork we will look for a preliminary answer to the question how young people in vocational education give shape and meaning to their leisure time, and how this process is influenced by their lifeworld.

These three presentations will pivot on the complex interplay between (1) the lifeworld of this supposedly challenging group of young people, (2) institutional expectations and limitations, and (3) the possible consequences of these findings for the institutional surroundings in which the research is conducted.

The fieldwork of the authors is ongoing, which makes the discussion of the symposium extra relevant. The preliminary findings presented by the authors are the starting point for a group discussion. In this discussion we look for a broader interpretation of the problematic youngsters' agency as institutional rose bushes: societal messengers and citizens-in-the-making – signalling institutional challenges. How do we underpin this perspective methodologically? What are the ethical considerations? And how do we organize the institutional feedback?

Symposium: Social rights and social work: a dynamic and multi-level perspective on non-take up *by Lore Dewanckel, Tineke Schiettecat, Silke De Troyer and Caroline Vandekinderen*

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A social work perspective on the non-take up of social rights

Since the conception of European welfare states after the second World War and following the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, welfare states have taken an active role in envisioning and pursuing the normative value orientation of social justice and human rights which lead to the implementation of a constitutive rights-based principle of social protection. Welfare states have institutionalised an extensive infrastructure of public welfare services to redistribute social resources, which is often referred to as the 'system world'. However, in the face of growing social, economic, political and demographic challenges, many European welfare states have been confronted with barriers in realising the social rights of certain groups of citizens. This phenomenon has often been referred to as 'the non-take up of social rights', which relates to persons or households not (fully) making use of the welfare benefits and resources they are entitled to. During these transitions, a tendency towards decentralisation and increasingly local welfare provision has been promoted as a strategy to deal with these challenges. Subsequently scholars have emphasised the vital importance of discretion in local welfare systems in realising social rights being considered as dynamic arrangements in which professional actors are involved in the provision of welfare resources and rights. Considering the core mandate and key principles of social work as a practice-based profession and academic discipline, we argue that social work should have a key role in knowledge and practice development on understanding and combating the non-take up of social rights because of their unique position between lifeworld and system. Social work's professional discretion can be situated at the street level in its relationship with the 'system world' while also making use of the spaces that refer to the political and politicising nature of social work practice. In using those discretionary spaces, social work practitioners become more than mere executors of policy but are 'applied social policy makers' who co-construct policy whilst shaping the relationship between lifeworld and system.

In this symposium we focus on social work practices related to realising rights in different contexts and deepen our knowledge about the dynamic and multi-level processes associated with the non-take up of social rights. We adopt a social work research perspective to examine how social work can shape the dynamic relationship between people's life worlds, survival strategies and life trajectories as intertwined with structural and systemic resources. A social work perspective on non-take up is vital due to its quest for social justice as a reference point.

Solidarity and religion: about frictions, complementarity, complexities and sensitivities within urban contexts

'Religiously inspired solidarities' is not an evident and well-known topic in social work and social policy research, but it is an important and relatively recently (re-)emerging phenomenon in practice, especially in cities. Since the development of the welfare state, secular local welfare state institutions like Public Centres for Social Welfare in Belgium have the specific task to secure the social rights of legally protected citizens. The welfare state was conceived to secure social protection against social risks. Besides the benefits of the welfare state, its territorial logic created several conditions and problems that are particularly emerging in urban contexts. This territorial logic, in combination with notions of welfare chauvinism, implies the idea that formal and social rights are based on national identity, merits and borders, in which only formally entitled citizens of a certain nation state, can claim these rights. As a result, also because of (increasingly) conditional and contribution-based logics, for certain groups of people, social rights can hardly be realized in the context of the welfare state and its institutions, which is often framed as the 'non-take up of social

rights'. Non-take up relates to the phenomenon that persons or households do not and/or cannot (fully) make use of the welfare benefits and resources. In this context, there is also increasing evidence that certain material and psychosocial needs are not realized through secular national and local welfare state institutions. These challenges developed a tendency towards subsidiarization in many European welfare states, as well as in Belgium. Horizontal subsidiarization, which implies the pluralisation of actors involved in designing and implementing social policies, stimulate the emergence of (new) hybrid partnerships between public welfare state institutions and religiously inspired solidarity initiatives and civil society in the field of social services and social work.

Within this context, referral is an important theme, especially when looking at the practices in which welfare state institutions are referring clients to religiously inspired solidarity initiatives, which are historically embedded in the Flemish context (mainly a Catholic inspiration but nowadays much more diverse). These practices of referral contain several frictions, complexities and sensitivities in the relationship between formal public welfare state institutions and its professionals, and informal actors in religious organisations and initiatives (such as volunteers). The literature study shows the limited knowledge about referral and its dynamics, which is mostly concentrated on access, accessibility and its obstacles. My ongoing qualitative research with social workers from Public Centres for Social Welfare and volunteers from the religiously inspired solidarity initiatives, focuses therefor on the cultural repertoires of referral and already shows the meaning, importance and frequency of referral (in both directions), and important sensitivities in the relations and dynamics between religious initiatives and welfare state institutions. This ongoing qualitative research has an action research orientation, and will cast a different light on referral between welfare state institutions and religious organisations and the role of professionals and volunteers in realising social rights and help requests.

The canary in the coal mine: The revival of

food aid as a strategy for poverty reduction

Today we increasingly see people falling through the loopholes of the often locally embedded, professional, rights-oriented care network, where a welfare conditionality creeps in. These people are often taken care of by the 'charity economy'. This term was introduced by Kessl (2009, 2014) and describes a volunteer distribution system where basic goods are distributed for free or sold at a discount to people in poverty. The system relies on the supply of everyday consumer goods from industrial overproduction, goods that can no longer be sold by legal standardization specifications, or goods from private households. This is categorized as 'new' because the expansion of such a distribution economy reflects a transformation of the welfare state.

The residual practice of food aid as symptom relief of poverty is not new. Local charitable food distribution has been an inherent part of poor relief since the 19th century. These charitable initiatives were selective in nature, aiming at the impoverished working class and private in nature, with bourgeois women often taking voluntary commitments based on a moralizing and instrumental logic. After the Second World War, the welfare state was further expanded, with the government focusing on redistribution and guaranteeing livelihood security through social assistance, social security and collective provisions. There was a reorientation from a 'charity/philanthropic'-based approach to a 'rights'-based approach, which was implemented with an emphasis on a public, collective and political commitment to realize universal human rights for every person to achieve a life in human dignity. Practices such as food aid thus faded into the background as residual measures, in favor of more structural measures. The current proliferation of food aid points to major problems related to the functioning of the social welfare state, which is confronted with a diminished poverty-reducing capacity and has resorted to new charity economies.

We explored a broad range of those

(informal) food aid initiatives in Ghent (a city in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) through visits, interviews and ethnographic research. Moreover, we conducted interviews with various local policy makers. In our findings, we focus on how these often private and informal practices relate to the extensive infrastructure of public welfare services to redistribute social resources. We argue that the hybrid constructions between public/professional and private/voluntary arrangements are indicative of a transformation in which the new charity economy has become an institutional and functional part of the architectural structure of the main welfare complex itself. This might reflect that human rights are here based on the principle of 'enough', tempering the ambition of (material) equality and facilitating remedial rather than redistribution practices. Further, we unravel what is happening within these informal initiatives in relation to the rights-oriented nature of these practices. We reason that they hold both the risk of becoming a parallel residual circuit for 'non-recyclable' citizens as the potential to track down people who live in the shadows of public welfare services, not taking up their social rights and to bring this in the public debate. Hunger as a catalysator for rights detection. The canary in the coal mine, one that might bark, if not muzzled.

Symposium: Child sexual abuse as a continuous crisis in social work - Sustainable developments as challenges for practice and research in child and youth services *by Bernd Christmann, Jana Demski, Maik Sawatzki and Hannah Esser*

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Child sexual abuse has been one of the dominating topics of child protection in Germany since 2010. Practice and research have developed continuously since then. Nevertheless, there are still numerous open questions and structural as well as professional challenges. Again and again, cases are being disclosed that reveal deficits in the child protection system, provoke criticism of the actors involved, and most of all result in devastating consequences for the children affected. Additional difficulties have also arisen as a result of the pandemic. For example, the various contact restrictions made encounters between children and the help system extremely difficult. At the same time, expanding digitalization potentially evoked increasing risks of victimization through mediatized sexualized violence. And even if a process of normalization has partially set in again, for example within the school system, further efforts are needed to qualify the relevant actors in child protection for dealing with sexualized violence in the long term. Three research and transfer projects will be used as examples to illustrate possible perspectives for this.

One focus lies on the role of the Jugendamt (youth welfare office), which has the function of public guardian of the child's well-being. The analysis of problematic case histories shows that dealing with child sexual abuse is a genuine professional challenge for the members of the different services of the youth welfare office. The professionals have to deal with complex case constellations in regard to risk assessment as well as in assistance planning, which differ in many respects from other forms of violence or abuse. The pressure to act and the fear of making professional mistakes are particularly present, and personal emotional involvement and distress are also very pronounced. The increasing public and political attention to the topic of sexualized violence contributes to increasing the fears and stresses of professionals. At the same time, this increased public sensitivity is also a reason to strengthen the youth welfare office in its key function and to improve the qualification of the professionals.

The project "Focus Youth Welfare Office" aims at generating and processing relevant knowledge for employees of the youth welfare office. Existing research findings, e.g. on social and psychological dynamics in the area of sexualized violence or on perpetrator strategies, are examined for their specific relevance to the requirements of the youth welfare office and made accessible at a low level. The results of three partial studies (file analysis, group discussions, online survey) will be triangulated and used in particular for the design of assistance planning and the development of protection concepts. The positioning of the youth welfare office as an important representative of social work vis-à-vis other actors in child protection, such as the judiciary, police and health care, will also be sharpened. Both the collection of data and its evaluation and processing are carried out in the context of research-practice-feedback loops in dialogue with partners from practice, in order to meet the requirement of a sustainable and reciprocal transfer of knowledge and expertise.

Furthermore, special attention is paid to the field of residential child care. Children and adolescents who are placed in residential institutions are particularly vulnerable due to their biographical experiences. In addition, forms of residential care are characterized by strong power and dependency relationships. In recent years, numerous studies have shown that the extent of sexualized violence in institutions is above average, as is the risk of revictimization. This is even more true for children and adolescents with disabilities and impairments. The future orientation of child and youth care in Germany towards comprehensive inclusion therefore makes it indispensable that inclusive settings in particular take measures to protect their addressees.

The joint research project "Developing and

Testing Inclusive Protection Concepts in Inpatient Child and Youth Welfare Facilities (SCHUTZINKLUSIV)" of the WWU Münster, the DJI, the SOS Kinderdorf e.V. and the SOCLES tries to develop and sustainably test protection concepts in the context of inclusive child and youth welfare in an alternating cooperation of science and practice. The subproject A Proximity and Distance of the WWU Münster forms the empirical starting point of the project. With the help of an ethnographic approach, the special protection needs of children and adolescents in inclusive inpatient youth welfare facilities are explored in relation to the regulation of proximity and dis-tance. The aim is to enable a fitting and participatory further development of inclusive protection concepts in the context of potential and risk analyses.

And in the area of digitality, too, specific challenges arise for social work. The digital space contains its own risk structures for sexualized violence. Since digital technologies intensively permeate the lifeworld (Lebenswelt) of children and young people, prevention is an important concern. The digital media usage of young people has undergone relevant changes as a result of the pandemic. Digital interactions have become increasingly important. Analogous to the associated opportunities, risks have also evolved.

The project "SoSdigital" looks at the potentially antinomic relationship of empowering and protecting children and young people from sexualized violence. For this purpose, the perspectives of three professional groups are examined, which are mainly active in sexual pedagogy, violence prevention and media pedagogy. The perceptions of professionals from these three groups with regard to the particular danger characteristics, but also the potentials for the appropriation of self-determination and self-efficacy in a digital context will be examined. Special attention will be paid to the question of what changes the professionals have noticed in the digital media usage of young people as a result of the pan-demic. Based on this, training content will be developed and provided together with rep-resentatives from the

field.

The presentations embed the three research projects in the current developments of child and youth welfare in Germany with regard to sexual child abuse - also against the background of the pandemic - and provide an insight into the status quo of the respective research processes.

Symposium: Radical Hope: Recent developments in theory, research and practice of the poverty-aware paradigm *by Michal Krumer-Nevo, Shlomit Weiss-Dagan and Shachar Timor-Shlevin*

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This symposium will present the current developments of the Poverty-Aware Paradigm (PAP) in Israel after the Ministry of Welfare and Social Services have adopted the paradigm as a leading model for social workers. Offering a revamped connection between social work and the body of knowledge known as 'critical poverty knowledge,' the paradigm is a full theoretical framework that addresses core facets of theory, ethic and practice with people living in poverty. Seeing poverty as a violation of the right to dignity and acknowledging the everyday resistance of people to their predicament, the PAP enables a critical interpretation that contextualizes service users' behavior. As a method of intervention, the PAP offers an array of rights-based and relationship-based practices that aim to work against injustice in the realm of both redistribution and recognition.

This symposium will be dedicated to the latest scholarly developments of PAP in various levels of practice and research.

The first presentation (Michal Krumer-Nevo) will describe the current development of the PAP in three governmental ministries: The Ministry of Welfare, in social work with families and with offenders; The Ministry of Justice, in the practice of lawyers with people in debts; The Ministry of Health, in a rehabilitation service for people with mental illness. The contribution of these developments to social change will be discussed.

The second presentation (Shlomit Weiss-Dagan) will describe the development and validation of a new scale for examining attitudes regarding the etiology and relational–symbolic aspects of poverty.

The third presentation (Shachar Timor-Shlevin) will introduce a new way to include Nancy Fraser's idea of representation into the theory of critical practice in social work, based on the Poverty-Aware Paradigm.

Symposium: Re-inventing the social professions in vulnerable neighborhoods during covid-19: analyzing landscapes of care as a socio-spatial professional orientation *by Griet Roets, Mare Knibbe, Sander van Lanen, Evelyne Deceur, Simon Allemeersch, Tineke Schiettecat, Ceren Sezer, Sara Willems, Klasien Horstman*

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In diverse European welfare states, the recent 'community turn' reinvigorates the transfer of care responsibilities of the welfare state as a provider of public resources and services to the informal, private sphere within households and communities. These developments interestingly also result in the spatial rescaling of the nation state's powers and responsibilities downwards to lower territorial levels of local welfare systems and communities. Little attention has nonetheless been paid to the vital yet changing role of community-based professionals throughout these transitions, although they are increasingly part of complex and dynamic community arrangements in which structural as well as local conditions give rise to complicated challenges in the provision of care. The complexities they have to deal with on an everyday basis have become particularly tangible during the covid-19 pandemic, which limited the functioning, accessibility and quality of public services that might be considered essential vehicles for the social professions in their quest for social justice.

In this contribution, we therefore explore how the corona-measures influenced frontline professional strategies of community-oriented social and health care workers in diverse neighborhoods, drawing on research insights that emerged from joint and ongoing research seminars between scholars located at universities in the cities of Aachen (Germany), Ghent (Belgium), and Groningen and Maastricht (the Netherlands). For the cross-analysis of the findings, we rely on a socio-spatial analytical framework of 'landscapes of care' as a key concept, and differentiate between how professionals might shape the interrelated matter-, mind-, and power-scape of care in the community. The framework allows for an in-depth understanding of how the national scale and socio-political, structural arrangements of care influence how the local scale of community-based care is produced, considering space not just in terms of the landscapes that demarcate physical-material boundaries, but also as produced through socio-cultural social interactions and processes of meaning-making, and political structures and systemic power relations.

The role of social workers on addressing young people needs in emergency situations *by Eliona Kulluri Bimbashi and Marsela Allmuça*

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Albania is one of the European countries that continues to have a young population. During the last three decades, the process of transition is associated with prolonged substantial changes, which have had an effect on all youth. Still some young people are more vulnerable than others in terms of social exclusion since the years of early school. Statistics show that in Albania 15% of young people face the risk of poverty, 46% of prisoners are young and 12.7% of illiterate people are young. The education of young people has changed positively in recent years, as in the case of reducing the gap between those who attend high school and then go on to higher education. On the other hand, there is a general decrease in the enrolment of young people in secondary and higher education, but researchers explain this phenomenon as a result of the decrease in the birth rate. Unemployment or underemployment continue to be one of the main problems of young people. In 2015 the ILO expressed its concern about unemployment at very high youth levels at the time. In recent years, there has been a decrease in youth unemployment and an increase in their employment rate. Unemployment and long-term unemployment among young people bring a number of other consequences, such as the risk of poverty, increased desire to emigrate, physical and mental health problems, higher crime, etc. Young people who want to emigrate are growing. According to a recent study, the desire to emigrate is at levels 60-70% among young people aged 18-19 and peaks at the age of 28-30 reaching the figure of 81%. These young people have plans to emigrate within one or three years. Also, it has been noticed that the desire to emigrate has already shifted to young people who have completed high school, vocational or higher school in contrast to the situation of a few years ago. Students are the ones who express the most desire to leave Albania, at even higher levels than unemployed people and the main reason for this tendency is the desire to improve living standards. Young people in need in rural areas and Roma community have lack access to education services, they suffer discrimination and disadvantages. Many of them have little education and remain unemployed for a long period of time, most are homeless and at risk to be involved in criminal activities or to be subject of offenders and traffickers, while a small percentage of they display emotional and behavioral and mental health problems. These are the consequences of the absence or insufficiency of appropriate services from the responsible structures.

Methods: The methodology was mixed one with structured questionnaire with young people and semi structured interviews with 12 social workers at local levels. Participants in this study were N =2041 young people aged 18-29 randomly selected based on the general population of the youth age group (18-29 years old) from 567,054 (INSTAT, 2018) distributed in 12 regions of the country according to the preliminary rural division (49.9%) and urban (50.1%). Of this sample 51. 3% were girls and 48.7% boys. Interviews were transcribed and examined using thematic analysis and questionaries through SPSS program.

Results: Data from the study with young people showed: access to the services and trust in institutions where young people would turn or ask for support in a difficult situation are religious institutions (100%) and family members (85.6%). In very low percentages are specialized social services at local level and relevant professionals such as doctors, social workers, etc. Furthermore, institutions in which young people have the lowest trust are Municipalities (65%), justice institutions (63.5%), public and private educational institutions (63.3% and 60.8% respectively), hospitals (61.1%). Data from the interviews with social workers showed that vulnerable young people are not part of local agenda and are not included in social local plans, specialised social services for young people are missing in the most part of the country and there is a lack of capacities of professionals of social care services/social workers which leads to

incomplete professional services and weak services to the most vulnerable groups especially young people. Data from the study are good base for recommendations to local government institutions, responsible ministry and school of social work for more attention to vulnerable young people in the social work curricula.

The Exacerbating Effects of COVID-19 on Children: The Clients of the Israeli 360 National Program for at-Risk Children and Youth as a Case Study *by Tal Arazi and Yael Sabag*

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Background:
The COVID-19 crisis had extensive impact on all children and youth in Israel and worldwide in all areas of life, including health, socioemotional and academic aspects, and particularly increased risk of exposure to violence, abuse and neglect within the family. The pandemic itself, with its social distancing restrictions, has led to the partial or complete closure of most educational, treatment and leisure settings and facilities for children and youth. In addition, children have been exposed to the effects of the crisis on their parents, often experiencing existential anxiety and fear for the latter's employment and health. All these have been exacerbated by the fact that the universal and dedicated support systems ordinarily serving the children and families have also been partially or even completely shut down, reducing the ability to identify those children and youth, to assess the exacerbation in their condition, and to provide help for them and their families, precisely at this challenging period.

Therefore, immediately upon the outbreak of the pandemic, an immediate need was identified to assess the situation of at-risk children and youth given the specific risk situations involved in the pandemic and resulting restrictions. In the absence of official administrative data, a flash review was written at the Brookdale Institute in March 2020 in order to asses the potential risks to children. The hypotheses arising from the review were empirically tested as part of the evaluation of the children served by the Israeli 360 National Program for Children and Youth at Risk by the end of that year.

Method:
The review was based on etiological risk models, initial data from Israel and worldwide, and conjectures from similar past crises such as economic crises and natural disasters. Toward the end of 2020, the hypotheses arising from the review were empirically tested as part of the ongoing assessment of children integrated in the 360 program. The data were based on surveys completed by professionals about the children under their care. The data were analyzed and the measurement in 2020 (n = 16,682) was compared to the two measurements conducted in 2018 (n = 21,300). The analysis examined the relations between the children's various characteristics and the scope and nature of changes in risk situations among them. The inter-measurement comparison (based on examining the gaps between T0 and T1) attested to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on children and youth at risk with regard to each life area.

Findings:
In 2020, the improvement among the children participating in the program was more moderate than the one observed in the previous years, in all areas of life. In areas where risk situations were identified in the first assessment and interventions were provided, the degree of improvement was similar to that observed in previous years. Compared to previous years, the second assessment identified many more risk situations in new life areas. The 2020 results cannot be explained by deeper acquaintance with the children and their distress during their stay in treatment settings. Therefore, the findings support the hypotheses regarding the negative effects of COVID-19 on children and youth based on etiological models and preliminary world data.

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The past, present and future: How can we (re)think (of) future-oriented social work with illegalised migrants? *by Soline Ballet and Robin Vandevoordt*
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Future-orientation is a social work practice with illegalised migrants in Belgium. This paper will address the origin, development and logics of future-orientation in order to gain a more complex understanding of sustainable social work in times of crisis.

In Belgium, illegalised migrants risk detention and deportation, are for a large part excluded from the welfare state and the formal labour market. To obtain a residence permit, is therefore one of the actions to solve illegalised migrants' precarious position in Belgian society. The Regularisation Campaigns of both 2000 and 2009 – as moments of 'crisis' – installed a temporary, exceptional procedure of collective regularisation, based on a set of certain criteria. Partially as a result, the practice of future-orientation developed, aiming to work individually with illegalised migrants towards 'durable' future perspectives, based on their initial migration project, and their present situation.

The development of future-oriented social work with illegalised migrants can also be located on the Flemish policy level. Whereas the immigration policy is a federal competence, the Flemish government has been responsible for the reception and integration of immigrants. Subsequent decrees created policy space for future-orientation with illegalised migrants, which incited various organisations to employ this type of social support. In reality, the actual development of future-oriented social work happened with a constant interplay between state actors and NGOs.

The paper then elaborates on the different practices of future-orientation and the various organisations and actors that use it, in the current socio-political context. While for some it is an open-ended process of socio-legal and psycho-social support with no specific end goal, a future-oriented approach also risks becoming a method to facilitate voluntary return.

To work towards 'a more durable' future for illegalised migrants, based on their past migration trajectories and their present situation, entails a specific temporality. As such, the paper also aims to grasp which temporal logics underpin practices of future-oriented social work, and which temporal dynamics this type of support produces.

Ultimately, this paper engages with questions on how future-orientation as a social work practice relates to the concept of 'crisis' and different temporalities.

The triadic constellation of a new service in the German Social Code II: "holistic care and assistance accompanying former long-term-unemployed during their subsidized employment" *by Frank Bauer*

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The paper is based on an ongoing empirical research project in den Federal Republic of Germany, which consists of a comprehensive empirical evaluation of a new law within the second book of the German social code (SGB II, Sozialgesetzbuch II), which deals with long-term-unemployment, neediness and poverty. In 2019 the so-called law for "participation chances" has been put into effect. This law allows for publicly subsidized employment for long-term unemployed. A central element of this law is a new institution as a regular instrument in the German social code: holistic care and assistance accompanying the former long-term-unemployed during their subsidized employment (ganzheitliche beschäftigungsbegleitende Betreuung). The paper concentrates exclusively on the research module concerning the holistic care, which actually is a complex example of social work in times of crisis.

The research module "holistic care and assistance accompanying the former long-term-unemployed during their subsidized employment" is of utmost relevance for the discussion of sustainable social work in times of crisis. This is not only because due to the covid-19-pandemia the share of long-term-unemployed is rising again, but also because the working conditions as well for the subsidized employed and the social worker have changed massively. A relevant question is thus, is it possible at all to establish a working assistance without regular face-to-face contacts and how do the restrictions affect the working relationship?

But the central question and the core of the paper is more fundamental. Since the addressed assistance is a new service in the social code two research has to establish an insight into its very structure. The law only sketches the task very roughly as a stabilisation of the subsidized employment relationship and the person of the former long-unemployed. Apart from the fact that this offers only a poor guidance to the experts themselves it is necessary to reconstruct the actual practises in detail.

That is why the subjective-matter of the sociological reconstructive research project is the triadic constellation: social worker – subsidized employed client – establishment where the employment takes place. Thus, one case is a triad consisting of three dyadic relations, the working relationship between social worker and subsidized employee, the employment relationship between employee and employer and the relationship between the social worker and the employer of his client. Only a detailed reconstruction of these relations can really show, where there is need for assistance, what this need consists of and which means of assistance and care are utilized by the social workers to solve the problems.

The paper will elaborate on contrastive case presentations which show how different needs of employees for assistance, different modes of integration within the establishment but also different types of working conditions for the experts of the assistance affect the service itself. It has to be considered, that the assistance-services can be implemented by the public jobcentres themselves or by educational institutions, that the employers can be profit-oriented private employees but also establishments of the welfare economics and last but not least that the target group of long-term-unemployed is extremely heterogenous. On the basis of a series of strong contrasts between constellations the paper will draw conclusions concerning the structure of the new service, address the consequences of the critical working condition during the covid-19-pandemia and discuss the generalizability of the results.

I'm actually your worst nightmare - intergenerational dialogues between social workers *by Steven Brandt, Rudi Roose and Griet Verschelden*

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It is stated that the core principles of social work: human rights, social justice, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are under pressure and that social work is becoming depoliticized. This finger of blame is mainly put outside social work, for instance a right-wing government or neoliberalism. However, inside social work, the critique seems also to be targeted to the newest generation of social workers. They are supposed to have an individualized and controlling perspective on clients and are less involved in a social justice approach. As such, it is asserted that the younger generation contributes to the depolitization of social work. However, there are indications that these statements are ungrounded and that the blaming of one generation by another might be underpinned by sentiments rather than facts. Could it be that older generation tends to evaluate current evolutions from a nostalgic and paternalistic standpoint? Do they impose their knowledge on the newest generation as a solution for current problems? A polarisation between generations of social worker, however, might lead to a battle over who holds the truth, rather than a constructive discussion about the core principles of social work.

In this presentation we explore the outcome of experiments with intergenerational dialogues that were set up in the public welfare centre of Ghent. These dialogues were set up as a non-formal research method which regards both the youngest and oldest generation as equally entitled to their part of the truth. Both generations have an equal voice, truth, and interest in the debate, rather than blaming the other or filling in the perspective for the other generation.

It is shown that the dialogues appealed to a certain curiosity and rapprochement between generations. It appeared that two members of different generations exhibited a genuine interest in the other's opinions so as to seem productive for the discussion of policy, strategy and societal problems. Dealing with disagreement and discussion may as well be part as a learning process because the interaction between the two perspectives opened up a reflection on one's own assumptions about the relationship of social work with policy and politics. Therefore the dialogue as such could be perceived as learning instrument between generations.

Preparing Social Workers to Assess Mental Health in a Post Covid-19 Environment *by Anthony Bruner*

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The Covid-19 pandemic has been identified as one of the most recent contributors to poor mental health and social workers should be in the front lines in the battle against Covid-19 related mental health issues. However, most social workers in the United Kingdom are not trained to assess for these specific challenges, understand the symptoms or meaningfully contribute in multi-disciplinary discussions with mental health service providers. Considering some of the most recent high-profile child deaths, some of which have been linked to the pandemic lockdown, it seems that social workers should now, more than ever, become more fluent in our current understanding of how the mind works and what it looks like when it is not functioning as we expect.

This conflict is best described with some simple numbers: After reviewing 25 serious case reviews, 47% of those involved a social worker assessing or engaging a vulnerable person either with a mental health issue or being cared for by someone with a mental health issue. However, out of the 72 higher education institutes which offer a social work programme, only 29% of those offer a module focused on mental health principles.

The discrepancy can partly be explained via an historical perspective, specifically understanding the interweaving relationship between social work and psychiatry, and how the two have diverged over the last 100 years. Psychiatry has claimed the mental health battlefield as its own, and with the influence of pharmacology in the last 20 years, social work, and the social causes of some mental health conditions, have largely been ignored in favour of a medical model, easy-fix prescription. However, social workers are given the legal right to safeguard children when they are at risk from harm from a carer whose condition may not be managed or whose parenting skills are compromised by a personality disorder.

When children are injured or killed, it is often the social worker holding the proverbial bag of blame.

Additionally, social workers can also be advocates for those enmeshed and entangled in an industry of changing diagnoses, fluctuating medication and endless medical appointments. When someone's "diagnosis" is rooted in an environmental problem, social workers are in a better position to understand their needs and place them within the correct context, sometimes with or without their medically trained colleagues.

At the root of this idea is that our current understanding of mental health very much sits within a socially constructed framework. This is best illustrated by the evolving Diagnostic Statistics Manual V (DSM 5) which, along with its European counterpart, ICD11, provides practitioners with the criteria for diagnosis. It's well established that many of these diagnoses are subjective and social factors such as one's family, personal circumstances or societal pressures are key contributors towards poor mental health, none of which reside "within the person"; the realm of the medical model. Consequently, these stressors are treated with a medical intervention, namely medication, which may treat the symptoms, but do nothing towards addressing the root cause.

These ideas are at the root of a current qualitative study querying what social worker's experience with mental health principles are within a child safeguarding context. This research will ask between 10-12 social workers about their work within the previous 6 months, specifically exploring their exposure to clinical mental health concepts, their comfort level when working with medically trained mental health practitioners and whether they felt prepared to use this information in a meaningful way.

Social work is playing "catch-up" in its safeguarding duties towards vulnerable children, and already the UK has seen some tragic outcomes stemming from families who were unable to be seen due to the national lockdown and the social isolation

some of these families experienced as a result. Social workers need to be armed with the right education so they can use mental health clinical skills and knowledge when needed, engage with medically trained professionals in a multi-disciplinary setting, and advocate for those whose personal identity is inextricably linked with a medical diagnosis they neither need, deserve or understand. The Covid-19 lockdowns have already been identified as triggers for underlying mental health issues, and social workers, with their expertise of understanding social catalysts, should be on the front lines of this battle.

This presentation will explain why social workers are well positioned to contribute towards the fight against Covid-19 related mental health distress and why they are not better prepared to do so.

Towards A Positive Living Group Climate in (Flemish) Residential Youth Care *by Lisa Cardoen, Stijn Vandevelde, Rudi Roose and Filip De Baets*

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It is important to conduct research on the way in which residential youth care can be seen as a meaningful intervention instead of merely a last resort. One of the priorities in providing good quality care is developing a positive living group climate. Striving for a positive living environment is one of the core elements for organizations and group workers. To collect and analyze information about (the implementation of) a positive living group climate and work climate in residential youth care, the Academische Werkplaats Leefklimaat (AWL: "Academic Workplace Positive Living Climate") was created. According to the principles of action research, the AWL consisted of both a learning and research trajectory involving 51 professional youth care organizations, to answer the following research questions: 1) Which elements are seen as facilitators/barriers by the respondents in creating a positive living group climate?; 2) How can facilitating aspects be embedded in residential youth care?; and 3) What is the impact of a positive living climate on indicators, such as aggression? The results show that the respondents have a clear view on those elements that provide a positive living group climate on the group, organizational and policy level. Small (residential) groups; the creation of an intersectoral community to discuss a 'positive living climate' and learn from each other are emphasized on policy level (macro). On organizational level (meso) following facilitators were reported: a clear organizational vision on a positive living climate; a stable, well communicating and trained team; time and space to invest in the relationship between children/youth and group workers; and the use of validated instruments focusing on the living and working climate. Genuine commitment regarding client participation, a focus on a clean, decent and attractive living environment and insight into group dynamics, combined with knowledge and the use of methods, are among the facilitating factors at group level (micro). A

lack of critical attitude towards the (obvious) rules and agreements, the multitude of administrative tasks and consultation moments and insufficient resources, knowledge and expertise are hindering factors in the development of a positive living environment. Further (qualitative/quantitative) research on research question 3 is needed. (Temporary) closed care was the focus of the second learning trajectory. Once again it became clear that there are no ready-made answers about the way in which an open living climate can be shaped. Through support, provided by the AWL, we hope to be able to provide input to organizations to (further) expand their vision and way of functioning towards a high-quality environment, in which the realization of a positive living environment is indispensable.

In doing so, there are a few main elements we want to emphasize:

- Working on the living environment has no boundaries in time and space

Attention to the living (and working) climate is a basic attitude that requires 24/7 attention, with a view to both clients and employees. The living environment is not a non-committal concept, but it is something that we must work on, taking into account the rights of children and young people.

- No 'positive living climate' toolbox

Although facilitators and barriers can be noted in working on an open climate, the living environment should not be understood as a technically implementable framework. Realizing a positive living environment should be understood as a dynamic concept whereby employees repeatedly and consciously reflect on what occurs in the living group and how they can adjust their actions accordingly. It is about striving for a basic attitude in which safety is the fundament for further growth, both as a client and as an employee.

- A positive living climate is not always positive

Based on discussions with employees and managers, it can be noted that the term 'positive living climate' (sometimes) is reduced to the interpretation that the atmosphere in the living group should always be cheerful and joyful. This leads to the (mis)perception that group workers are no longer allowed to structure, set limits or

react when the safety is compromised. More important than the term, with regard to the living environment, is the question: how does an organization consciously deal with (un)safety, aggression, complex situations, difficult issues, incidents, but also with positive matters. All this should be included in the pedagogical organizational vision. Based on these findings, recommendations for policy, practice and research will be presented.

Network governance in local territories: from ideal to reality *by Cristiana Dias de Almeida and Cristina Pinto Albuquerque*

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We intend to analyse, discuss and reflect on the processes of local governance in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects applied within the scope of social programmes or policies, from the analysis of the changes that have occurred in Portuguese society in the last 30 years and their repercussions on the people's lives, organisations and territories.

The conquest of democracy was an unequivocal milestone in the process of recognition and enshrinement of social rights in Portugal. The functions assumed by the Social State guarantee the universality of rights. However, over the years some weaknesses of the established system associated with the centralisation of functions have been demonstrated, namely the difficulty in accessing services, due to the location of physical services and/or the distance from the population, and the excessive slowness in accessing rights, mainly due to the bureaucratisation of services. On the other hand, there is a tradition of cooperation between the State and Social Economy organisations in the provision of goods and services (signature of the Cooperation Pact for Social Solidarity in 1996) in the areas of childhood, youth, disability, old age, health, education and social action. In this context, there was a progressive delegation of competencies in the field of social action, which oscillated between periods of greater centralisation and others of greater decentralisation of powers and those competencies.

Methods: Through the analysis of an example of a policy measure (the Local Social Intervention Network / Social Support Service), the application of questionnaire surveys (to professionals from 74 different municipalities), the accomplishment of case studies and focus groups with privileged actors, it was possible to define axes of analysis that allow to understand the dynamics of governance and classify characterizing features. These same features enabled the constitution of governance models adopted in the territories.

Results: The research made it possible to identify the virtues and limitations of the adoption of territorial governance models, greatly influenced by the history of the previous conciliation and the degree of openness of the territories to their operationalisation. Nevertheless, there was an evaluative ambiguity and controversy in the debate on its necessity and usefulness, on the one hand, and of discredit on the effectiveness of evaluation processes, on the other.

Brief discussion and Implications: Despite the theoretical recognition of the relevance of evaluation, there prevails a culture of mandatory compliance with evaluation practices, when imposed, without an appropriation of its results or the adoption of measures according to the recommendations. The need to strengthen awareness of the effective application of evaluation practices, as moments of reflection and learning, based on the principles of participation, usefulness, flexibility/adaptability, appreciation of complexity, multi-method approach and focus on changes and impacts, is emphasized. Only an evaluation based on the values of transparency, independence, ethics and inclusion can contribute to assessing the results, effects and impacts of projects, programmes and social policies based on territorial governance models.

**How can cooperation between social workers support the social rights of young people in vulnerable situations in Flanders*? by Jan Naert and Wendy Eerdekens*

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How can cooperation between social workers support the social rights of young people in vulnerable situations in Flanders?

An increasing number of young people in European cities are living in vulnerable situations. Social workers try to intervene in domains such as education, welfare work and youth work. Yet, too many young people are insufficiently reached (Naert, Roets, Roose, & Vanderplasschen, 2019).

This action research is conducted in the city of Ghent (Belgium). Together with social work organisations, the cooperation between youth welfare, youth work and education for young people between 15 and 25 years in vulnerable situations is examined. Different perspectives on support needs are mapped out. A lifeworld orientation (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009) is used as the underlying framework for this research project.

Results show a fragmentation of service provision making it hard to receive appropriate support. Too often, organisations seem unaware of each other's existence or practices. Also, assumptions about each other complicate good cooperation. This leads to difficulties in providing support for young people in vulnerable situations, especially support that needs a cross-border approach.

The need for better cooperation as a widely shared view between social workers in the different sectors (Roets, Roose, Schiettecat, & Vandenbroeck, 2016). Nonetheless, some important tensions emerge that need to be addressed, such as the way problems of youngsters are defined by different partners, how organisations are structured, different ways of cooperation that do not relate to each other. This causes difficulties in creating qualitative support networks closely connected to the context of youngsters.

In this session we want to present a reflective framework for cooperation. This framework aims at providing a basis for connection with youngsters in vulnerable situations. Furthermore important elements of cooperation are included such as: co-construction of minimal support, linkage between youthwork – youth care – school and interventions that are direct at different levels (micro-, meso- and macrolevel).

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Handle with care - Mothers and Child protection social workers: Reflections on Care and Agency *by Andrea Fleckinger*

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The presentation reflects the agency of single mothers as addressees of child protection social services in their interaction with their social workers. The insights presented are part of a qualitative participatory research project on the experiences of single mothers with child protection social workers in South-Tyrol - Northern Italy. It aims to contribute to a critical discussion on the role of mothers as addressees of child protection social services, the role their knowledge plays within the assessment processes, as well as their methods to cope with situations where their decision-making power had undergone significant limitations. A particular focus is drawn on the two concepts of Care and Agency, both elements that shape the daily social work practice.

The broad concept of agency in this presentation is understood as the possibility of an individual to act. The specific focus is on the capability of addresses to actively construct the collaboration and interaction with their social workers. Agency further includes power, understood as a transformative capacity (Raithelhuber, 2008). Therefore, reflections on empowerment and disempowerment are important to critically analyze the multiple vulnerabilities evoked by the hierarchical structure of the relationship between the addressee and the social worker. The concept of agency helps to ask about the social conditions that enable the respective forms of self-determination. In this respect, agency is understood as a continuous negotiation process, strongly connected to the specific context (Scherr, 2013).

To broader the understanding of the specific vulnerabilities, the relationship between social worker and addressee is based on, Tronto's concept of homines curans is integrated (Tronto, 2017). This paws the way for a deeper reflection on the neoliberal shaping the concept of care has experienced within social work practice (Tronto, 2017, Brandt, et. al 2019, Pentini & Lorenz, 2020). In contrast, the concept of homines curans opens for an ontological shift towards an understanding that all humans are fragile, interdependent, and in continuous need to give and receive care. This particular focus on care highlights the intersections between the elements of power, agency, motherhood, and social work practice.

Based on concrete case examples, the (re)actions of the single mothers to their social workers and their methods applied to "handle" their social workers are explored. Their accounts show a broad perspective including experiences of empowerment, resignation, powerlessness, fear, and aggression. With the aim to give a voice to the often hidden views of addressees the presentation adds significant elements to the actual discourses on the current crisis of social work profession. Including the knowledge of addressees at eye-level, embedded into the relational ontology of care, gives an impetus to formulate responses that create sustainable social work in a post-pandemic society.

Intervention of social work within solving toxic legacy in Slovakia *by Martin Gál, Michaela Vaceková, Jana Levická*

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The ecological approach in the context of social justice points to the complexity of social phenomena that are the object of professional interest of social work. The role of social workers in this approach is to find a balance between the perceptual needs of the client and the possibilities of their fulfillment. In several cases, the solution lies in interdisciplinary cooperation. It is also important that effective interventions must be scientifically validated and recorded for wider use. Research in the field of environmental justice thus relates the social, economic and environmental aspects of everyday life. As well, it is necessary to monitor how individual human rights are fulfilled (Matthies et al., 2000; McKinnon, Alston, 2016). The long-range failure of deteriorating living conditions of certain groups of our clients indicates that their right to a healthy environment has not been respected. Despite the long-standing notion that these problems occur only in economically insufficiently developed countries, it is necessary to begin more actively try to resolve this issue also in the Slovak Republic. The economic development of Slovakia between 1980 and 2000 caused that almost 40% of the territory in 2019 was marked as slightly disturbed and almost 10% as intensely disturbed environment. Due to the small area of the Slovak Republic, the fact that the conditions of good environmental quality do not reach even 50% of the territory is very worrying. From the point of view of social work, is the alarming fact that in those 10% of the territory marked as intensely disturbed environment, there is no systematic assistance from the state, which would help to gradually resolve the situation. The paradox is that this Slovak toxic heritage is essentially a state heritage. Prior to 1990, in the territory of present Slovakia there operated state-owned enterprises which pursued to mining and quarrying industries, the chemical industry, mechanical engineering, textile production and other sectors. After 1990, almost all of these companies were privatized, mainly by foreign entities. The new owners mostly refuse to solve environmental burdens caused by the inappropriate manipulation with waste and wrong managing of former state-owned enterprises. On the contrary, some of them continue to increase environmental pollution. In Slovakia, we still have active sludge lagoons, gudron (petrol toxic waste) pits, landfills of toxic waste and other chemical waste threatening the air, soil and our waters. There are still a lot of locations in the country where people live in the immediate vicinity of such an environmental burden. Usually, it is people living in poverty or social exclusion (Rambaree, Powers, Smith, 2019). Their age, family circumstances or economic situation do not allow to inhabitants of these localities to change the environment, despite the real threat. The goal of the paper is to present the results of qualitative research focused on this "Slovak toxic heritage" in the context of social justice and social work. Within the qualitative research, we used the method of content analysis and the method of semi-structured interview. The subject of the content analysis was 15 sources available on the Internet, which contain valid information about the condition of the environment in Slovakia. Based on the indicators, we identified locations in the Slovak Republic with multiple risks, in which we conducted semi-structured interviews with selected representatives. The research sample consisted of 23 local experts. Our research findings confirm that serious economic, work and health problems will be accompanied in the near future by social problems, such as the accumulation of poverty, the departure of productive members of the community, the growing need for social services, and so on. We are also forced to declare that the state leaves the solution of these problematic situations to the self-government and organizations of the 3rd sector.

Prioritising cases in waiting lists:

empirical study and analysis from the viewpoint of social justice *by Koen Gevaert*
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Social workers must often negotiate and make decisions about resource allocation on a micro-level, in the context of scarce resources and waiting lists. They are confronted with the difficult task of prioritising cases: who should have priority over whom in access to care, and why. Although many social workers meet this problem regularly, these decisions are nevertheless always accompanied by doubt and controversy.

Professionals who prioritise cases take difficult decisions with far-reaching consequences for the service users involved, since these decisions are heavily impacting on the accessibility of professional care. There is however little scholarly evidence on how such a decision-making practice works in real life. Based on existing literature on discretion and decision-making, it can be assumed that to obtain more knowledge on how this decision-making practice works, it will be necessary to relate that practice to its policy context and to its moral and political dimensions.

In this presentation, we discuss the main findings of several studies in which prioritisation processes were scrutinised in the context of Integrated Youth Care in Flanders, more specifically in the domains of long-term residential care for minors with disabilities and in Child Welfare and Protection. These studies were undertaken in the context of a PhD, where the following research questions are addressed:

1. How does the practice of prioritisation relate to its social policy context?
2. Which kind of decision-making practice actually takes place when professionals use their discretion to decide about priorities on a case-level?
3. How can prioritisation be theorised as a moral and political practice, based on the principle of social justice?

The research design consisted of four steps: a systematic literature review, an analysis of policy documents, an empirical study on the argumentation of professionals by means of video-recorded case-discussions, and an empirical study that explored how these professionals reflect on their own moral agency in this process, by means of semi-structured interviews.

Firstly, the systematic review mainly taught us that, to the extent that prioritisation is a subject of research at all in youth care, this research is dominated by the ambition to develop decision-making tools in terms of point-count measuring instruments, trying to resolve the controversial character of prioritisation by giving the decision a status of objectivity. Secondly, in the policy analysis, we found that policy-makers show little recognition of the fact that every policy strategy that aims to deal with prioritisation, inevitably creates its own new contradictions and problems. The illusion of a perfect solution puts the burden to actually 'solve' the problem on the shoulders of the professionals. Thirdly, our observations of the argumentations made in real-life case-discussions, learned us that the professionals do not just neutrally apply rules, but take a stance, in two ways: by making a personal and active interpretation of the situation and by creatively applying universal criteria to a particular case. Our last study probed at the lived experience of these professionals, and showed how that experience is dominated by ambivalence, caused by the inherent tension between the policy context on the one hand and actual practice on the other hand.

Finally, after discussing these findings in our presentation, we want to propose a number of core elements that any policy, and any professional, should reflect on and should choose sides on in prioritisation practices, from the viewpoint of social justice.

Social Cost Benefit Analysis as a Paradigmatic Shift in the Community Planning of Social Services *by Kateřina Glumbíková and Marek Mikulec*

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Community planning of social services is a method of social work that can be used to plan social services at the level of municipalities or regions to meet local specifics and the needs of individual citizens. The planning of social services set up in this way is further followed by their financing by a specific region or municipality.

Community planning of social services in the Czech Republic is inherently associated with the uncertainty and unpredictability of society, the growing complexity of the life situations of social work clients and global neoliberalism; political ideology with an economizing paradigm, which applies the laws of the free market to social work. As a result of the above, social work must legitimize its existence in front of the majority society, where structural risks are individualized and the principle of aid merit is applied. This is reflected mainly (but not exclusively) in the practice of social services, which are forced to operate in a competitive environment, where they must demonstrate their performance and functionality by measuring purely quantitative indicators (such as number of clients, number of beds, number of interventions) in the context of gaining financial support to ensure their survival. Non-quantifiable aspects of social work of a qualitative nature (such as the client relationship or gaining the client's trust) do not have a place in this efficiency (performance) environment, which completely loses the ethos of social work as a client relationship-based profession. As part of a project aimed at optimizing community planning of social services at the municipal level, a proposal of indicators within the creation of social cost benefit analysis was compiled on the basis of desk research, individual interviews (n = 10) and focus groups (n = 3) with actors of community planning of social services (SCBA). SCBA is based on an originally economically oriented cost benefit analysis (CBA), dealing with financial costs / benefits and return on investment. SCBA is an extension of this economic imperative influenced by CBA, which enriches it with a whole range of benefits / perspectives (e.g. social, environmental). It therefore focuses not only on the economic side, but on the social impacts as a whole. Based on a thematic analysis of data obtained through a qualitative research strategy, a number of social impact indicators were identified that were specific to certain social services such as shelters (e.g. the number of clients the service supported in stable housing) or relief services (e.g. number of clients that the service allowed to stay in the natural environment); but also a number of social impact indicators that can be used across services (e.g. number of volunteers with whom the service cooperates; organized community events; number of multidisciplinary collaborations; training of social workers; number of clients allowed by the service to stay in the natural environment). At the end of the paper, the possibilities of using social impact indicators in the community planning of social services and the paradigmatic shift that it brings in monitoring the financing of individual social services are discussed.

Ordering homelessness. On freedom and autonomy *by Bram Gootjes*

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Nowadays, public policy on homelessness focusses on participation, activation and having a house as a human right to fight desocialisation by working in normal jobs and living in normal neighborhoods (Padgett e.a. 2016; RVS 2020; Wewerinke e.a. 2014). At the same time personal, institutional and societal recognition (Honneth 1994) is still a gap (Huber e.a. 2022). Within practices, policies, interaction and knowledge surrounding the practice of working with homeless people the norm of being self-reliant, reflexive, rational and self-supportive within your own social network of self-chosen subjects is in one way or the other apparent.

In this research we take up the notion of modes of ordering (Law 1994, Moser 2005) and relate these as ordering practices in which norms meet and take shape. Different modes of ordering homelessness to which social workers try to attune, will be addressed. These result from ongoing ethnographic research within an organisation in two larger cities in the Netherlands. These organisations are involved in guiding homeless people towards housing and work to provide for one's own maintenance. The modes of ordering discussed exist in reciprocity to the professional - client relationship, to the social and material environment and to social political institutions. these reciprocative relationships are understood in the way that Axel Honneth has articulated these into the three spheres of ethical life he re-actualised from the work of Hegel: the intimate, the institutional and society as a social whole (1994).

Empirical approaches to social pedagogical relationships: the question of coherence and subjection in socio-educational contexts *by Sarah Henn and Fabian Kessl*

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The mediation between the individual and society is concretised in youth welfare as a mediation between the specificity of the "individual case" (Braun et al. 2011, p. 22) and the "generality of the reference norm" (Olk 1994, p. 15). In the welfare state context, the socio-educational organisations and the professionals working there have the function and task of both - being dedicated to the everyday lives of their users/addressees, i.e. enabling them to cope with everyday life in a self-determined way, as well as ensuring the normalisation of their behaviour.

In view of the "basic contradiction" of professional action (Urban 2004, p. 61), socio-educational actors are confronted with this necessary mediation as a requirement to establish a relationship of coherence between two very different positions: the position of individual users/addressees and diverse societal ideas of norms, represented by certain institutionalised organisations. The responsibility of mediating these positions lays with the professional organisations and their experts. However, this process must be shaped and moulded by all those involved in the concrete social-pedagogical situation and constellation.

On the one hand, this has already been explained in detail in terms of professional theory. On the other hand, empirically, the process of gaining coherence in pedagogical relationships has only rarely been considered (i.e. see Graßhoff 2012, Karl 2015, Walter and Stauber 2017). This is where our research project comes in. Our empirical study of "fitting"-relationships puts the focus on the connection between provision and take-up, which means that the everyday process of creating coherence will constitute the centre of attention but will be framed and contextualised by interviews regarding the different perspectives on the case-history. The research question is 'In what way do the actors involved in the concrete social pedagogical situation and from their position as users/addressees and as social pedagogical professionals, succeed in mediating individual needs and social normative expectations with each other?'

This question will be investigated in the research project by means of a multisite ethnographic design (Marcus 2010), where pairs of researchers will observe the same situation but each focussing on one participant. In addition, interviews with both positions about the case history will give deeper insight into the specific perception of the ongoing relation. Our methodological approach for reconstructing the establishment of relations, as coherent, crisis, nonfit or subjection will be guided by the ethnographical openness for different analytical tools and concepts. So, we will use categorizations-tools from the GT-inspired situationanalysis by Clarke (2012) and refer to a social theoretical background of the mediation of subjective and objective approaches, as the documentary method (Bohnsack 2017) suggests.

Starting from the thesis that "non-fit" is the normal state and the production of coherence is something exceptional, the systematic observation of the production of coherence will shed light on the interplay of pedagogical professionalism, the organization-culture and the societal context as the conditions of successful pedagogical relationships, since the basic problem of social pedagogical facilities consists of institutionalized interventions in subjective everyday coping of people.

In our presentation at the conference we will reflect on the methodological design on the basis of first findings from a (students)pre-study.

The emergence of the End-of-Life as a Social Question in the development of knowledge in Social Work *by Helena Neves Almeida and Berta Pereira Jacinto*

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Marilda Iamamoto (1998:27) argued that Social Work has a Social Question based on its foundation as a specialization of work. This author defends "Social Question" as "a set of expressions of inequalities in mature capitalist society". Thus the "Social Question" emerges in the context of the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century and is historically associated with social inequality and poverty (Meirelles, 2017: 119). According to some authors (Castel, 1998; Rosanvallon, 1998; Santos, 2011), the capitalist crisis of 1970 would have enunciated a "New Social Question", providing a wider range of social risk situations: the job instability of those who considered themselves stable, the emergence of precariousness coupled with rising unemployment. Regardless of the historical period, the "Social Question" is rooted in the capitalist system, more precisely, in its adversities. Marilda Iamamoto (1998: 28) states that "Social Workers work with the Social Question in its most varied daily expressions: such as individuals experience them at work, in the family, in the housing area, in public assistance".

This is a question that arises in an attempt to open horizons of reflection for other problems, still so little explored in Social Work. It is mainly from the twentieth century that the development of medical-biological sciences is witnessed, translated into the innovation of equipment, clinical procedures, prophylactic measures that allows today, the health sector to be one of the sectors that has grown the most at the economic level (Drumond, 2007: 25). This development allowed human beings gains never before achieved, such as: the increase in the average life expectancy, the prevention and eradication of diseases, the control of chronic disease and the cure and of acute disease (Pina & Carvalho s/d). Extraordinary gains that should not prevail in the face of the reverse of all this technological emergency achieved.

Pessini (2002) emphasizes, in this growing care technology, how important and urgent it is to rescue a holistic view that takes care of pain and suffering in its dimensions: physical, social, psychological, emotional and spiritual. In this context, the "Social Question", arising from the setbacks of the evolution of capitalism, does not have at its core the needs and rights that should be promoted for someone who needs monitoring at the end-of-life, in the most diverse contexts, whether institutional or in the middle of the family environment. Putting the end-of-life person's suffering in a holistic view adding to what was advocated by Pessini, in the most diverse formal contexts with the end-of-life person's family, is the current challenge for the inclusion of these issues in the "Social Question", not in a perspective of the reverse of capitalism but of the medical-technological revolution.

It is in this reflexive proposal that we intend to develop the objective of this work. Based on the literature review, the article intends to contribute to theoretical inspection of Social Work in the emergence of new realities that demote respect for human rights and that must be covered by the "Social Question" emerging from medical and technological development.

The Un/Deserving Child: philanthropic philosophies and practices in Combating child poverty
by Nicolas Jacquet and Griet Roets

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Child poverty remains a complex and multi-dimensional social problem in most Western societies. In the context of the changing relationship between citizens, the welfare state, civil society, and the market, a complex historical reconfiguration of the institutional welfare state framework can be observed in relation to charity- and rights-oriented assumptions in anti-poverty strategies towards children in poverty situations. Whereas critical scholars have referred to newly emerging ideas referred to as 'neo-philanthropy', 'new philanthropy', and 'new charity economy', we tackle how a discursive distinction between un/deserving children can be at stake in anti-poverty strategies, based on blaming 'incapable' parents for being responsible for the structural conditions and inequalities in which their children live. We focus on a qualitative research project in which we investigate the philanthropic philosophy and practice of a foundation that provides support to ensure food security and educational and leisure time activities for children in poverty in collaboration with social partners. While exploring the practices and normative value orientations of the foundation's social partners, we tease out whether, and if so, how the foundation might be a little stone in the shoe of public actors in the welfare state.

Crises of women's rights – Is sustainable social work and female empowerment still possible in Afghanistan? *by Saleem Jalalzai, Tameem Jalalzai and Susanne Leitner*

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Thinking about the term "times of crisis", Europeans may think about the Corona pandemic and currently about the War in Ukraine. But women in Afghanistan are facing a crisis in almost every part of their lives since August 15th 2021.

Afghan female social workers, before engaged with women's empowerment are now bereft of the legal basis of their work. They have to face persecution and threat by the Taliban regime. Nonetheless, these women do not accept to see their achievements of the recent years to be destroyed. They keep on struggling for their rights and are searching for ways and solutions to go on.

The target presentation is based on an 3 months stay for research purposes in Kabul, Afghanistan from February to April 2022. There we interviewed and accompanied women who previously were engaged in an officially recognized welfare organisation which now is forbidden. The presentation is to give a short overview on the situation of female social workers in Afghanistan after the collapse of the Republic government. Voices of female social workers concerning worries, struggles, hopes and strategies for their personal and professional future will be reflected. It will invite to reflect the chances of sustainable social work interplaying with instable governmental and social frames.

Concludingly, ideas and open question affecting the relation between the theoretical and practical development of Afghan and European social work in times of crisis, will be discussed.

Philosophy as method for social work *by Jonathan Lambaerts*

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According to commentators the current pandemic brought about a fundamental shift in our social paradigm. We came to question ideals – like individual freedom and privacy – that until then were considered to be corner stones of our liberal society. We also came to redefine concepts as responsibility and solidarity. The pandemic would turn out to be a major event enabling us to create a more just society (Žižek:2020), capable of dealing with global challenges (Latour:2021). Only nothing fundamental has changed. If anything the welfare challenges from before the pandemic (inequality, social exclusion, (risk of) poverty, intolerance, …) have increased. While structural injustices (racism, sexism, …) remain unaddressed. On the contrary, the fight for more equality is being met with opposition. The political narrative of protecting economic interests resonates with a significant and growing part of the population. Just like that of preventing cultural practices to be 'cancelled'. This puts pressure on the practice of Social work as it invokes a logic of self-interest and groupthink, while Social work originated from and is driven by a universal ambition (Claessens:2017).

In times of crisis exceptions have to be made. Policy makers reassure that these adaptations to the modus operandi of the welfare state and Social work are temporary. The Italian philosopher Agamben however illustrated that these states of exception tend to become permanent (Agamben:2005). Social work should thus be on its guard. Especially because the classic liberal democratic narrative is used to justify these policies. What this shows is that during the pandemic the consensus on how liberal democracy, welfare and Social work are to be understood further unravelled. Ideals like equality, liberty, solidarity, … are still endorsed, but there no longer seems to be a shared understanding of what they entail and how they are best put into practice. Such a shared understanding is necessary for a community of practice. If not, welfare officials and social workers risk being thrown off their game. And that is not without risks. Without a clear focus Social work falls back on an instrumental logic: being that of the institutions that organize or facilitate the Social work practice. The danger being that Social work becomes an end in itself, reducing the people that rely on it to a means to an end (Habermas:1989). Furthermore, the absence of a shared understanding of the narrative of Social work will bring welfare officials and social workers to act in accordance with their personal beliefs. This too will affect the universal approach of Social work. This crisis is invisible for the naked eye, but the unravelling of a shared understanding of its narrative will continue to affect the Social work practice and eventually undermine it. The difficulty is that it is not a matter of just setting the record straight. This would be nothing else than a moral power grip by one fraction over another, as there is no benchmark left to decide what the right understanding of the Social work narrative is. A new shared understanding can only grow organically and this takes time. This raises the question how welfare officials and social workers are to relate to this uncertainty and how it can be prevented that it immobilizes them. The answer is by utilizing the not knowing into the practice of Social work. This might feel contra-intuitive but acknowledging a lack of knowledge gives a new kind of certainty. It puts welfare officials and social workers on a new footing, which enables them to continue to act. It goes without saying that the actions that spring from this point of view differ from those that spring from an alleged knowledge. And these actions might stand closer to the core values of Social work. In order to utilize this not knowing in Social work a methodological approach is needed and that approach can be found in the oldest of disciplines: philosophy. This might come as a surprise as most people still associate philosophy with abstract theories and otherworldly discourses. Interesting for personal growth at best but without any practical value. This common shared opinion is regrettable. Philosophy is above all a method and not a set of theories. And as a method it is perfectly suited for the challenge Social work is facing. This paper will illustrate how Social work benefits from the philosophical method, after discussing the method itself.

Social Workers' Perceptions Regarding Legal Intervention versus therapeutic Intervention for Older Adults without Significant Cognitive Decline Who Are Abused *by their Adult Children by Sagit Lev, Mickey Schindler and Yael Waksman*

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Background: Elder abuse and neglect are widespread phenomena that affect one in six older adults and carry serious consequences for their health and psychological well-being. Older adults who are abused by their offspring often find it difficult to cooperate with professionals to put a stop to the abuse. In these situations, social workers face an ethical dilemma regarding the choice between therapeutic intervention or legal intervention to stop the abuse. Beyond considerations of the old person's decision-making ability, the decision whether to employ therapeutic intervention or legal intervention is related to social workers' perception regarding the benefits and risks of each. Therefore, the aim of the study was to examine how social workers perceive the benefits and costs of legal interventions versus therapeutic interventions.

Method: The study was conducted by means of the qualitative vignette method, which allows for a non-invasive and non-threatening discussion of different perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes. Participants were 21 social workers from welfare facilities who specialized in working with older adults. Data was analysed inductively, informed by the principles of content analysis.

Findings: Three themes emerged: (1) Benefits of therapeutic intervention, which allow for gradual, long-term and stable changes for both older adults and offspring and enable processes of empowerment of the older adult to take place; (2) The disadvantages in applying for a legal intervention, in particular the fact that this is often a temporary solution that may lead to violation of trust and exacerbation of violence; (3) The advantages of applying a legal intervention, namely older adults' immediate protection, as well as the lifting of social workers' burden of responsibility. In addition, in some cases legal intervention was preferred by older adults, who wanted social workers to act in their place.

Discussion: The findings highlight the complexity of the considerations and decision-making processes of social workers in situations of caring for older adults who are abused by their offspring.

Implications: The findings can serve as a basis for further research and development of sensitive interventions that will determine the adequate balance between maintaining older adults' safety and autonomy in the long term.

Water as a Problem of Slovak Social Work? *by Jana Levická, Martin Gál and Michaela Vaceková*

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The issue of environmental social work or eco-social work in the Slovakia appears minimally. The low theoretical interest in this area of social work is not only due to the interrupted development of social work during the years 1950-1989, but mainly to the geological location of Slovakia. Slovakia is a landlocked country located in Central Europe. It is its geographical location that has protected the country for a long time from the effects of global climate change, which in the first years manifested itself as a pleasant increase in temperatures in the summer and a mitigation of winters. Therefore, in Slovakia there was a long-range scepticism in relation to climatologists predictions. In the academic background, we perceive the ever-increasing interest of social workers in environmental issues, but the prevailing belief was that we would not solve these problems in the Slovak Republic. Our country was not threatened by hurricanes, volcanoes, tsunamis, huge devastating fires or anything like that. In addition, Slovakia has large reserves of quality drinking water and also a big number of mineral springs. In this relatively safe climate environment, therefore, the prevailing view is that Slovak social work must resolve more urgent problems than problems related with environment. However, in recent years, the serious effects of climate change have begun to manifest themselves in Slovakia. The global warming, which is increasing, causes alternating periods of drought that are unusually long, which are interrupted by heavy storms and heavy torrential rains. Around 2018, two small tornadoes were recorded in the Slovak Republic. In the summer of 2021, a few kilometres from the Slovak Republic, a tornado swept through Czech cities, with consequences that we only see on the movies. In recent years, Slovakia has been confronted with a persistent drought, as a result of which water problems have arisen in several parts of the country. Climatically, the country is getting closer to the countries such as Croatia or the north of Bulgaria. The negative effects of climate change, manifested in the alternation of extremely long-range changes and torrential rains in 2019, affected about 60% of the country. Villages in eastern Slovakia which are not connected to the public water system have been reporting a water shortage for several years from beginning of May. It is also confirmed in our country that the consequences of drought and heavy torrential rains affect the socially vulnerable groups of the population the most. Some Slovak social workers draw attention to the growing need to implement knowledge of environmental social work in the Slovakia. Social workers working in excluded communities see this as a necessary. In the contrast with countries that have begun engage with this issue at the turn of the millennium, we lack strategic solutions or direct state support. It turns out that access to water also affects several Slovak municipalities which are not connected to the public water system. Water supply by cisterns proves to be insufficient because it does not have enough to cover the needs of all the inhabitants of the affected localities and, in addition, it is associated with the risk of contamination of drinking water. The paper presents the results of research focused on the impacts of environmental burdens on the daily lives of people living in the affected localities. We focus on people's problems with access to water as such and specifically on access to drinking water. Our findings correspond to the findings of foreign colleagues who provide evidence that problems with access to water, especially drinking water, affect the poorest sections parts of the population the most (Gray, Coates & Hetherington, 2012). Our findings confirm the urgent need to implement the environmental principles of social work in the Slovakia.

Developing a positive living climate in residential youth care: how do group workers cultivate a basic pedagogy? *by Delphine Levrouw, Stijn Vandevelde and Rudi Roose*

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Introduction

In residential youth care (RYC), supporting childrens' quality of life is a main priority. One of the key factors in providing good quality of care in these services, is developing a positive living group climate. From a human rights perspective, children have the right to grow up in "normal" circumstances. Studies examined the key elements in organising a positive living climate. One of these key elements focuses on the role of the group worker and his / her profound influence on the child's wellbeing in daily interactions.

Yet, the development of a basic pedagogy seems to be under pressure, due to evolutions, including de-institutionalisation and considering residential youth care as "a last resort", a strong focus on "what works" and "managerial thinking". leading to high rates of administration, and registration tasks as perceived by youth care and educators. Taking into account this context, the development of a positive living is a complex matter. Consequently, group workers look for guidance concerning how they can act professionally and what a basic pedagogy means in the current establishment of a positive living climate.

Objectives

In this study, we aim to investigate on how group workers cultivate a basic pedagogy in the living group. Moreover, we are interested to get insight in (1) which pedagogical actions are considered as meaningful, (2) which environmental characteristics influence this basic pedagogy and (3) how group workers deal with these influences in the current pedagogical culture where they work.

Method

We developed an explorative trajectory with 8 group conversations consisting of ten group workers. We started inductively by shaping the trajectory in close cooperation with the researcher. Group workers brought on different themes they thought we should talk about to get insight in the present pedagogical actions and culture, e.g. the discussion about the content of their function profiles.

Results and conclusions

The group conversations are being analysed at the moment and the results will be presented at the conference.

Preliminary findings show that, in response to the first research question, group workers mention the value of small moments and actions, being present, showing the believe in youngsters' competences and dreams etc. In regard to the second research question, factors including the group setting as such, the rules, the structure, the administrative tasks, the present pedagogical culture and the scarcity of employees are being mentioned.

The reality of professional encounters unraveled *by Harry Lunabba*

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Drawing on Roy Bhaskars critical realism and Derek Layders domain theory, I have developed a theoretical model for understanding and analysing professional encounters in social work. The theoretical model has been developed through an extent of various ethnographic research projects focusing on welfare practices with young persons.

There is an ongoing debate on various theoretical and methodological approaches in social work practice, stretching from ideas related to evidence-based practice as well as social constructionist theories. To implement critical realism and domain theory in social work calls for recognition of the two sided or multidimensional nature of the social universe, including both epistemological and ontological elements. Further, central for critical realist implementation is to understand the interlinked relation between social structures and social agency.

An example of such critical realist and multidimensional approaches in social work is Björn Bloms and Stefan Moréns ambitious work on CAIMeR theory. CAIMeR theory's ambition is to provide a coherent theory that considers contexts, actors, interventions, mechanisms and results in social work. However, there is still a lack of such critical realist theory development, that focuses on the particularity of the professional encounter; what specifically occurs in the domain of situated activity between social work professionals and clients.

I argue that social work practice unfolds to this specific social domain of situated activity between a social work professional and a client. This domain of situated activity manifests the practical implementation of practice theories or social work models as well as the methodological and interpersonal skills of individual social workers. Further, situated activity occurs within the realities of social frames conditioned by interpersonal relationship between the social worker and the client, but also by the immediate social and physical surroundings.

In sum, the presented model on professional encounters aims to acknowledge how social work is conditioned by various objective, subjective, collective, and individual mechanisms. Based on these four dimensions I suggest that situated activity in social work can be analysed multidimensionally focusing on four operational elements: 1) instrumental activity, 2) intersubjectivity, 3) identity preserving mechanism and 4) situated framing. Instrumental activity refers to the practical implementation of professional routines and interventions. Intersubjectivity draws upon the emotional and relational connection between social workers and clients. Identity preserving mechanisms acknowledges both the individual agency of social workers and clients, but also how individuals are conditioned by psychological and/or psychobiographic experiences. Situated framing includes both the immediate interpersonal reality that can enable or hinder rapport, but also how encounters take place in an immediate social context, such as a social office, school, home, hospital or even a digital platform such as a Zoom- or Teams-call.

The benefit of applying a critical realist multidimensional model when examining professional encounters is that it helps to provide a nuanced evaluation of the effects, outcomes, or eventual shortcomings of professional social work. Further, critical realism and domain theory provides tools for understanding how all social activity, including professional social work, is socially conditioned by social realities and social work client's agency. But critical realism based models also highlights such elements as the sufficiency of a social work interventions or the interpersonal capabilities and instrumental skills of individual social workers.

It's lonely at the top - leadership and loneliness *by Catharina Nickel*

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COVID-19 has a profound impact on the lives of people around the globe. The necessary restrictions, such as physical distancing policies with their widespread effects on almost all aspects of daily life, have forced people worldwide to adopt new ways of learning, working, and socializing. Increasingly, scientific research addresses the impacts of the pandemic on various aspects of people's lives. Many long-term effects remain to be seen, but evidence shows already that the pandemic resulted in mental health impacts triggered by social isolation and loneliness, such as increased anxiety (cf. Smith and Lim 2020).

It's lonely at the top
This presentation aims to zoom in on perceptions of loneliness experienced by many individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, it focuses on increased loneliness experienced by senior leaders in global humanitarian and peace operations during COVID-19. While the leaders' loneliness in pre-pandemic times has often been understood as an unpleasant yet unavoidable side effect of their work, it may be worth it to take a second look at this and assess whether this loneliness is truly necessary and conducive. The presentation wishes to assess to what extent the "loneliness of the powerful" has ever been beneficial, either for the human wellbeing of those affected or for the effectiveness of the work, especially in settings where work is ultimately intended to drive social transformation processes.

While this presentation does not intend to tab into the discourse of proximity and distance in professional social work – which is a research topic in itself – it wishes to address the role of senior leaders and the theoretical underpinnings of leadership, thereby focusing on senior leaders in complex international operations. The presentation draws from anecdotal evidence gained from senior leaders in humanitarian and peace operations worldwide - a field of work often characterized by harsh living conditions and loneliness even in pre-pandemic times - and is inspired by concepts of feminist leadership by Bela Kapur and Srilatha Batliwala. It considers Hofstede's conceptualizations of the distance to power, long-term orientation, and indulgence.

Leadership revisited
Ultimately, this presentation would like to contribute to a discussion around the various forms of leadership, their ideological foundations, and implications. It aims to contribute to already existing debates in social work research around leadership and wishes to consider new insights gained during the COVID-19 pandemic regarding the linkages between positions of power and loneliness. The findings of these discussions may contribute to helping social work research draw a clearer picture of the foundations of leadership and its practical implications for practitioners and those who offer leadership support at various levels.

Masculine capital for good and bad as well as research on social work *by Jiri Nieminen*
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The presentation figures out the idea of masculine capital as an extension of Bourdieau's theory of social capital and asks what it could have to give for social work and its research. Methodologically, it interprets previous studies, four dissertations and one other study, on social work dealing with men's and masculinity, from 2003–2021, from the mentioned perspective. It suggests that the concept of masculine capital could be divided into exclusive and inclusive masculine capital, the former leading to a one-dimensional perception of masculinity, the latter creating a perspective on empowerment and affirming the autonomy of social work clients in order to preventing practices that causes problems for immediate circle, society and especially for man itself.

Legal aid for people in extreme poverty. Challenges and reflections from a study on a voluntary organization in Italy *by Maria Chiara Pedroni*

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Extreme poverty and social exclusion are perceived as clear violations of human rights and are increasingly being placed in the wider debate about citizenship rights, democracy, social inclusion. Poverty and social exclusion involve a growing number of people in Europe, contributing to inequality and social injustice.

This PhD research focuses on a non-profit organisation which engages in protecting homeless people, victims of trafficking, people in extreme poverty and immigrants, through legal aid and advocacy in Italy. In this organisation lawyers serve as volunteers to provide information and help with legal issues.

This research explores social exclusion and difficulties of people affected by extreme poverty and homelessness, and aims to bring out their daily resistance outside welfare services. Most of them, due to their social exclusion, do not have the resources to demand their rights or do not have knowledge regarding the law, services and welfare system.

This research sheds light also on the example of active citizenship, wherein volunteers support people when their rights are threatened, thereby promoting increased awareness about their rights and an inclusive community.

Data are collected using participatory observations and semi-structured interviews, that are conducted with a sample of volunteers (25) involved in 5 different cities. Observational data are gathered through periods of observation in 2 different locations in the city of Milan.

This research aims to provide in-depth insight of this significant arena, thus showing how the mission of organisation is translated in practice and the complexities related to these practices.

In my presentation, I will discuss reflections and insights from my research and their implications. I will argue that this research can provide useful and sensitive knowledge with the potential to connect political and practical dimensions of social work related to wider challenges that affect our society, inspiring social workers, volunteers and policy makers.

Community Organizing for Social Justice: The Case of Diverse Communities in Israel *by Dassi Postan-Aizik*

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Background and Purpose

Since the 1970's economic, cultural, and political changes have negatively impacted community efforts to organize. Social workers face many challenges in facilitating community organizing. Such challenges include growing racial, ethnic and gender divisions, political disengagement and social fragmentation. The study purpose is to explore the use of a Critical Adult Education (CAE) framework to overcome organizing challenges in diverse communities that face social exclusion. Building on the case of Community-Academy in Israel, we studied the experiences of activists and professionals that learned and organized together to promote inclusive urban development. The research examined the experiences of activists and professionals in diverse communities in organizing to face local injustice using a CAE framework, as well as their perception of the outcomes.

Methods: Data for this qualitative study was gathered through multiple methods. Purposive sampling was applied for 20 semi-structured interviews with local activists) and 10 professionals involved in community organizing. Two focus groups were conducted with neighborhood activists. Observations during meetings and classes were conducted to obtain a rich contextualized understanding. The data were analyzed according to a constructivist grounded theory approach to allow for deep understanding of participant's social, political and experiential realities. Triangulation was used to capture the participants' various viewpoints and bracketing was applied to diminish the influence of the researchers' early assumptions and allow for reflexivity in data analysis. Lastly, member checking was used to enhance research credibility.

Results: Participants experienced CAE as instrumental for organizing across diversities through three dynamics: a) transposing knowledge refers the process through which participants developed new information and critical awareness that shifted power from institutions that traditionally hold it to the local residents; b)disrupting power concerned unconventional organizing and the redrawing of boundaries between local activists and professionals; c) negotiating diversity involved navigating ethnic and religious contention, while raising awareness to discrimination and other forms of injustice. Personal relationships, built over time and forged by common goals, helped withstand in-group conflicts. The perceived outcomes of organizing were mixed. While the experience empowered activists at the individual-family level and successfully promoted community goals, only limited policy change was accomplished at the national level.

Conclusions and implications: The study findings suggest that a CAE framework has advantages for organizing diverse communities that face injustice. Since it openly engages with diversity, it can facilitate sociopolitical consciousness and build strong relationships. The study also emphasizes the importance of relationship building for organizing, while acknowledging that the cost may disproportionately affect minority groups within the community. CAE encourages community activists and professionals to challenge traditional power structures and confront local mechanisms that diminish their rights and freedom to organize. Compared to other organizing strategies, CAE requires learning processes that may consume more resources. A CAE framework may also involve tensions and conflicts during the organizing process and is susceptible to contentious events outside of the community. Organizing using a CAE framework can be an empowering experience that promotes local change. However, it's influence on the national policy level is unclear. As sweeping social movements highlight the power of communities to inspire social action, social work is well-placed to support local change and promote social justice for excluded communities. Implications call attention to social worker's choice of organizing strategies for diverse communities and suggest the need to reconsider the role that community institutions take with respect to traditional power hierarchies.

Lessons (not) learned from pandemic times. Individual and organizational aspects of digital transformation in the disability field
by Martin F. Reichstein

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On the whole, fields of social work are said to be skeptical when it comes to the implementation of new technologies (cf. Mayerle, 2015, p. 9). Nevertheless, it is important to note that in recent years and decades no new technology has influenced social life to the same extent as the internet and associated digital media and means of communication (cf. van Eimeren & Frees, 2014, p. 378). During the COVID 19 crisis, significant parts of social life were shifted into the digital space. In particular, the use of digital information and communication tools has increased significantly (cf. Hacker et al., 2020, p. 564). According to Embregts et al. (2020, p. 8), this was also the case in the lives of persons with an intellectual disability. However, it was already apparent in pre-pandemic times that marginalized groups in particular - in this case persons with so-called intellectual disabilities - could not participate in the 'digital society' to the same extent as this seemed to be the case generally (cf. Reichstein, 2016, p. 81).

Now that the pandemic seems to be coming to an end in some countries, it is worth asking how sustainable the ad hoc 'digital transformations' that have emerged will prove to be in post-pandemic times. In addition, it is important to ask how these transformations have affected and continue to affect the lives of marginalized groups. It seems possible that – in retrospect – the pandemic will be seen as a catalyst and momentum for an increasing distribution of digital tools among the groups in question. At the same time, however, it is also possible that existing "digital divides" (Kinnunen & Georgescu, 2020, p. 56) deepened during the pandemic and will raise future problems (cf. Jeste et al., 2020, p. 830).

The oral presentation outlined here will attempt to assess the effects of the ad hoc digital transformation of individual lives that has taken place in the pandemic, based on a review of the international research literature available to date. The focus will be on persons with intellectual disabilities. In addition, the presentation will reflect on already foreseeable effects of digital transformation in social services for the group in question.

The more fundamental question is what role digital tools should or can play in the future development of societies, social services and for improving individual quality of life. It should be noted that advancing digital transformation generally raises questions that affect not only equal access to new tools and technology but also 'classical' social work questions such as that of the relationship between help and control (cf. Schädler et al., 2021). Against this backdrop, the presentation will conclude by outlining further research needs at the intersection of social work and informatics.

"VielfaltNRW" - Needs of young Muslims and religion-sensitive professionalism in German child and youth welfare *by Cynthia Kohring and Inga Selent*

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The current Covid 19 pandemic highlights societal inequalities at multiple levels. It vehemently points to unequal structures, access and opportunities in social work as well. At the same time, unequal structures and opportunities of participation of social actors and groups can be identified even before the pandemic, indicating processes of change and development.

In Germany youth welfare services are aimed at all young people by law. The interests and needs of every child and young person are to be given equal consideration. Nevertheless, it is clear that not all groups of young people are reached and included equally. For example, young Muslims are often primarily associated with Islam-critical and deficit-oriented aspects. Furthermore, they are not as much addressed as an ordinary part of diverse youth cultures. The same applies to Islamic organizations as providers of social services in general, although there are already a variety of social services. The legal requirement to guarantee a diversity of providers with different value orientations and that clients can choose freely is not consistently guaranteed with regard to religious plurality.

Focusing on social work practice in general, there are also unanswered questions about whether and how social workers consider topics such as religion (focus: Islam), interreligiosity, and faith in their daily work and education. However, these represent an important aspect of a religion-sensitive professionalism.

The project ´VielfaltNRW´ focusing on these questions in a mixed-methods approach and includes perspectives of young Muslim people, (future) social workers as well as decision makers of public child and youth welfare services.

Environmental Justice in the Context of Roma Communities *by Michaela Vaceková, Jana Levická and Martin Gál*

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Social work as a profession focuses on social assistance to people in meeting their basic living needs, if they are unable to help themselves. Part of this social assistance is also to improve the client's ability to use possible sources of assistance or to manage the impacts of the environment (Hepworth et al., 2020). The impact of the environment on the daily life of the inhabitants is dealt with by environmental social work, which began to form as a new field of social work in the 19s of the 20th century. Pollution, global warming and its impact on the environment have led major international social work organizations (IASSW, IFSW, ICSW) to demand that the natural environment become one of the values of the profession. Each of the individual fields of social work requires specific professional equipment and knowledge of social workers in the field. In the environmental social work, social workers use strategies to manage unfavourable living conditions (Levická et al., 2012). The subject of this approach, based on the principle of ecological justice, is the environment, which has a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals. The paper focuses on environmental social work from the perspective of one of the basic human rights, namely the right to a healthy environment. In this context, the Roma communities are just one of the most endangered groups in the Slovak Republic. They often accumulate the several pathological phenomena, which include for example unhealthy lifestyles, poor basic living habits, unemployment, poverty and other socio-economic or health problems. The healthy development of children is also endangered due to the adverse environment. The aim of the paper is therefore to point out life in some excluded Roma communities in Slovakia. The paper is processed in a qualitative research design based on semi-structured interviews and observations. The snowball technique was used to create the research sample. The issue of Roma communities has long been an unresolved issue in Slovakia, the severity of which has deepened significantly since 1989. The results of our research show that the existing approaches to solving the problem are insufficient and do not contribute to solving the situation of the inhabitants of excluded communities. Populist non-systemic measures do not help eliminate poverty and, paradoxically, rather deepen the community's dependence on state intervention. The inhabitants of these communities do not have any social competencies that they could use to solve their situation. Our findings lead us so far to the conclusion that the lives of the inhabitants of these communities have been significantly affected by the learned helplessness (Seligman & Maier, 1976). As part of our ongoing research, we therefore want to focus on identifying solutions that would at least partially improve the quality of life in these communities.

Humanitarian crises as a springboard for more sustainable social policies? The case of irregular migrants in Europe *by Anja Van den Durpel*

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Having a shelter, a place to sleep, is a basic physical need (Cunningham, 2019; Hutton et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2008). Moreover, access to housing is a basic right enshrined in several international agreements such as the European Social Charter and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. However, irregular migrants' rights are at the same time curtailed by European legislation: The Facilitators Package states that "intentionally assisting" irregular migrants on entry, transit and –for financial gain- residence must be sanctioned (Article 1(1) Directive 2002/90/EC) with criminal penalties. Yet, Article 1(2) of the Directive allows, although does not oblige, Member States to exempt assistance for humanitarian reasons upon entry and transit.

The contradiction between both laws becomes apparent in its implementation. Indeed, the dilemma is passed on to national, regional and local level politicians, civil servants, police, people working in NGOs/CSOs, and irregular migrants themselves. Each of these actors is left to the own motivation to (not) facilitate irregular migrants, with some discretion power. Irregular migrants are often reluctant to invoke their rights and to rely on legal protection, in order not to attract authorities' attention (Carens, 2008; Engbersen & van der Leun, 2001; FRA, 2017). They are therefore dependent on what the actors in the field offer. It goes without saying that there are a multitude of different and even conflicting local practices.

Based on the results of PhD research, this presentation first zooms in on local practices in the Netherlands, Germany and UK and on the motivations and policy frames that local actors used before the Covid-19 crisis to (not) facilitate irregular migrants' access to housing. It then presents some of the measures and policy frames applied to support irregular migrants since the COVID-19 lockdown, as well as measures and policy frames used by European countries and cities in response to people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Central to this presentation is to reflect on whether crisis measures taken (can and/or should) lead to a more sustainable and humanitarian policy with regard to irregular migrants. Although in the recent past irregular migrants were mainly, and foremost by (supra)national policy-makers, regarded as law offenders (Delvino, 2017; Levoy & Geddie, 2009; Provera, 2015), during these two recent crises they were treated more as rights holders (HRW, 2020; Mallet-Garcia & Delvino, 2020; Van der Vennet, et al., 2021). Nevertheless, these are two sides of the same coin. Which way will the dime fall in the future, or will it stay upright in balance?

Homebound family foster care - supporting families at their homes
by Kaisa Vuolukka
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In Finland child´s family is the primary way to care for a child. Supporting a child and the family as early as possible is considered important. Finland is part of Nordic Welfare System. The Finnish child protection system has had the so called family service orientation. However, it has recently become child-focused (Pösö 2014). Child orientation system is based on the ideology that the main goal of child welfare service system is to prevent social problems. Whenever possible, the aim is to avoid out-of-home care by giving families support services they require (Kuronen & Lahtinen 2009). Removing a child from birth parents should be the last intervention option (Hestbaek et al. 2019), and used only when necessary to protect the child's welfare (Gilbert et al 2011).

In 2015, Finland reformed Family Foster Care Act (263/2015). It now states, that instead of placing a child in out-of-home care, foster parent can help the child's family at home. Support ought to be relationship-based, allowing the family to stay at home, maintaining intimate relationships between the family members. To offer family foster care, the foster parent needs to meet with certain criteria: A short pre-training and suitable to offer this kind of support. This way, the foster parent does not have to be a trained health-care or social work professional, as their role is more of a support person. This kind of care, where a support person or family foster carer comes home to assist the family at their own home, is a more widely used practice in the care of the elderly and disabled. It is, however, not recognized as common practice in child welfare system. It has been argued what are the differences between part-time homebound foster care and professional family work or other home services which are often offered by private companies and bought by a community. Differences between these services are unclear and clearly undefined.

This is a case study concerning one NGO, which has recently started relation-based part-time family support service by a trained foster parent/ carer. Even though the law does allow this option, it is not used in practice. Organizations like NGO´s and churches offer important help to families. They also reduce the gaps between different services provided by the public sector. However, their role in Finnish service landscape is lesser than in some other European countries. Most social services are offered on municipal level, and regulated by detailed legislation.

Question for this study is to find out what help in this particular support, how the foster parents or carer help families, and how this service can be adopted in Finnish child welfare system, as it is not widely used, even if allowed by the legislation. Using the Finnish Family Foster Act practices for the elderly and the disabled people is widely accepted in the society. I argue that to avoid out of-home-care, child welfare system needs to offer varied services, as soon as possible and they need to be attractive to the families involved services sustainable for families.

The data will be collected during the summer 2022 from the NGO in question and analyzed by content analyze. Some results of the study / data collection will be presented at the conference.