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Challenges faced by departmental managers in Arab social service departments addressing community violence exposure – *Neveen Ali-Saleh Darawshy*

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Over the last three decades, there has been a notable uptick in research focusing on violence, particularly social or community violence. These investigations have targeted diverse demographics including children, youth, young adults, and adults, delving into the realms of direct and indirect exposure to violence and its ramifications across emotional, psychological, and behavioral spheres. However, there remains a scarcity of research concerning mental health professionals who interact with individuals affected by such circumstances. Notably, recent reports from Arab Palestinian communities in Israel have highlighted a significant surge in incidents of violence exposure and subsequent victimization.

The marked escalation of community violence incidents within Arab Palestinian society in Israel underscores the necessity for an in-depth examination of this phenomenon, particularly from the standpoint of Social workers and welfare services within these communities. Given that Social workers often reside and operate within the very communities they serve, they may undergo "shared trauma" with their clients (Dekel & Baum, 2010), along with secondary traumatization from hearing the narratives of violence-afflicted individuals (Ben-Forat, 2015; Dagan et al., 2015). Recent research on Arab Palestinian Social workers (Authors, 2024) has underscored the challenges they face in balancing personal and familial security with their professional obligation to support victims of community violence. Notably, informal support networks comprising peers and supervisors play a pivotal role in assisting Social workers during periods of heightened exposure to community violence. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of managerial support within Arab social service departments in effectively managing and supporting Social workers in their practice.

This study aims to elucidate existing or proposed interventions for addressing this phenomenon, the role of social service department managers, and the expectations placed on the Social Work profession in this context.

Research Method

Utilizing a phenomenological qualitative approach and conducting in-depth interviews with 10 Arab social service department managers from various regions across the country, this study seeks to enhance our comprehension of welfare bureaus' interventions and the coping strategies adopted by Social workers in response to community violence. By capturing the perspectives of departmental managers, the research endeavors to enrich discussions on policy formulation and the role of Social Work in addressing socio-political issues within ethnically diverse minority communities.

Contribution to Practice

This study stands as a pioneering effort, as it represents one of the initial explorations into the intersections of welfare bureaus, Social Work, and community violence within the Israeli context. It seeks to expand knowledge concerning welfare bureaus' interventions in the phenomenon of community violence and to shed light on the coping strategies employed by both welfare bureaus and Social workers, as perceived by departmental social services managers. Specifically, it aims to elucidate policies regarding the treatment of ethno-national minority groups amidst prevailing socio-political challenges.

By challenging existing institutional paradigms and advocating for orientations rooted in social justice, this research holds the promise of reshaping and informing Social Work practices. Ultimately, it strives to advance social justice for marginalized communities impacted by community violence.

Unveiling the power of social policy evaluation: rethinking the role of social workers – *Cristiana Almeida*

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The communication aims to critically discuss the assumptions of social policy evaluation, its relevance in the scientific field of Social Work and the contribution of Social Work professionals in the design and implementation of social policy evaluation.

The importance of evaluation in theory, discourse and practice has grown significantly all over the world and in all sectors. Evaluation is a reflective, analytical and structured process of assessment, which fulfils the functions of measurement, support for decision-making, training (in the sense of continuous learning) and strengthening participatory democracy. It is a systematic process of "posing questions and problems relating to decision-making processes and the implementation of programmes, policies, projects and investments, using organised systems of critical reflection" (Capucha et al., 1996:10-11), gathering information on the starting conditions, development and implementation of a given action, based on the resources available and the proposed objectives, and allows for evaluation, based on knowledge, to guide the decision-making process, as well as the action itself. Since the dawn of the genesis of evaluation, public policies have been a key field (cf. Alkin & Christie, 2004; Capucha et al., 1996; Guerra,2002; House,1993; Kusters et al.,2011; Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014; Weiss, 1995). There are various approaches, marked by an emphasis on the decision-making dimension or the rationalisation of decisions according to effectiveness and efficiency criteria, or, more recently, a more comprehensive approach that integrates the entire process, from planning to formulation and implementation.

As a result of technological, economic and social transformations, Social Work is faced with new problems and challenges (Almeida, 2022; Amaro, 2015; Dominelli,2004; McDonald, 2006; Otto, 2018; Stalker, 2003; Webb, 2006). For this reason, the evaluation of social policies has gained relevance for Social Work practice in general and for Social Work research in particular.
In the current economic, social and political context in Portugal, the responsibilities assigned to Social Work professionals are increasing. In this sense, it is suggested that Social Work research "by and for Social Work" (Branco, 2008:49) be carried out by professionals with "recognised proximity and immersion in the field" (Branco, 2008:59) to provide Social Work with more tools not only for scientific development but also for building and deepening the disciplinary knowledge necessary for professional practice.

As Social workers engage in the evaluation of social policies, they are confronted with the realities of institutional dynamics, often uncovering discrepancies between professed values and institutional practices. Therefore, there's an imperative to reconceptualize Social Work institutions, ensuring they actively embody principles of social justice in policy conception, implementation, evaluation and service delivery.

In this context, the role of Social workers in policy evaluation extends beyond technical analysis; it involves a critical examination of institutional structures and norms that shape policy implementation. By advocating for policy reforms that prioritize equity and social justice, Social workers contribute not only to the improvement of social policies but also to the transformation of institutional frameworks, fostering environments that are more responsive to the diverse needs of communities.
Through the analysis of an example of a policy measure (the Local Social Intervention Network /Social Assistance and Support Service), the application of questionnaire surveys (to professionals from 74 different municipalities), the carrying out of 6 case studies and 3 focus groups with privileged actors, it was possible to define axes of analysis which enable us to understand the dynamics of the Portuguese social policy evaluation and to classify characteristics which enabled the constitution of evaluation models.

The research made it possible to identify the Portuguese social policy evaluation profile and to conclude that, despite the theoretical recognition of the relevance of evaluation, a culture of compulsory compliance with evaluation practices prevails, when imposed, without ownership of its results or the adoption of measures under the recommendations.

In conclusion, this communication has shed light on the pivotal role of social policy evaluation within the field of Social Work, emphasizing its growing importance amidst global shifts and challenges. By championing a more participatory and justice-oriented evaluation culture, Social workers can contribute significantly to the advancement of both Social Work practice and policy conception, implementation, and evaluation, ultimately creating more responsive and equitable systems that address the diverse needs of society.

Re-thinking the role of parents in child protection social work – *Katrin Bain*

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This presentation explores how parents who are involved with Social workers in Children's Services when there are safeguarding concerns about their children are represented in policy, organisational procedures and Social Work practice.

The term 'child protection', by definition, places the child centre stage to the extent of severely restricting parental rights, if considered necessary, to protect the child. Clearly the welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989 Section 1) and the child's interests are at the centre of decision-making (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 Article 3). However, parents' behaviour is most frequently what triggers Social Work involvement and parents are almost always the principal actors in the child protection process. Most children who are the subject of the child protection process continue to live with their parents or return to the family home after a short time in the care of a local authority. And, when risks have been identified because of parental behaviour, parents are often required to make substantial changes, before a decision is made that their children can live safely with them. Effecting changes in parental behaviour is, therefore, commonly seen as key to the long-term safety and well-being of the child and this is the case for statutory child protection Social Work in many countries. Parental participation in the child protection process is therefore essential. A four-level model of parent-citizen participation in Social Work is introduced in this presentation.

Despite the pivotal role parents' behaviour plays in Social workers' assessments and decisions about what happens to children, there has been little reflection thus far about how Social workers perceive and represent parents in their work with them and how this interacts with how parents are represented at the organisational and policy levels. This presentation begins to fill these gaps by exploring how parents are represented at the three levels of policy, organisation, and frontline practice. With regard to the latter, it offers an analysis of how Social workers navigate their role as mediators between the state and parents navigating inherent tensions, like the right to family life and child protection, the involuntary use of services, the allocation of resources between preventive and protection services and the government initiated neoliberal managerialism that is at odds with the professional ideal of Social workers of a relationship-based, helping practice.

This analysis is informed by two identical studies, conducted while different governments were in power, which focused on how parents were represented at each of the three levels including one English local authority. By adding insights from two points in time, the presentation puts the continuous stream of policy change and organisational restructuring into perspective, delivering insights into continuity and change in child protection Social Work. The result is a parent-citizen typology with ten variants of parent-citizenship. The citizenship typology shows that there is no single narrative of parents. By moving beyond simplistic certainties and revealing the complexities of parental representations this replication study shows that policy, organisational environments, dominant societal themes at a given time and how Social workers use discretion, power and relationship-based practice influence how parents are represented in Social Work. Giving more visibility to parents contributes to a much-needed dialogue about their position and the expectations of them in Children's Services.

A (living) room of our own: social work researchers collective as a pocket of resistance to neoliberal academia – *Liron Ben-ezra, Hagit Sinai Glazer & Ayelet Prior*

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Virginia Wolf advised us that we all need a room of our own. As we stand in different, yet somewhat similar positions as early career academics, as researchers and as Social workers, we all work individually and tirelessly to obtain something we can call 'my room'. Those three rooms of us are spread across the building that we occupy in the university. Each in her room, we accomplished – at least to a certain degree – what Wolf aspired for us. But other than giving us a space of our own, we found out that the room can also be isolating and lonely. In the room, each on her own, we perpetuate the silos built by the capitalist neoliberal academic beast. To paraphrase Wolf's iconic advice, we realized we need another room, a living room, a shared space to come together.

Audre Lorde suggested that "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house", and so our living room was born as a counter space to the isolating rooms of our own. It offers a space for alternative conversations, and the opportunity to move away from feeding the academic beast with our papers, grant applications, and course outlines. Within our collective space we work against the various hierarchizing forces that shape academic research and the positions afforded for researchers. Together, we engage is slow scholarship, shifting away from the fast-paced, quantity-driven institutionalized academic world towards fostering relationships, challenging binaries, and questioning the nature of knowledge itself (Wahab et al, 2021). Collectively, we immerse ourselves into practicing ethical and political being through music, movement, poetry, and writing. Within the neoliberal academic entity, we take up space differently. In a away, the mere existence of our collective within the university is already dismantling the master's house by creating a space that is devoted to inquiry and exploration that goes beyond the existing tools we have been trained to use.

More so, being part of a collective that promotes critical perspective and considers diverse forms of knowledge not only broadens our being as researchers but also enriches our practice as Social workers. Engaging in critical dialogue within the collective empowers us to question assumptions and breaks down hierarchies between ways of knowing, allowing us to be in a more flexible, open and creative standpoint as we meet the people we work with in the Social Work field.

This lecture will be a walk in our journey of creating a shared space dedicated to collaboration, inquiry, and social justice values—a transformative path that we collectively embark on. Through our shared experiences and insights, we aim to inspire others to challenge the neoliberal structures within academia, highlighting the importance of solidarity, resilience, and collective action.

Protecting the rights of people with mental ill-health: the role of mental health social workers in ensuring decisional capacity processes – *Jim Campbell*

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There is increasing interest in the way that mental health Social workers and other professionals adjust practice to meet the challenges of new laws and policies designed to address historical abuses of power and institutionalisation. This presentation will use the international literature to explore the role of mental health Social workers when decisional capacity (the ability of the citizen to make a rational decision about their best interest) is being considered. It begins with brief overview of the origins of mental health Social Work in the UK and the legacies of paternalist discourses that continue to inform some decision-making processes. Despite these legacies, many mental health Social workers and other professionals are now committed to forms of more collaborative or shared decision-making (SDM) processes.

These opportunities are created by contemporary legal and policy drivers that have shifted professional views on decisional capacity, away from substitute to supportive decision- making approaches which, in some ways mirrors the principles of SDM. Of particular note is the way that many jurisdictions have shaped national laws to accommodate the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The presentation then discusses how these laws impact upon mental health Social Work practice where interventions are now required to be human-rights compliant and tailored to the needs of those who receive services. In conclusion, it is argued that mental health Social workers should continue to develop relational decision-making processes to inform interventions that protect the rights of service users and their families.

A French tradition in de-institutionalisation: a solid base for de-institutionalising social work or just a romanticised image? – *Dries Cautreels & Simon Allemeersch*

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In this symposium, we build upon two French authors and practitioners – Francois Tosquelles and Fernand Deligny – and connect them with ongoing discussions on de-institutionalisation in specialised care environments for children and youngsters. We will hereby focus on the relevance of their concepts within our research and ongoing fieldwork we both conduct in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium.

Psychiatrist Tosquelles (1912-1994) can be designated as founder of Institutional Pedagogy, with the psychiatric hospital of Saint-Alban as its cradle, whereas pedagogue, writer and filmmaker Deligny (1913-1996) became famous for his collective work with autistic children and youngsters in the Cévennes region. Both have spent time in the psychiatric hospital of La Borde, one of the bedrock institutions of Institutional Psychotherapy, but they ventured on two distinct journeys. Yet, we want to point at interesting communalities between both: how these authors functioned as critical references and voices in the troubled timeframe they lived and worked in, and how both challenged the notion of the asylum as a straightforward method in care and support, thereby critically questioning 'the institution'.

Although not widespread, the ideas of both Tosquelles and Deligny are recently (re-) proclaimed in care and support for vulnerable youngsters (youth work, psychiatry, disability, …) and through the arts. This, we argue, asks for fundamental critical reflection and debate as we withhold two risks. First, we see a risk of methodologising the ideas of both Tosquelles and Deligny. After all, we see a growing number of fixed methodologies being applied as institutionalised logics: a clinicalisation of pedagogic practices in (youth) care and a increasing emphasis on 'securing' youngsters. Thus, the influence of what we described as a 'containment-pedagogy' in youth care is, however intrinsically ambivalent, still prevalent and goes against the very grain of Tosquelles and Deligny's work.

Secondly, we elaborate on the risk that both scholars and their ideas are romanticised to that extent that the very nature of their work, which is fundamentally critical, is mortgaged. This too calls for reflection and positioning, especially if we hold de-institutionalising Social Work in sight. And, if we pledge to oppose a merely romantic historiography of their work, we also must ask how Social Work practitioners may derive practical action perspectives from these authors and their works.

In this vein, we believe both Tosquelles and Deligny provide interesting theoretical frameworks when de-institutionalising Social Work, both connecting theory and practice throughout their work. In doing so, we engage in a joint challenge to realise 'institutions' as radically horizontal spaces 'to imagine institutions that could be constantly rethought, reworked, and remapped'. We do this in an attempt to stay true to the legacy of both scholars, both by opening up discussion on practices and lived experiences and by using and discussing arts, pictures and video.

<u>'They continue what has been proven not to work': challenging detention as an answer to unsafety through Institutional Pedagogy</u>

When developing Institutional Psychotherapy, Francois Tosquelles combined the psychoanalytical framework by Lacan and the insights of Simon with the ideas of Marx and systemic and personal experiences of power- and institutional practices, a.o. being a refugee during the Spanish civil war and resisting the horror of the second World War.

As a reaction on a strict medical and individual view on psychiatric care, the political and the psychic were, as he stated, 'two sides of one same project of resistance' tackling the alienating effects of an 'établissement' ('authoritarian, hierarchical, oppressive and stagnant'). Broadening the scope to Institutional Pedagogy, we use the concepts 'collectif soignant' and 'collectif des ensembles' as a theoretical and practice-driven framework which aligns us with the idea of a 'permanent revolution'.

In this research, we focus on vulnerable youngsters with the status (imposed by the juvenile court) of a 'worrying developmental situation' and in an apparent need for measures providing 'safety' and 'security'. They find themselves in a challenging situation with frequent defiant, resisting and challenging action, reaction and escalation; often experiencing (the consequences of) judgmental and excluding rationales in society, policy and care. Recent Flemish policy (2019) on 'safe residence' ('veilig verblijf') provides a regulatory framework for these youngsters stating that new closed residential facilities should be established to provide them this 'safety'. Several (private) service providers have realised these facilities the past years; often using the rhetorics of 'client-centeredness' or 'safety' but, paradoxically, with detention and firm clinicalisation as both end and means... 'Safe residence' as both a policy and emerging practice can thus be regarded as an excess of institutionalised logics since an 'établissement' is de facto installed through detention, constant monitoring and strict regimes.

As an alternative, two projects 'safe trajectories' ('veilige trajecten') originated. In these initiatives, closed residential care is not the conditio sine qua non and an intensive pathway is set up with every youngster and those around him or her. As these initiatives try to set up an alternative through resisting detention as an answer to unsafety – facing a (growing) political and societal pressure – they could be considered possible illustrations of de-institutionalisation and Institutional Pedagogy. The ongoing ethnographic research focuses on the perspectives on former and current support by the youngsters included in these 'safe trajectories', their network, and the organisations and counselors providing these 'safe trajectories'.

In this presentation, we elaborate on the first results of the research while making a link to Institutional Pedagogy: imagining transforming care and support for the youngsters concerned, embracing constant reflexivity on structure and culture, and rethinking care for these vulnerable youngsters and institutions as a whole as a 'permanent revolution'.

<u>'Like a normal house': about place-making and 'camérer' in and around a psychiatric institution</u>

This presentation is about social-spatial research on the historical site of the Psychiatric Hospital Dr. Guislain, in the city of Ghent. The immediate reason for this ongoing research is the moving of two psychiatric units that specialize in the treatment of children and youngsters with mental disabilities and additional psychiatric problems. These units were moved from their current separate locations, to share a new building on the historical site of the psychiatric hospital next to the Museum of psychiatry Dr. Guislain, in the superdiverse Ghent neighborhood 'Bloemekenswijk'. Through action research and fieldwork, this research tries to gain insight into the housing and living experiences of vulnerable youngsters, and into the implicit logics on care and community building within the psychiatric hospital.

Historically, providing housing has been a crucial part of the de-institutionalisation of psychiatric care in Flanders from the late 1980ties onward. Yet, after two official reconversions of Flemish psychiatric care, the provision and quality of housing has again become a neglected part of the recovery process of (former) psychiatric patients.

As one professional of the hospital put it in an interview: 'It starts with a question for help, but almost always ends with a housing problem'. The psychiatric hospital presents itself as a specialized professional environment centered around a paradigm of individual cure and 'clients' who stay within the institution as short as possible.

Yet, from our research we see 'patients' spending long periods of time in this unit, possibly much longer than the intended recovery trajectory – and the living group of the institution may be the only stable environment available to them. Whether the specialized care-givers want this or not – the recovery of their patients boils down to handling social and collective issues within the institution, and to housing issues and a difficult question of place-making outside of the institution.

Filming, and the playful use of the camera as an instrument (after Fernand Deligny's term 'camérer' – camering instead of filming) plays an important role in this research. But what is the meaning of a possibly outdated notion of 'camérer', when every youngster has a camera on his or her phone?

Film may have been sensational for the youngsters with whom Deligny worked in the 1970ties – but what difference could a single camera make when every cellphone camera has a nearly perfect resolution? We will compare this imperfect camera with other cameras in the psychiatric unit, and discuss the significance this 'camérer' may have for the different parties involved. For the researcher, using the camera may be a way of surviving symbolically in the environments. After all, 'I am only the cameraman'. For the participants, the shared use of the camera is a much more accessible form of research: it is a way of making a story together, and an opportunity for the youngsters to acquire authorship, or a third point to escape the charged relations of therapeutical programs and clinical treatment. Furthermore, this video is then part of the conversation in feedback sessions with the staff of the units, as well as it is a way to connect with the immediate neighbors of the hospital and the neighborhood at large. We will take a look at practical examples and discuss how the camérer and the practical production of video works works within these environments.

Rethinking institutionalised social work in a transnational and superdiverse migration reality – *Pascal Debruyne & Hans Grymonprez*

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Migration challenges Social Work, both in its thinking and in its actions, to intervene socially from a rights-driven agenda. In this contribution, we analyze how the premises of the post-war welfare state – one of the historical defining moments for Social Work – and highly institutionalized practices of Social Work that resulted from it, come under pressure. Migration is not only pre-eminently a transnational issue, but it also forces us to rethink social mobility on the nexus of migration law, social law and the actually existing social policies of welfare state bordering. Drawing on this, we will suggest 5Ps for a different Social Work. In order to live up to its social value orientation of social justice beyond institutionalized welfare practices we rethink Social Work based on 5 P's; post-national, papers, pedagogics, practices and politics.

Crafting spaces of hope. Social work and the spatial reimagining of 'belonging' with undocumented families – *Pascal Debruyne, Sylvie Van Dam & Kaat Van Acker*

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Social Work likes to put itself on the map as a 'human rights profession' (Reynaert and others, 2022). In the context of the postwar welfare state, citizens do not only have civil and political rights, but also social rights. These universal social rights constitute an important part of full citizenship (Marshall, 1950). In times of migration, however, 'differential inclusion' (Könonen, 2018) and 'practices of illegalization' (De Genova & Roy, 2020), obstruct newcomers' and people without formal citizenship access to the welfare state and its institutions.

Yet, at the same time, literature shows how citizenship is reassembled in the context of migration: unfolding from 'citizenship status' to 'practices of citizenship' (Isin & Nielsen, 2008). It generates a citizenship from below from where rights are claimed and created by those populations withheld from formal status. In this paper, we set out to explore the role of Social Work as a 'human rights practice' for those populations who are on the state territory in practice but are institutionally disenfranchised. We draw on interviews with Social workers (15) and families without formal citizenship (30), and participatory observation in 5 different Social Work organizations and one community organization of undocumented people that offer support to people without formal citizenship.

We explore what kind of practices and relationships contribute to the building blocks for Social Work as a 'human rights practice' (Reynaert ea., 2022) for undocumented families, and adopt a critical spatial lens to look at the production of 'spaces of hope'. Spaces of hope are defined as practices and initiatives of Social Work, where space can be created to experience citizenship differently (facilitating a process of 'becoming' a de facto citizen) but can also generate political space to open a future citizenship. These spaces thus embody 'prefigurative politics' to create alternative imaginaries of belonging and citizenship, in a multiscalar migration management that aims to obstruct them.

We explore how informal and formal Social workers play a role to rethink and – more importantly – spatially "reenact" practices of belonging for precarious undocumented populations. How can these spaces of hope become a political leverage as "arrival infrastructures" (Meeus, ea., 2019) and what kind of street-level initiative is taken by Social workers to reshape citizenship and social rights in times of migration (Barberis & Boccagni, 2014)?

Researching the relationship between child welfare and protection (in Flanders – Dutch part of Belgium) and poverty – *John William Decoene*

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Background and purpose
Poverty and social inequality have far-reaching consequences for the lives of children and families, and these developments provide major challenges for Child Welfare and Protection (CWP). My research focuses on whether, and if so, how, Child Welfare and Protection Services can deal with social inequality and poverty as a social and structural problem instead of merely a problem of individual parents and children.

This research encompasses several empirical sub-studies in which we examine through qualitative research how frontline practitioners and policymakers on organizational and governmental levels deal with poverty and the underlying assumptions behind their actions. We focus on the frontline workers and the policy actors of the Youth Welfare Agency, a governmental organization in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium), responsible for child welfare and child protection, which has a public mandate to intervene in families for the sake of the safety of the child, using Signs of Safety. We adapt a theoretical framework, based on the writings of the Italian theorist and political activist Antonio Gramsci (1891 - 1937) on the significance of 'hegemony', 'common sense', and 'good sense'.

'Outreach' or 'mobile work'? Six types of working in the real-life context of people – *Cis Dewaele, Wouter Vanderplasschen, Didier Reynaert & Jessica De Maeyer*

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Introduction
Although 'outreach' is a central element of deinstitutionalisation and an important methodology in the field of Social Work, youth work and (mental) health work, the concept itself lacks clarity. By using the term outreach, different practices of entering the real-life context of people in a vulnerable situation with different objectives and providing different forms of support for individuals and communities can be meant. This can range from community health work over seeking contact with hard-to-reach drug users and providing support on the street to community building practices fighting the non-take-up of social rights. In daily practice, this conceptual unclarity creates confusion in use of terminology and difficulties in delineation of tasks and responsibilities.

Methods
Based on the results of a former study (Dewaele et al., under review), 14 focus groups with outreach workers (n=76) were organised in 6 cities in Belgium. The former study, which consisted of a Latent Class Analysis performed on the data of an online survey, resulted in 4 types of real-life context work. Those 4 types were discussed in the focus groups.

Results
First, the discussions resulted in the distinction between 'outreach work' and 'mobile work', where the former is based on a specific vision, posture and principles. Second, the discussions redefined the four types of real-life context work into 5 types of outreach. The first type is 'community outreach, characterised by working in public space with groups, casefinding, structural policy work and realizing fundamental rights and/or working on community building. The second type is 'street outreach', characterised by working in public space with individuals, casefinding, structural policy work, participating in the daily lives of people and realizing fundamental rights. The third type is 'family outreach' and is mainly characterised by working with families via home visits with a focus on the development of the child, safety in the family and broadening the clients' network. The fourth type 'housereach' is characterised by working with individuals who are mainly professional referred, making home visits and has as main objective supporting independence and quality of life. The fifth type is 'inreach' and is characterised by working in other organizations, working with individuals via self-referral and with a focus on social reintegration, employment and (mental) health.

Conclusion
Without writing a new definition of outreach, the results from the focus groups differentiate between outreach and other forms of real-life context work. The typology consisting of 5 types provides a framework for practice, research and policy by providing more insight in the aims, tasks and limitations of different types of real-life context work.

Critical skills to become a social worker: learning outcomes highlighted – *Diana Dias & Cristiana Almeida*

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Several scientific areas taught/learned in higher education (HE) tend to follow shared understandings and references, shaped not only to promote quality but also to align learning outcomes (LO) across the world. The scientific area of Social Work (SW) is not an exception.

Firstly, this paper compares the alignment of Portuguese LO for SW HE programmes with the Global standards for the education and training of the SW profession, settled by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social workers (IFSW). Assuming a qualitative approach, LO were semantically analysed, using content analysis framed by the grounded theory paradigm. Thus, the incidence and the typology of LO from all Portuguese SW HE programmes were explored. Then, it will proceed to the analysis of how institutional variables affect the selection of the LO by each HE institution, regarding its academic offer in SW.

Results reveal that HE institutions must reinforce several dimensions of LO for SW students, namely the ethical issues, but also problem solving and communication skills, to assure that Portuguese institutions are aligned with the international standards and guiding principles of this scientific area. It also shows that institutional variables have a small impact in the selection of LO for SW degrees, a conclusion that opens new avenues for future research, namely the impact of the scientific environment in which the degree is functioning.

Belonging versus alienation among at-risk young adult Arabs in Israel: the perspectives of social service providers – *Elias Haneen & Sulimani-Aidan Yafit*

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Background and purpose
The aim of the study was to promote a context-based understanding of risk situations in the lives of young-adult Arabs, based on the perception of social service providers. The literature has addressed structural risk situations in terms of discrimination, social exclusion, and unemployment. However, little is known about how these risk situations affect young adult Arabs' identity during emerging adulthood. The main questions of the study were: "What are the risk situations that young adult Arabs face?", and "How are these risk situations related to their socio-political and socio-cultural contexts?".

Methods
Thirty-nine social services providers were interviewed in depth regarding their perspective of at-risk young adult Arabs. We used thematic analysis to analyze the interviews.

Findings
Analysis of the findings yielded three major themes. The most dominant theme that was discussed by all participants was that of belonging versus alienation as key to situations of risk. This theme traversed through all accounts, and included discussions of group belonging in the country, and individual belonging within the ethnic community. The results follow this theme as it threads through the two other dominant themes of socio-political factors and socio-cultural factors of risk. Due to high rates of intersection of the belonging theme with the context themes, we present them together – we follow the theme of belonging and alienation, through discussion of socio-political and socio-cultural context themes. The first context theme centered around socio-political factors that contribute to risk. This major theme concerns structural conditions and barriers that participants face with regard to being part of a disadvantaged ethno-national minority group in terms of discrimination and inequality in resources. The second theme concerned socio-culture factors that contribute to risk, and includes cultural and religious norms, familial expectations, and gendered dynamics within their cultural and communal setting.

Conclusions and implications
The research findings, as revealed by the services providers' perceptions, indicate intersecting risks, in which a sense of alienation develops among at-risk young-adult Arabs in Israel – in both the social-political and social-cultural contexts. Our analysis was guided by Yuval-Davis's (2006) framing of social and political belonging. Using this framing enabled us to bear in mind that belonging to a social location must be understood within wider power relations in society.
We recommended that a new approach of critical Social Work be crafted that centers discussion of the socio-political and structural risk situations, and that positive socio-cultural aspects can be promoted to carve out places of belonging for at-risk young-adult Arabs. Accordingly, professionals are advised to recognize the transition to young adulthood among minority youths in the context of marginal locations that consider their challenges and risks. Such a point of view could reduce these young people's sense of alienation in the various spaces and contexts.

Exploring attitudes towards rape myths among Italian and German youth: adaptation and validation of the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale - Subtle Version and the Male Rape Myth Acceptance Scale – *Nicol Ellecosta, Demis Basso, Giulia Gaggero & Urban Nothdurfter*

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The femicide of Giulia Cecchettin on November 11, 2023, has instigated a robust discourse within the Italian public sphere concerning violence against women. The noteworthy impact of this incident is derived from the seemingly unremarkable status of the perpetrator, a model university student. This event has effectively dismantled the prevailing archetype of the perpetrator as a grotesque entity, thereby debunking the fallacious assumption that criminal propensities are exclusive to particular individuals.

The flawed notion of a 'just world' extends to crimes of sexual violence, perpetuating a stereotype that holds victims responsible for their victimization. An entrenched misconception posits that women frequently fabricate allegations of abuse. Furthermore, a biased belief implies that the victim deserves the harm inflicted, often attributed to factors such as attire or intoxication. These ingrained convictions collectively manifest as 'rape myths,' a term introduced by Burt in 1980 encompassing stereotypes related to both rape victims and perpetrators.

Despite the widespread exploration of rape myths concerning female victims, there is a notable oversight in examining these myths in the context of male victims, despite the existence of analogous myths. Examples of such myths include the erroneous presumption that women cannot perpetrate sexual assaults against men or the mistaken belief that men invariably welcome and consent to sexual advances.

The presence of these myths not only in public opinion but also within the legal system, law enforcement agencies, and recovery centers for rape survivors underscores the imperative to study the subject of sexual violence. Consequently, this study seeks to achieve dual objectives: to scrutinize and compare the prevalence of rape myths in a bilingual sample and to provide valuable tools for future research in sexual violence prevention within Italian and German-speaking contexts.

The study aims to adapt and validate the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale - Subtle Version (IRMA-S) to assess biases related to female sexual assault and the Male Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (MRMS) for male sexual assault. Following the recommended respondent-to-items ratio of 10:1 for factorial analysis, a sample size of 320 per language is deemed appropriate for testing based on the IRMA-S, which comprises the most extensive item count (32).

You have the right to remain silent: how social work academics cope with the neoliberal university – *Guy Feldman*

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Background

Over the last few decades, institutions of higher education globally have undergone a substantial transformation. A vast and sprawling body of literature has shown how academic institutions, confronted by declines in government funding and growing financial pressures, have adopted market principles and practices that have had far-reaching consequences for faculty, students, and society as a whole. Although the changing nature of higher education has received sustained attention in the literature, less attention has been given to the ways in which this transformation affects academics on a subjective level.

To redress the current imbalance, this study examines how tenured and tenure-track Social Work faculty in universities in Israel confront the economisation of higher education. Our focus on Social Work provides a unique opportunity to explore the impact of these fundamental changes. Social Work is a practice-based profession that seeks to promote the welfare of marginalised groups, to ameliorate social problems and to achieve social justice. Social Work as an academic discipline is therefore an interesting case in point because of the tension that exists between the profession's mission of pursuing social justice and protecting those who are marginalised and the logic of the market that is a core part of academic life today. Social Work is well-positioned to contribute distinctive insights of its own to the debate about the economisation of higher education.

Methods

The study is grounded in a constructivist-qualitative approach, which seeks to capture the essence of a phenomenon through a close examination of people's individual perceptions and experiences in light of the broader socio-political environment in which they are enmeshed. We conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a sample of 13 participants. Based on the number of academic ranks in Israeli academia, our sample was divided into three groups of tenured/tenure-track academics in schools of Social Work from five research universities in Israel: Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Professor. We recruited faculty members in each group (five lecturers, five senior lecturers and three professors), who represented each of the following universities: Tel Aviv University, the University of Haifa, the Hebrew University, Bar-Ilan University, and Ben-Gurion University. Participants from each group were randomly selected by a research assistant and were then invited to participate via email. All data were coded thematically with the aid of MAXQDA.

Findings

First, our findings reveal the tension that existed between the academic freedom that was given to Social Work faculty and the disciplinary power the university used on them to ensure their compliance with neoliberal interests and logics. Findings indicate that participants at all academic ranks experienced many degrees of academic freedom in their universities (e.g., the autonomy they have in designing their courses and conducting research). At the same time, they described how the university uses its power to discipline them to be compliant in sustaining the ongoing marketisation of the institution. There was broad consensus among participants, for example, that the university is heavily invested in ensuring that faculty cater to outside entities and secure grants, thus bringing large sums of money into the university.

Second, findings show various strategies that our participants adopted to cope with the consequences of being part of a neoliberal university. These strategies can be divided into two groups: strategies at the individual level and strategies at the institutional level.

To be sure, all of the participants, from all academic ranks, admitted that they conformed to the patterns of everyday life in the neoliberal academy. However, participants developed a set of strategies that enabled them, to some degree, to remain committed to their own personal values and, in very few cases, to resist and subvert the power relations that govern them.

Conclusion
This study has lent some clarity to whether Social Work faculty 'practice what they preach'; in other words, whether they resist the oppressive power exerted over them and try to promote systemic change within their universities (as they encourage their students to do within social service organisations). Our findings suggest that even among Social Work academics, individual or collective resistance to the neoliberal academy's disciplinary regime is marginal and, in many cases, non-existent. Social Work academics in our study largely refrain from fulfilling the profession's stated mission of working towards social justice by attempting to change the system. Based on these findings, we suggest that academics come together to discuss their individual and collective grievances and then act in concert to redress those grievances and, more broadly, the discipline they endure under the neoliberal university.

Specialist consulting as a solution to the lack of structures in residential care? – Nina Flack

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The Deinstitutionalising of residential care in Germany is closely linked to the question of privacy and familiarity in the field of family-like forms of housing. The presentation will discuss relevant questions of Child Well-being (The presentation will focus on the German discourse which, from a pedagogical, sociological and juridical perspective, speaks of Kindeswohl, which is to be seen as a complex and multidisciplinary construct (Fetger & Fatorre 2024).) in a field of residential care that is characterized by a lack of organizational embedding and structure.

The presentation will reflect the results of an ethnographic study that focused on family-like forms of housing as a form of residential care. The most important aspect of this setting is that pedagogically qualified caregivers live together in one household with young people to offer intensive education and care (Schäfer 2021). As a result, the professionals' private lives overlap significantly with their pedagogically work. Living together raises questions about the necessary balance between publicity and privacy, closeness and distance, which must be constantly reflected (Schäfer & Thole 2018). The structure of the setting raises important questions in the context of the Deinstitutionalising Social Work. On the one hand, pedagogically qualified caregivers live in a household that must have an operating license and the work takes place in a professional institution. On the other hand, living together leads to an overlap between professional work and the private lives of professionals. This can result in a loss of professional structures and guidelines – as the caregivers are not embedded in team structures. In addition, they have no direct supervisor, as they work independently (Flack 2023). Nonetheless, important questions in the context of residential care, such as Child Well-being, must not be lost. These diffuse structures in the field of family-like forms of housing require flexible (de-)institutionalized structures that can adapt to this pedagogical field of action while at the same time focusing on a professional pedagogical perspective.

The pedagogically qualified caregivers have a contractual cooperation relationship with a youth welfare organization. The organization provides the specialist consultants, who are seen as support by the caregivers. On the part of the organization, important questions arise regarding Child Well-being and how this can be ensured. First results of the dissertation study show that the organization has no clear job description and task structure for the specialist consulting. This leads to a seemingly heterogenous design of specialist consulting, which is why an open, ethnographic approach was chosen for the dissertation study. These issues of missing institutional structures are analyzed with the help of the Situational Analysis (Clarke 2012) and is used to identify important relations between actors, actants and discourses in Social Work. The presentation will use case studies to show which actors are implicated and silenced (Clarke et al. 2018) and which topics in particular need to be discussed in the context of Deinstitutionalising Social Work. Because of a diffuse understanding of which actor in the system of residential care has the responsibility for the Child Well-being at what point in time must be discussed – which is realized in the context of this presentation.

Bridging the gap: trust-building in feminist participatory research within institutionalised contexts – *Andrea Fleckinger & Sabine Tiefenthaler*

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Feminist and participatory methodologies enable collaborative knowledge construction, fostering transformative processes that directly impact the lived experiences of participants (Kirby, Greaves & Ried 2010; Unger, 2014; Mies, 2008). Central to these approaches is the acknowledgment of research as a co-creative process, dismantling hierarchies among diverse forms of knowledge through critical examination of power dynamics (Reid & Freid, 2008; Prasad, 2019). However, the application of feminist participatory methods within institutional settings presents some challenges. Institutional rigidity and power dynamics often impede trust-building, thereby limiting the potential of feminist participatory approaches. Recognizing trust as a key element to make the knowledge of addressees in Social Work visible, the central focus of the presentation is on trust-building processes in research contexts. Without trust, narratives remain suppressed perpetuating existing inequalities, power relations remain undiscovered and social realities can neither be explored nor changed.

Drawing from two feminist participatory research projects conducted in Italy the complexities of trust-building within Social Work contexts are discussed. Both academic researchers experienced similar challenges regarding four central themes: access to the field, the role their personality as a woman and academic researcher played, the creation of a safe space, and (im)possibilities of social transformation.

Existing and desired child and family services from Afghan women's point of view in Finland – *Laleh Golamrej Eliasi*

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Introduction

This study aimed to explore the perception of Afghan women about existing and desired welfare services for immigrant children and families in Finland. In 2022 the number of foreign-born individuals in Finland was about 477,000, which is 9% of the whole population. 13% of this group were under 20. As a consequence of increasing immigration, there is a need to develop social services and expand the knowledge of Social workers and other social service professionals to meet the needs of diverse client groups, such as migrants.

Immigrant children face multiple challenges compared to their peers with Finnish backgrounds. This group is less likely to pursue higher education compared to their Finnish peers and may experience racism in their host country. Children settle in the new country and adopt the habits of the new society faster than their parents. In the context of collective cultural values, this may cause conflicts in the family, if the parents wish to maintain and bring their children up according to their cultural and religious traditions.

The intersection of societal, familial, and individual challenges, such as inadequate education, unemployment, racism, and domestic violence can lead to social exclusion. Children immigrant who encounter social exclusion are at a heightened risk of engaging in risky behaviors. Consequently, immigrant children must receive support, with Social workers assuming a critical role in the welfare system for this population. Balancing family rights and the best interests of children is a demanding responsibility for Social workers and decision-makers alike, specifically with immigrant service users, as understanding and interpreting situations in different cultural and social contexts may be challenging. Given the growing trend of Afghan immigration to Finland, there is a strong need to improve the skills of Social workers and provide effective welfare services for immigrants.

With the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021, the number of Afghans who came to Finland has increased from 599 in 2020 to 820 in 2021. According to Statistics Finland (2022), there were 13,050 Afghan people in Finland, and 3,879 of whom were under 18 years old. It is a knowledge gap about the welfare services for the Afghan children and families in Finland.

Main Questions
1)   How do Afghan women describe the existing child welfare services?
2)   How do Afghan women describe their desired child welfare services?

Method

For obtaining the objectives of this research, the qualitative interviews conducted with 13 Afghan women over 18 years old who currently reside in Finland. To recruit participants, a multi-pronged approach was utilized, which involved the distribution of flyers across a variety of non-governmental organizations that specialize in working with/for immigrants in four cities in Finland. Additionally, the snowball sampling technique was employed to expand the pool of potential participants. Interviews were conducted with each participant, lasting from 35 minutes to 1 hour and 5 minutes, and all interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed. Data was analyzed by Content analysis. Before conducting this research, ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Turku on 29/09/2021.

Results

For the perception of the existing children and family services two themes emerged: I) Laws & Practices, and II) Providing Information for immigrants. Their point of view on desired children and family services also were identified in two themes: I) Increasing life skills and economic support, and II) Improving communication between service users and service providers. The results show that in order to improve the well-being of the immigrant children, which welfare services are the immigrant families satisfied with and suggest the services and Social workers in which areas should improve.

National diagnosis of the deinstitutionalisation of social services in Poland – *Mirosław Grewiński, Joanna Lizut & Paweł Rabiej*

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The "National diagnosis of the deinstitutionalization of social services in 16 Polish voivodeships (regions)" took place in 2023. The text present results of the research and diagnosis the preparation of social assistance and integration institutions for the implementation of deinstitutionalization in Polish public services in: foster care, support for dependent people, support and integration of people with disabilities, support for people with mental problems, support for older people and support for people in crisis of homelessness. Various aspects of creating and delivering social services by institutions, preparation and expectations were analyzed service recipients towards social services, the potential of inter-sectoral cooperation and the potential of using e-services and technologies in the creation of new services and changes in institutions.Various research methods were used to carry out the "National diagnosis of the deinstitutionalization of social services in 16 Polish voivodeships (regions)".

Objectives of the research:
1. Analysis of the needs of social service recipients 24 – hour facilities versus community services.
2. Analysis of existing residential services and the possibilities of their modification in to community services with focus on state of knowledge and preparation of institutions and decision-makers in local government to transformed and provide care in the community.
3. Analysis of strategies for community services, aims to enhance management, creation of cooperation and collaboration networks, standardization, and the use of technology in community services. In research CAWI involved 2,650 respondents from institutions and 3,518 recipients of 24-hour services and environmental. The Case Study research covered 256 entities in all regions,and the survey of municipal governments – 531 units. In total, over 8.3 thousand people participated in the study.

Boundaries and human dignity in social work: a foucauldian inspired perspective – *Hans Grymonprez*

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In recent years, the politicization of Social Work has ignited debates (Naert et al., 2023), yet politicization remains often elusive even to seasoned practitioners and researchers. Conversations lack precision, revolving around abstract and very broad concepts like 'change,' 'transformation,' or 'human dignity,'. Social Work's right to discourse , introduced by Philps in his seminal text ' the knowledge form of Social Work ' (1979), seems increasingly under scrutiny while some voices even pronounced its end (Maylea, 2020).

In this session, inspired by Foucault's concept of 'critique as limit attitude,' we explore the potential for everyday situations to become arenas for transparent politicization. To achieve this, I draw upon the notion of human dignity, delving deeper into boundary situations where power, subjectivity, and knowledge (also produced and reproduced by Social workers) intersect to perpetuate oppression and exclusion.

Through analytical exploration, we aim to uncover the transformative power of human dignity as an idea which in practice is a contingent quality which can be gained or lost (Jacobsen, 2007). In this session I use excepts from a lengthy narrative of a family in deep poverty (Grymonprez & Willem, 2018). Transparency then means being very clear and unambiguous about the boundaries, both in terms of the day-to-day non dignified situations in which people find themselves as in the role of Social Works to act upon boundaries.

Digital technologies and practices of social work surveillance. An Italian case-study in social services to tackle poverty – *Paolo Guidi & Mara Sanfelici*

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This contribution explores how the use of digital technologies is driving forward new surveillance practices in Social Work, looking at the implementation of a new national electronic information system (IS) in social services to tackle poverty in Italy.

Surveillance practices are intrinsically ambiguous, and in themselves not good or bad, but surely not neutral. They can entail watching to enhance the care and safety of the "surveilled", with or without their participation, or they can involve an effort to control those whose conduct is under suspicion and allow oppressive practices. In contemporary societies, surveillance has been defined as "the operations and experiences of collecting and analyzing personal data for the purpose of exerting influence, deciding who is entitled to what, and controlling" (Lyon, 2017). Processes of social sorting have been embedded in society much before the introduction of digital technologies. However, they have more recently been transformed through the involvement of ICT, utilized to increase the capacity and the power of surveillance in welfare systems. In many parts of the contemporary world, the provision of social services has become increasingly digitalised through practices of 'datafication' in which the mass collection of personal data informs interventions (Hoeyer et al 2019; Ruckenstein and Schüll 2017). Technologies have been increasingly used to support professional assessment and judgment, or for eligibility screening, most of the time uncritically considering them as neutral technical tools, with no link to value assumptions. In Western contemporary societies, these transformations are taking place in a context where the individualization of risks is justifying the dismantling of the welfare state, and fostering the return to an individual-blame perspective in social services.

Against this background, this contribution will discuss the results of a research project aimed at understanding how the implementation of a new electronic information system in services to tackle poverty is influencing the Social Work helping process. Policy documents have been analysed to grasp discourses and rhetorics underpinning the implementation of this platform. 20 interviews were administered to Social workers, to understand their experience using this IS. The analysis of policy documents highlight the main (declared) concerns of the policy makers: to improve data collection and knowledge about poverty in Italy, ensure interoperability with other social protection and health services, evaluate interventions and reduce differences among territories. Social workers reflections and descriptions of their practice show a more nuanced picture, unveiling how this IS has being used also to monitor and direct their work, imposing new forms of categorizations and surveillance on service users. Social workers are constrained by a number of 'e-pathways', that influence the way in which they think and act, risking to undermine the relational dimension in the helping process. The analysis of professionals' discourses shows the reasons why some of them are appreciating the new tool for data collection, while other are more critical sometimes adapting with the new rules, in other cases enacting forms of everyday resistance. This analysis is useful to understand how Social Work can position itself as an agent that can deinstitutionalise potentially oppressive practices and discourses in the digital age, or on the contrary, contribute to reinforce these processes.

Parent – peer advocacy & support in child protection: conceptualisations of inclusive approaches with birth parents – *Anna Gupta & Yuval Saar-Heiman*

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There has been a growing critique of child protection (CP) systems in many Western countries for being too punitive, individualised and risk averse, particularly in the context of increasing inequalities. Studies have found that many parents have negative experiences of the CP system; fear, blame and shame permeate and hinder the development of effective working relationships. As a result, there has been increasing interest internationally in innovative ways of meaningfully involving parents in the development of more humane and socially just CP processes.

Parent peer advocacy and support programmes, delivered by parents with lived CP experience to parents receiving CP intervention, are examples of more inclusive practices gaining attention and promising positive outcomes. These programs can operate on one or all of three levels: case advocacy; programme advocacy; and policy advocacy. However, little is known about how individual programmes are conceptualized and delivered or how variations across programme typologies may influence outcomes. This paper presents a scoping review of empirical literature on parent peer advocacy and support programmes to begin to address this gap by examining 25 years of research that explores the design and delivery of these programmes as context for programme benefits and outcome achievement.

Methods: Study methods were guided by PRISM-P scoping review standards. The review focused on studies published in English between January 1996 and June 2022. A search across a range of electronic databases, grey literature websites, and peer-reviewed journals, resulted in 3,884 unduplicated citations. Eligible studies were those that examined programs delivered by parents with lived experience to parents in the CP system and addressed program development, delivery and/or outcomes. Data extraction (n=50) focused on programme characteristics, study methods and findings. A subsequent phase two analysis of supports important for outcome achievement identified 20 studies representing 13 programs. Thematic data analysis explored support descriptions across study findings and similarities and differences in conceptualisations of parent peer support.

Findings: The Phase 1 findings reveal an emergent evidence-base addressing a relatively wide-range of parent peer advocacy and support programmes distinguished by both programme and parent (service provider and recipient) characteristics. Further programme variation was identified in the theoretical underpinning of service delivery and anticipated outcome achievement with some examples of limited attention to theories related to parent empowerment and inclusion. Findings further reveal an evidence-base increasingly focused on programme effects and outcome achievement. Across studies, there was a reliance on traditional child and case-level outcome measures (e.g., reunification, maltreatment reoccurrence) in both practice and research and a need for a greater focus on equality- and rights-based measures eliciting the parent perspective. The Phase 2 findings revealed a diverse range of supports provided by parent advocates, providing a more nuanced picture of both the types of support provided and the contribution of lived experience to these supports. A multidimensional framework representing fourteen support domains across four categories is presented.

Conclusions: The results of this scoping review reveal the importance of contextualizing the parent peer advocacy and support empirical evidence with greater consideration to programme types and characteristics. Further implications include the need for improved theoretical transparency among these programmes and alignment with the main tenets of these more inclusive approaches. Findings

also highlight the need for practice and research to recognize more fully the breadth and depth of unique supports provided by parent advocates based on their lived experience and the potential contribution of these supports to outcome achievement.

Child welfare as social networks: towards ecological, relations-based and systematic agenda – *Timo Harrikari*

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Protecting children is a long-term and permanent function of human societies and communities. The foundation of the current Western child welfare and child protection systems was launched at the end of the nineteenth century when the first modern child welfare and juvenile justice institutions were established. From the very beginning, the mission of these institutions has been 'social' in nature, but studies focusing explicitly on social bonds, relationships or systems in child welfare, here utilising social network theory, are still rare.

In this presentation, child welfare will be conceptualised as social networks. The presentation discusses on how thinking of child welfare more as social ties and social networks than institutional boxes can provide a new type of up-to-date, empirical-based and fine-grained study setting for developing ecological and systems theory not only in child welfare, but even more widely in Social Work studies.

In addition, the presentation formulates, how we can renew a theory of how the social-ecological fabric is constructed, social networks are structured, and social ties are organised within the scope of child welfare through empirical-based social network analyses (SNA) and their results. Consequently, the objective of the presentation is to provide an overall understanding of the operation of social networks in child welfare and related fields. Three specific but intertwined focus will be examined: how can we conceptualise and analyse child welfare agents and activities constituted in the domains of a) egocentric (personal and interpersonal), b) sociocentric (interpersonal, intra-organisational) and c) the networks of sociocentric networks (interorganisational relations)?

The presentation is based on a research project for two years at the University of Helsinki funded by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2024–25) Five types of egocentric and sociocentric network data will be collected from the child welfare clients, workers, teams and organisations that represent four well-being services counties in Finland. The project will be implemented in collaboration with national authorities and international academic partners.

The relevance of the method discussion for the deinstitutionalisation of social work – *Sarah Henn*

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For some time now, a distinction has been made in the debate on the professionalisation of Social Work between an evidence-based mode of action on the one hand and on the other one based on reconstructive methods of case understanding. These models are sharply contrasted. As a result, many methods and concepts with emancipatory aspirations, such as empowerment or families first, are also categorised as transferable action guidelines and thereby are dismissed. On the other hand, it can be observed that professionals explicitly ask for orientation and action guidlines, that working conditions are inadequate and that the ideal of reflexivity is neither made possible by organisations with the appropriate framework conditions, nor can it be realised by professionals due to work intensification. Against the background of the conference topic, the presentation will show which problems arise from the neglect of the debate on methods in Social Work for the change of institutional logics. The thesis is that the debate on methods is the place where science and practice must be mediated with each other so that Social Work is not dominated by managerialist or therapeutic logics. The question is therefore how concepts of critical reflexivity and understanding methods can be used to legitimise and institutionalise framework conditions that enable integration and social justice without driving professionals into burnout.

Institutionalisation in the process of deinstitutionalisation – *Gordana Horvat & Suzana Tomašević*

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The institutionalisation of the social care system has increased in recent times, while the same system is the lever of the deinstitutionalisation process that questions the role of the system itself in society. Social Work faces two major problems. Firstly, there is the political level and the inability of the system to respond to people's needs, which calls into question the very purpose of the system, which is strongly centred on the individual and not on the collective, while the responsibility and blame for the difficulties they face lies with the user. The second point is the values of Social Work, which can no longer be respected by Social workers because Social workers are left with only a narrow neoliberal intervention space to working with users and transitioning to community support. Services and support for users are standardised and Social workers are deprived of the flexibility of their work and their autonomy, as the ever-growing bureaucracy is bound only to the legal framework, resulting in a lack of social dimension. The centralisation of the social system and the revival of institutions to accommodate users whose capacities are to be expanded leads to a diametrically opposed direction of the deinstitutionalisation process, whose implementers are the very institutions that are again advocating institutionalisation. Social workers are increasingly confronted with sanctions if they deviate from a strong institutional regime.

Research conducted in Croatia as part of doctoral dissertations on two different population groups, namely children and young people and the older people, points to the lack of democracy, emancipation and participation in the work with users, as well as the renewed advocacy of institutionalisation in the absence of accommodation capacities. In both cases, the lack of methods for working with users was noted, as well as the uneven development of Social Work in relation to needs and opportunities. The paradigm of power, according to which the institution defines the problem and offers solutions, does not include the dimension of the person as a subject who has the right to make decisions about his or her life. Social workers become an extension of the state, lose their professional identity and at the same time are exposed to a paradigm of blame for failures in working with people. Furthermore, examples from the practise of the planning method with users are highlighted, showing that users lack active participation and the opportunity to express their wishes and needs and decide independently on changes that affect their lives. The aforementioned studies show that there is a perceived potential, but also a lack of a planning method that should normally be a space for the involvement of all participants (formal and informal) from the network of people that can be resources in solving the difficulties defined by the users. Of particular concern is the fact that Social workers do not undertake planning in their work with older people as this has recently ceased to be a statutory requirement and it remains unclear on what basis, how and what type of care is provided to older people. Planning is a mandatory part of the working process when implementing individual planning with children and young people, as opposed to older people. Social workers often create a plan without the child, family or anyone from the child's network being involved in the creation. The system has bureaucratised planning, which no longer has any purpose other than pure administration, which means a loss of professional identity for Social workers, but also a loss of autonomy in their working with users.

The question is how to bring about a reversal of the paradigmatic approach that currently leads to a for instead of with or subject instead of object, but it is worrying that this question was asked a long time ago and is still waiting for an answer.

Supportive relationships mitigate the impact of peer aggression on children's well-being – *Migena Kapllanaj, Natallia Sianko & Mark Small*

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Peer aggression and bullying significantly impact children's well-being and overall experience. On average, across OECD countries, 23% of students report experiencing peer aggression a few times a month, with 8% report experiencing peer aggression frequently. Research indicates that peer aggressive behaviors emerge early in a child's school years, encompassing physical, verbal, and emotional aggressive behaviors. These behaviors often persist and contribute to a cycle of generational aggression in multi-systemic environmental contexts.

To understand the impact of peer aggression on children more fully, it is important to consider children's immediate and distant environments, including relationships with family members and other influential adults. Using a sample of 10-year-old children from 29 countries (n=43,361, 49% girls), this study investigated the connection between peer aggression and children's subjective well-being, in the context of supportive relationships with parents and teachers. Data came from Wave 3 of Children's Worlds International Survey (ISCIWEB), a comprehensive international study assessing children's subjective perceptions and evaluations of their lives and well-being in diverse contexts and domains. Preliminary findings reveal that approximately seven out of ten children have encountered some form of peer aggression, with significant variations among countries. On average, boys experience more peer aggression than girls, and these differences are statistically significant in most countries.

Regression analyses indicate a negative association between peer aggression and subjective well-being. Further, parental and teachers support significantly moderate this relationship, suggesting a protective influence of supportive relationships with influential adults in children's lives. In summary, our results highlight the adverse effect of peer aggression on subjective well-being but underscore that this impact is diminished when children have robust supportive relationships with parents and teachers. These findings illuminate the importance of social support systems in alleviating the consequences of peer aggression and emphasize the need for interventions that promote positive environments in both family and educational settings to enhance subjective well-being.

Action research as a method of deinstitutionalisating social work – *Andraž Kapus, Nejc Berzelak, Kaja Zoran, Maruša Tomc Arko, Andreja Rafaelič*

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The paper will present a dynamic process and method of action research which researchers from the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia use as a key method for research, professional Social Work counseling and achieving structural changes in the field of social welfare and long-term care. Our action research approach is focused on obtaining data for the needs of evaluation, and at the same time enables research campaigns and projects, organization of events, advocacy campaigns and the involvement of various actors to achieve change in dialogue and co-creation.

Action research, as we develop it at the Social Protection Institute, is a democratic way of research, when researchers and those who are researched both participate in research and in the implementation of social changes. It emphasizes the importance of group dynamics, joint decision-making, dialogue and collectivity in research. Action research is one of the ways to involve people who are excluded due to various social circumstances in research and knowledge creation, and at the same time to restore some valued social roles to them.

The paper will focus on the method of action research as a way to deinstitutionalize existing practices in social care and long-term care and a way to keep our practice as researchers and Social workers dynamic, self-critical and self-reflective.

The transformative potential and risks in the transition from safe to brave spaces: exploring brave spaces in social work – *Denoix Kerger*

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Purpose
Within the context of the Interreg ORPHEUS project, a study was conducted to examine alternatives to deradicalisation policies in the UK, the Netherlands, Flanders, and France. These policies towards preventing violent extremism, inadvertently led to a complex array of challenges and unforeseen consequences. Central to these repercussions was the erosion of trust between the youths and the institutions tasked with safeguarding and supporting them, resulting in feelings of alienation and the impossibility to express their grievances and feelings of injustice.
The concept of "Safe Spaces" is a methodological framework within prevention services, educational institutions, and youth work organizations. It aims to furnish young people with a confidential milieu conducive to candidly discussing their personal experiences. However, it became apparent that Safe Spaces could potentially devolve into restricted environments, reinforcing fixed identities, and diminishing the capacity for agency within the broader societal context. In this context, the notion of "Brave Spaces" could offer a potential solution. Brave Spaces empower individuals and groups to publicly articulate their grievances while actively participating and taking initiative. Brave Spaces allow to challenge established norms within the democratic principle of disordering.

Methods
This project delved into the distinctive characteristics of Brave Spaces through the application of a comprehensive mixed-methods approach. Four case studies were conducted in organizations situated within the city of Ghent (Belgium): an ecological activist movement, a community work organization, a social-cultural institution, and a youth welfare organization. The methodology encompassed participatory observations, document analyses, and interviews, affording a nuanced understanding of the dynamics intrinsic to each Brave Space.

Findings
The study uncovered the prerequisites of Brave Spaces, as well as their key inhibiting factors, that influence the transition from Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces. Participants need a minimal degree of (perceived) agency to vocalize their grievances publicly. The associated risks with making grievances public can be mitigated, but not entirely eliminated, through adequate professional support. This study underscores the significance of the professionals supporting the Safe Spaces. Professionals, too, needed the "courage" to operate in the public domain and actively contribute to fostering a more engaged and democratic society. Such an endeavor inherently entailed embracing unpredictability and the potential for disrupting established consensus, which extends to the organizations and professionals involved.

Conclusions and Implications
This research supports the transformative potential inherent to Brave Spaces within the domain of Social Work. By promoting agency and embracing unpredictability, these spaces offer a platform for socially vulnerable individuals to actively shape and participate in society. However, it also raises critical questions pertaining to the limits and responsibilities of Social Work in navigating this transformative terrain.

The study prompts a discussion concerning the boundaries and possibilities that define Social Work's engagement with such spaces. While Brave Spaces hold promise as a strategy for politicising grievances in a more engaged, democratic society, they are not devoid of challenges and potential negative consequences, urging reflection on the ethical and practical considerations governing Social Work's engagement with these transformative arenas.

Society, democracy and social work professionals - social work education and practice in international comparison – *Christian Christrup Kjeldsen, Jörg Fischer & Onno Husen*

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In the transition from academic studies to social practice, students also undergo a transition into a professional role. The aim of Social Work studies is to equip students with the skills they need to work successfully and for a long time as professionals in the field of Social Work. The path of Social Work education should not be understood solely as a linear process in which teachers pass on knowledge to students, i.e. one generation to the next. Rather, the process of developing Social Work education and the profession is an iterative process in which Social Work graduates are confronted with Social Work practice, but also change it over time being in practice. The aim of Social Work practice is to influence society, which in turn influences Social Work education. In this circular process and triangular relationship between Social Work education, Social Work practice and society, mutual expectations and perceptions play a central role.

The aim of the presentation is to present the first systematic perceptions of a research framework and invite interested partners across the TISSA community to take part an International Comparative Social Work Assessment (research project). The project framework will seek to investigate the interplay between Social Work education, Social Work practice and society, current mechanisms of influence and transfer transitions are to be explored in a cross-country comparative study on Social Work.

Toward sustainable international social work: the case of an Indonesian-Swedish collaboration – *Zlatana Knezevic, Bernard Selfry Yamaraja, Gede Widya Mintaraga & Amanda Pettersson*

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Transnational and global actors and debates largely influence social and development work in the international arena. An example of this is out-of-home childcare, where current trends show support for both deinstitutionalised options and institutionalised residential childcare, such as orphanages. Higher education international exchange programs, which may involve Social Work field placements, are, however, relatively invisible as actors supporting or opposing deinstitutionalisation and institutionalisation of Social Work. This is important to highlight considering that in the Global South, institutionalisation may be sustained by actors from the Global North, despite the fact that deinstitutionalisation is generally advocated in the Global North. Furthermore, given the rise of "voluntourism", which has transformed formerly non-profit humanitarianism into for-profit tourism, it is crucial to investigate these collaborations and ask critical questions about the kind of Social Work that is supported. Voluntourism makes less demands on previous experience, language proficiency, duration of stay and offers tailored "internship packages", which makes it particularly appealing to students who are looking for internships in the Global South. In addition to earlier problematisations of international exchanges between the Global North and Global South as new forms of colonialism and professional imperialism, Social Work field placements carry particular concerns. The work may in the worst case be considered to rest on the exploitation of the already vulnerable, often in the so-called child orphanage industry, irregular and short-term work and a lack of solidarity and reciprocity with the local community.

Drawing on the case of an Indonesian-Swedish partnership involving the higher education and NGOs, this paper discusses how international partnerships related to Social Work can challenge unequal relations of power, changing the meaning of Social Work in the process. In particular, initiatives involving digital Social Work and follow-up work will be discussed as sustainable alternatives in a world shaped by power dynamics between the Global North and the Global South.

How life world oriented social work mediates academic success and failure – Eva Lange & Holger Ziegler

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As part of a joint project, we have investigated educational processes of young first-time graduates from precarious backgrounds. The focus has been on the possible effects Social Works' family support on (stories about) scholastic success. It became apparent that explanatory standard models of empirical school success research are not really feasible to grasp these 'statistically improbable' experiences of success. We suggest that a concept which is at odds to assumptions about 'rational choice' as well as to assumptions about a non-reflexive 'habitus' is explanatory: the concept of 'concerns'.

As we may argue – and empirically demonstrate – that family support can help young people to realize their individual 'concerns', concerns are also an analytical fulcrum for analyzing what Social Work may (or may not) provide to academic success of their clients. However, the development of these Concerns cannot be reduced to the influence of a few individual role models or supportive caregivers, but can be derived from the multi-layered experiences of the respective biographies.

"Give us enough for a weekly so we don't have to cross every day" – strategies of drug users residing in Abkhazia and on methadone treatment in Georgia – *Gaëlle Le Pavic*

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Contested borders impact access to social services for differently situated populations yet few studies take the point of view of service users to unveil this impact. This chapter documents and analyses the situation of drug users residing in Abkhazia and following methadone treatment in Georgia. Abkhazian legislation forbids methadone, while the Georgian ones limit the dispensing of methadone to a single dose. These legal frameworks constrain those who reside in Abkhazia to commute daily to Georgia. The study unfolds by initially exploring borderland and bordering practices concepts. Using then Foucault's insights into biopolitics and governmentality, the chapter shows how individuals subjected to power negotiate, challenge, and reshape it. To further explain how the resistance to power ubiquity unfolds where power is not only repressive but also productive, the chapter incorporates Arendt's distinction between visibility and invisibility.

Using data from a focus group with drug users on methadone treatment, complemented by observations at the dispensary within the Rukhi Hospital, Georgia and interviews with medical staff, the results show limited access to the public space generating little visibility for the methadone users' cause. However, they keep engaging in actions at different scales to convey their demand for multiple days' worth of methadone doses. Acknowledging the ethical challenges inherent in this research, the study endeavours to transcend a mere do-no-harm approach. It seeks mutual gains by supporting the advocacy efforts of methadone users navigating the daily challenges of the Georgian-Abkhazian contested border. The researcher has taken proactive steps, including dissemination actions, to amplify the voices of methadone users at the local, national, and international levels, advocating for their right to access methadone for extended duration.

Cultivating a positive living and working climate in residential youth care: a pedagogical perspective – *Delphine Levrouw, Jan Naert Rudi Roose Stijn Vandevelde*

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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 and working climate wherein the importance of elaborating a basic pedagogy is coming to the fore.

Yet, the development of a basic pedagogy, in relation to the cultivation of a positive living and working climate, seems to be under pressure, due to organizational and social influences, including de-institutionalisation and considering residential youth care as "a last resort", a strong focus on "what works" and "managerial thinking". Subsequently, there'is an urge to control and instrumentalise the pedagogical in these settings. These influences lead to high rates of administration and registration tasks, and an unsafe context to work in, as perceived by group workers and staff members.

Objectives
In this presentation, we focus on the results of four different studies wherein we focused on a learning trajectory aimed at improving the living cimate in a residential youth care organisation, and qualitative studies focusing on the experiences of of care workers (3) and managers (4) about the elaboration of a basic pedagogy in relation to the development of the living and working climate and the challenges they face.

Overall, in this presentation, we discuss the overarching themes that came to the fore, including the societal influences playing a significant role in how organizations and care workers elaborate a pedagogical perspective in relation to the development of a positive living and working climate. There is a considerable struggle to prioritize a basic pedagogy in a climate that promotes an instrumental and managerial approach. However, there seems to be a lack of a countermovement from care workers and managers. Suggestions for praxis are addressed.

Social work & poverty in the UK – *Saul Lovell*

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Poverty has been clearly established as one of the major contributing factors to increased incidence of child abuse and neglect. In the UK, local government social services departments are responsible for investigating and responding to children in need of protection. Demand for these services is at a peak and continuing to rise. This project explores the extent to which Social Work as a profession is making efforts to address the structural issue of poverty.

Much has been written about the space that Social Work occupies between the personal and the political and the changing identity of the profession over the years. However, if Social Work in the UK is to be practised with integrity, and sustainability, there is a need to explore how Social workers are positioning themselves in relation to the critical issue of family poverty specifically. The timing of this research is key in the context of increasing economic inequality; soaring demand for public services; and severe cuts to local government budgets.

The primary aim of this project is to explore the extent to which children's Social workers in England are aware of the link between poverty; and child abuse and neglect. And what role they feel their profession has in relation to addressing this issue.

To place current Social Work practice in context, the literature review will explore:

- The history and development of Social Work as a profession, both in the UK and internationally
- The political context in the UK within which Social Work has developed
- Poverty and inequality, and the politics around these issues
- Existing policy and guidance

To investigate Social Work's current attitude towards poverty, a series of interviews and focus groups will take place with student Social workers; Social workers; Social Work leaders; and Social Work educators. It will then be possible to establish any correlations or divergences between the wider social and political narratives around poverty; and the narratives that exist within the field of Social Work. The data collected will be analysed using discourse analysis. The analysis will seek to explain the existing power dynamics between the political layers of decision making, and the profession.

The findings of this project will be of significance to the profession in terms of developing an understanding of its position in relation to addressing poverty; the reason for this position; and any scope for change. It is intended that valuable data will be produced which could generate new and reinvigorated conversations around the identity of the profession and its commitment to the empowerment of people and communities.

Understanding loneliness and social participation among men transitioning into retirement: insights from Estonia – *Olga Lupanova & Merike Sisask*

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In an ageing society, it is important to address loneliness and foster social participation among older people to promote their health and well-being. Despite the high prevalence of loneliness and low social participation among older adults in Estonia, particularly among men, research on this topic remains scarce. Therefore, this study aimed to shed light on Estonian men's perspectives and experiences of loneliness and social participation during transition to retirement as well as their expectations to the community, local government, and state in addressing these issues.

Drawing on a qualitative research approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 Estonian men aged 55 to 75. Participants included men with different household size, employment and retirement status and social participation activity. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the interviews.

The results reveal that loneliness is perceived by men as a negative emotion, which is associated both with a lack of desired social interactions and also with being inactive and staying at home. Men who are less involved in community life for reasons beyond their control would like to increase their social activity. Major barriers for social participation are loneliness and lack of information, health, transportation, like-minded people, and suitable opportunities to participate. Moreover, societal stereotypes, such as the perception of older men as socially passive, and difficulties in detecting men's loneliness, put on them disproportionate responsibility for preventing and alleviating loneliness as well as for their social participation.

Addressing these challenges requires joint efforts from various stakeholders, including communities, Social workers, and policymakers. By providing accessible information, creating inclusive participation opportunities, removing barriers, sharing responsibilities, and challenging societal stereotypes, communities can empower older men to remain socially active throughout their retirement years. Ultimately, fostering social participation among older men not only enhances their well-being but also contributes to building more resilient and supportive communities.

"Needs, diagnoses... I hate all that: It's just me": exploring and navigating the needs of homelessness hostel residents in England – *Karl Mason*

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In England, there has been emerging academic interest in the role of Social Work with people experiencing homelessness. In common with most European countries, homelessness statistics have continued to rise in England and those who are most at risk of long-term homelessness experience multiple, overlapping social exclusions and aspects of marginalisation. These include poverty, substance use, mental ill-health, chronic physical health conditions and disability, as well as adverse experiences and trauma in childhood. These experiences mean that people who experience homelessness are likely to encounter Social workers when seeking support within welfare institutions due to related care, support and welfare needs. Whilst there has been a movement towards Housing First models (which provide accommodation and support immediately) in a number of countries, in England the main form of first stage accommodation for those who have been sleeping rough is hostel accommodation (which provides accommodation and support incrementally or conditionally). In this supported environment, the aim is to provide accommodation and safety, whilst supporting and enabling residents to move on to more independent housing.

This presentation will report on case study research undertaken at an English hostel over a three month period. The larger research study aimed to examine the contested nature of needs and how these are navigated and supported for populations who are homeless. Case studies provide an opportunity to look at contextual and contested issues in detail and the case study site was a single-site, 50 bed, mixed-gender, urban hostel in England catering for people with 'complex needs'. The study comprised 28 interviews with hostel residents, 25 interviews with hostel staff and in-reach support professionals and 43 structured observations of keywork meetings, team meetings and handover meetings. The resulting data were analysed thematically.

This presentation will focus on findings that demonstrated contention relating to the hostel as an institutional setting and its capacity to effectively address the underpinning needs that arise in the context of homelessness. Whilst the hostel aimed to address and support complex needs, it did so within a stretched funding climate which affected the provision of internal and external support services. The presentation will address contention across four aspects of hostel provision: providing accommodation, providing a safe environment, providing support and providing enablement to progress beyond the hostel environment. It will identify the key opportunities and barriers to achieving these aims and proposals to de-institutionalise the provision of support towards a more person-centred support system.

Navigating disrupted spaces: social work beyond institutionalised boundaries in disaster contexts – *Enni Mikkonen, Tuomas Leppiaho & Sanna Hautala*

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Background
The impacts of ongoing disasters and crises transcend geographical and national borders, manifesting on both a global and local scale. Disasters not only disrupt fundamental aspects of human rights but also produce, expose and reinforce social inequality (Dominelli 2024). In this landscape, Social Work assumes a critical role within disaster relief efforts and in prevention measures, serving as an integral agent of the welfare service structure and in addressing its deficiencies. However, these contributions are often overlooked in research and public discourse (Hay & Pascoe, 2021), highlighting a need for a broader and more in-depth practical perspective on disaster Social Work.

Research question
In our paper, we examine the dynamics of encounters, interventions and approaches that Social workers adopt when responding to the needs of people in/after disasters. We pose the following research question: What kinds of practices and approaches do Social workers employ when encountering and supporting people in and from disaster contexts? The analysis offers in-depth insights into Social workers' perspectives that align with the social justice orientation navigating within and beyond the institutionalised and formal support systems.

Theoretically, disaster Social Work addresses the mobilisation of adaptive capacity among individuals, communities and societies (Romakkaniemi et al. 2021) within the prevailing polycentric and transnational ecosystems. Considering the multiple social consequences of disasters, we view them as events where the material/environmental and social spheres intersect instead of categorising them as 'merely' unavoidable natural phenomena (Puttick et al. 2018). We approach disaster as a social concept, defining it as an event that disrupts and affects not only the lives of individuals but also the social and societal fabric (Quarantelli 1985, Das 2020).

Method
Our paper is based on a qualitative study conducted through semi-structured interviews with 13 Social workers and 4 other professionals in the social and/or humanitarian field. The participants had experience working in different crisis contexts in Finland, Britain, the Balkans, and in refugee camps in Southern Europe. The study is part of our wider research project on disaster Social Work (KATA)*. The data were analysed using interpretative and qualitative data-driven content analysis.

Results
Our results shed light on the expertise of Social workers, both within social service structures and beyond institutionalised, observable practice. We specifically focus on dimensions of disaster Social Work transcending institutionalised framework, which we approach through three key findings: proximity, silence, and safeguarding. These aspects of practice operate within spaces where marginalised, vulnerable and otherised positions and contexts abound. Through 1) embracing the nuances of proximity as an interactive-spatial method rooted in embodied and tacit knowledge, 2) acknowledging and engaging with silent spaces, knowledge, and relations within disaster contexts, and 3) safeguarding affected people and contexts amid structural injustices, we position Social Work as a critical advocate for equitable disaster relief and mitigation efforts.

Discussion and implications

We propose that proximity, silence and safeguarding constitute a multidimensional practical approach for Social Work in disasters, transcending institutionalised framework particularly in two ways. Firstly, Social workers physically venture beyond their office settings to engage with spaces of unpredictability and immediate calamities. Whether by sitting beside people at accident sites or moving about within disrupted spaces, Social workers reach out to people and communities, embodying a commitment to ensure their psycho-social safety and address their needs. Secondly, within the contextually and institutionally defined confines of service systems and available resources, Social workers extend and rethink institutional boundaries in their encounters, advocacy efforts, and support practices in disasters. This approach builds on a horizontal, community-driven orientation, thereby expanding upon the prevalent technical-administrative focus of disaster relief work and preparedness (Mhlanga et al. 2019). Through this approach, we suggest that Social Work can engage in deconstructing injustices and inequalities in aid work structures.

Urban renewal as a social practice – *Marjan Moris, Ronald Crouzé & Pieter Cools*

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Whereas urban renewal projects in Belgium throughout the nineties intended to address the needs of vulnerable groups, the focus of urban policymakers has shifted since the early 2000s towards stemming middle-class flight from cities and improving livability. Despite the continued emphasis on citizen participation in urban renewal discussions, different resident groups remain severely underrepresented in the participation trajectories. Historically, Social Work organizations have played an important role in informing, supporting and mobilizing underrepresented citizens in relation to urban renewal. However, their involvement has been rather reactive than proactive. Typically they are asked, or take the initiative, to improve participation processes that are not proceeding adequately. Citizen participation thus became institutionalized in a way that has depoliticized the conflict of interest between current and future residents and has largely included social organizations as partners to enhance the representation of vulnerable residents. Both trends contribute to inequitable urban development and a democratic deficit, which are especially problematic from a social justice standpoint.

This study explores how Social Work can act as a democratic practice to foster more inclusive urban renewal, thereby aligning with its fundamental commitment to social justice. We examine the potential roles and mandates of Social workers within urban renewal processes, the ecosystems in which they operate, their capacity to represent diverse resident perspectives, and their ability to maintain space for dissent in their efforts to influence these processes. Additionally, we explicitly question the role of Social Work in urban (participation) mechanisms that often adopt an individual approach to equality, presuming equal access and uniform capabilities to participate and speak.

Our four-year action research focused on three urban renewal projects in Antwerp, each chosen for its unique context in terms of the project's commissioning parties, timing, and phases. We conducted semi-structured interviews with Social workers, citizen movements, and spatial development professionals, complemented by (participatory) observations of formal participation moments. The focus of our data collection was to understand both the social dynamics, involvement and points of conflict of ongoing participation trajectories and the role of Social workers. The transcribed interviews were inductively coded, with findings shared within a learning network of Social workers.

The outcomes of this study are encapsulated in a model that connects barriers faced by less-heard resident groups to the role of social professionals as trusted intermediaries. Using this model, we discuss how Social Work can render visible, lower or circumvent barriers to citizen participation in urban renewal and the limits they encounter in this endeavor. We also highlight the importance of strategic alliances and the structural embedding of social knowledge in urban renewal frameworks. We conclude by presenting how Social Work can transform the logics of urban renewal towards more equitable social justice outcomes by discussing the different roles they adopt. At times, they position themselves (strategically) as formal players, thus aligning with the existing institutional logic. At other times, Social Work acts as a critical agitator, bringing its politicizing role to the forefront, challenging and seeking to transform certain participations mechanisms. This nuanced engagement illustrates the complex interplay between adherence to established structures and the pursuit of transformative social justice within urban renewal contexts.

Deinstitutionalising the clinical in social work – *Jan Naert*

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In this presentation, I problematize 'the clinical' as problematic in Social Work theory and praxis, leading to a reduction of understanding the political. I explore the transition of 'the clinical' throughout the history of Social Work, pleading for a more political driven Social Work approach with coalitions between academia and praxis as a necessary turn.

This also necessitates the deinstitutionalization of clinical approaches within the field of Social Work. The prevailing clinical paradigm is deeply ingrained within Social Work institutions, serving as a means of categorizing 'target groups,' thereby diminishing the agency and subjectivity of citizens. From the perspective of Social workers, this clinical framework constrains contemplation of alternative possibilities, as it perpetuates a discourse and emphasis on the micro-level where 'the problem' is localized. Deinstitutionalization, in this context, entails dismantling the predominant narrative surrounding clinical perspectives in Social Work and advocating for an alternative knowledge base that prioritizes the experiences and perspectives of service users as the foundation for interventions. Furthermore, it involves the consideration of socio-economic realities and living conditions of individuals and groups over time, as well as the examination and mitigation of institutional and structural inequalities within society.

The intersection of clinical thinking and Social Work literature and praxis has undergone significant evolution over time, reflecting broader shifts in both fields and society at large. Historically, linked to the roots of Social Work late 19th and early 20th centuries, the tension between an individual approach and a broader community empowerment approach is imbedded in Social Work as a profession (Maylea, 2020). The influence of clinical thinking was limited at the time, but a first step towards a categorization or 'target group thinking' was made. A 'big step' was taken post world war II, where psychoanalytical theory was integrated in the Social Work literature and praxis, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world. This period could be described as the psychodynamic area in Social Work, where concepts as unconscious, developmental stages, attachment and influence of childhood experiences, were introduced to understand individual behavior and especially problematic behavior or 'clients needs'. In that sense, be it a psychodynamic one, a more clinical thinking permeated Social Work literature and praxis. In the late 20th century, Social Work incorporated more ecological perspectives and contextual frameworks to understand clients' lives. Thinkers as Bronfenbrenner and Bateson were influential in linking an individual perspective with a 'person in environment' view. This could be called a more holistic turn in Social Work theory and praxis. However, still starting from a clinical view and problem definitions. From the 80ties on, professionalization of Social Work meant the integration of Evidence-Based Practice in research and praxis. A more psycho-bio-neurological paradigm became dominant. This again reduced the attention for a broader understanding of human problems in relation to institutional deficits and broader shift in western societies towards a more neoliberal tendency of individual responsibility. The overdominance of a bio-neurological paradigm in combination with the introduction of New Public Management techniques – a necessary couple – led to reductionist approaches that prioritize individual pathology and biological determinism over social, cultural, and structural factors. In the current debate, some scholars see no other solution than 'the end of Social Work' (Maylea, 2020), others make a plea for the 'reinvention' of the political or dissent in Social Work (Garrett, 2021). We take a stance for a repolitizisation of Social Work, targeting 'the clinical' as intrusion of a more structural and movement based praxis. Moreover, we address the necessary coalition between academia, praxis and people 'in the margins' or 'subaltern' to counter the hyper individuality as result of the current clinical desert.

Qualitative evaluation research of a new project aiming to prevent the placement of young children in distressing upbringing situations – *Jan Naert*

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The presentation discusses some preliminary results of a practice-oriented and qualitative study that aims to investigate what changed in a residential setting (CKG). The research is conducted in close connection with practice. This means that the researcher also aligns with the day-to-day operations of the CKG. In addition to participatory observation, interviews are conducted with various stakeholders. Since march 2024, the researcher participates in the organization for one day of the week. By having the researcher present one day a week and actively participating in the practical activities, we gain a deeper understanding of the ins and outs of the organization. From welcoming parents, to understanding the connections between various forms of 'offerings' and opportunities, to the dynamics at both team and policy levels. Moreover, there is an interaction between research and practice through obtaining insights about the organization and the lived perspectives and methodologies in various settings and moments (team meetings, individual conversations with parents, reception staff, and context mentors).

The presentation focuses on the initial results of this ongoing research. On one hand, it examines the changes occurring at the level of the teams involved in the service provision, while on the other hand, it also explores the underlying principles guiding difficult decision-making processes regarding interventions in situations of distress. Given that the research lens extends beyond team dynamics, it also addresses some organizational-level conditions necessary to implement this service.

Hippo in the classroom – ideology and politics in social work's course books – *Jiri Nieminen*

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In Social Work, politics is like a hippo in a classroom: appropriate for the space, but unspoken. To understand politics, one must look at ideology. Not only to the prevailing political reality, but to the cultural unconscious, pre-political understanding and silent commitments. Politics can be understood in a broad (anything is political potentially), mediating (politics mediate civil society to state) and narrow sense (administration). In my paper I am looking for ideology and politics reading 1st year Social Work's course books between 1994–2024, asking how the self-understanding of Social Work as a policy and politics has taught in Nordic and Finnish context where universal social policy has long been the norm. There are four themes in the material: (1) Social Work became its own academic subject (separate from social policy) in the 1990s at the same time as the politics and economic structure of the development period of the welfare state project ended. However, in Finland Social Work is still strongly linked to the structures of the welfare state. (2) Thus, the Social Worker's political leeway is described as thin insofar as it is institutionalized bureaucratic work centered on the welfare state, but in the coursebooks written in the last decades the possibilities for as a political subject are offered more widely, e.g. as a partnership, even political activism with clients. (3) Coursebooks remind students of the knowledge production of Social Work and that it is possible to influence politically with the knowledge – or then politicians reject the knowledge produced in Social Work because it does not fit their ideology. (4) Ethical questions are par excellence political. But less often Social workers and researchers want to say this out loud, because appealing to ethical principles has given support to Social Work's self-understanding and the defense of its status in difficult times. In summary, it can be stated that today the relationship of Social Work is contradictory to the Nordic welfare state ideology, because its institutionalized practices both enable and limit Social Work as policy and politics.

Contours of critique: unraveling the fabric of critical social work through its self-narratives – *Klara-Marie Niermann*

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Background
Critical Social Work theory often challenges traditional paradigms by emphasizing the constructed nature of social realities. This dissertation explores how critical Social Work observes itself and its environment, employing a discursive analytical approach to systematizing texts within the field.

Objective
To analyze and theorize the discursive practices and observational methods used in critical Social Work, enhancing our understanding of how these practices shape theoretical developments.

Methods
The project utilizes discourse analysis as its primary methodology, supported by a suite of methodological tools including metaphor analysis, Toulmin's argument analysis, analysis of difference settings, and linguistic text theme analysis. This multi-dimensional approach facilitates a comprehensive examination of texts that systematize critical Social Work.

Results
Findings reveal distinct discursive practices that critical Social Work employs to construct its theories and observations. These practices were systematically contrasted and compared, leading to a nuanced understanding of how critical Social Work theories are formulated and the role of language in this process. Additionally, a heuristic for examining theory-forming texts was developed, contributing a new tool for future research in the field.

Conclusion
The research underscores the complexity of discursive constructions within critical Social Work and illustrates the pivotal role of language in shaping Social Work theory. By dissecting the narrative structures and rhetorical strategies in critical Social Work literature, this study provides insights into the dynamic interplay between language and social theory.

Preserving trust, ensuring effectiveness: the right to refuse testimony as a key to strengthening social work – *Alessandro Novellino*

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In Social Work, the relationship of trust between professionals and clients is essential for the effectiveness and acceptance of social services. This trust is jeopardized when Social workers are compelled to testify against their clients in legal contexts, as there is currently no comprehensive right to refuse to testify. This legal gap can lead to clients withdrawing out of fear of legal repercussions from their disclosures, which hinders the utilization of necessary assistance.

The planned input aims to illustrate how crucial a legally established right to refuse to testify is for the effectiveness of Social Work and why the absence of this right complicates daily work. For example, it will be demonstrated that Social Work plays a key role in the prevention and management of problematic social dynamics, which is undermined by current legislation. Using fan projects as an example, it will be shown that societal recognition of Social Work as a trustworthy and indispensable institution is limited by the absence of legal frameworks.

A right for Social workers to refuse to testify, similar to that already existing for doctors and lawyers, would enhance the professionalism and legal standing of Social Work. It would also promote societal appreciation of Social Work as an essential part of the social security system. Thus, modernizing Section 53 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to grant Social workers the right to refuse to testify is urgently needed.

The input will advocate for a legislative adjustment that meets the specific requirements of Social Work by creating the necessary confidential framework in which Social workers can operate effectively and without fear of legal consequences for their clients. Such a reform could further strengthen the professionalization and effectiveness of Social Work and promote societal cohesion.

Online racism towards Arab-Palestinian young adults in Israel and its psychological outcomes – *Shira Pagorek Eshel, Raghda Alnabilsy & Haneen Elias*

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Background and purpose

Addressing racism is a core obligation in Social Work given the ethical imperatives of social justice and dignity. However, meeting this obligation has become more challenging, due to the rise of web and social media racism and its negative consequences on well-being. This study aimed to shed light on this understudied phenomenon among young Arab-Palestinian adults in Israel and explore the risk and protective factors which contribute to the relationship between exposure to online racism and mental health. We hypothesized that online racism would be positively correlated with depression and negatively corelated to well-being and that online political participation as well as ethnic and national identity would moderate the relationship between online racism and its psychological outcomes.

Methods

The study was carried out during November 2021-May 2022. We used a cross-sectional design, with non-random convenience sampling method. The sample included 601 young Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel (aged 18-27). participants filled out online questionnaires in Arabic which examined demographics, perceived online racism, social media political participation, ethnic and national identity, well-being, and depression. Descriptive and univariate analyses were carried out, followed by a path model examining direct and interaction effects between the study variables.

Findings

Exposure to online racism was perceived as moderate. Higher online racism was associated with lower well-being and with higher depression. A more consolidated ethnic identity, and lower social media political participation, were associated with higher well-being. A less consolidated ethnic identity and higher social media political participation were associated with higher depression. An interaction between online racism and ethnic identity was significant regarding well-being as well as for depression. That is, given low levels of ethnic identity, higher exposure online racism was related with lower well-being. This relationship was not significant for more highly consolidated levels of ethnic identity. Likewise, given low levels of ethnic identity, higher online racism was related with higher depression. This relationship was not significant for more highly consolidated ethnic identity. The interaction between online racism and national identity was significant regarding depression. That is, for participants who highly defined themselves as Arab-Palestinian, higher exposure online racism was related with higher depression. This relationship was not significant for lower levels of this national identity.

Conclusions and implications

A consolidated ethnic identity serves as a buffer against the negative effects of online racism for both well-being and depression. However, a consolidated Arab-Palestinian national identity exacerbates the negative effects of online racism on depression. Political participation on social media may jeopardize well-being. These findings reflect the complex structural and political reality which young Arab-Palestinians in Israel are faced with.

The roots of racism are hidden in the social, economic, and political systems. Raising public awareness to these underlaying mechanisms and the ways they manifest on social media is a first step towards confronting online racism. Moreover, culturally competent policy practice in Social Work needs to emphasize the political and develop more skills to engage with power and conflict.

Challenges of social work with transgender people in the Czech Republic and Thailand in the context of the system of gender-affirmative care – *Karel Pavlica & Kath Khangpiboon*

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Transgender people are one of the vulnerable groups who often encounter various forms of transphobia, bullying, discrimination, or misunderstanding. The negative consequences of social stigmatization are particularly faced by trans women, whose specific situation can exclude them both from social life and can also be a barrier to access to social services. Working with this target group is a challenge for Social Work that has the potential to support the quality of life of trans women, or, because of an insensitive, disrespectful, and uninformed approach, contribute to their further stigmatization or pathologization.

The paper examines the stories of trans women in the Czech Republic and Thailand through an interpretive phenomenological analysis. It focuses on how they experience their gender identity in the context of the system of gender-affirming care, which is set up in a certain way in both countries, and how this system affects their quality of life. It seeks an answer to the question of how Social Work can positively affect their situation on an individual and broader social level.

In the Czech Republic, transgender women can access transgender-specific healthcare services covered mostly by insurance. However, this process requires medical evaluation and diagnosis. Legal gender recognition is conditioned by surgical sterilization and by non-existence of marriage or civil partnership, which, in combination with social stigmatization, are factors that have a significant negative impact on the lives of trans women in the Czech Republic.

In Thailand, gender-affirming care lacks government funding, with services predominantly organized by medical schools and nongovernmental organizations. The absence of centralized government services results in inconsistent care provision and accessibility challenges. Legal gender recognition is not possible. Although the approach to trans women in Thailand seems to be more respectful than in the Czech Republic, significant stigmatization is faced especially by those who want to build a career.

In both countries, the biggest challenges in the field of Social Work working with transgender women are especially the absence of guidelines for social assessment and specific duties of Social workers supporting transgender women in gender-affirming care. Social services also lack experience with this target group, have lack of knowledge in the field of gender identity, and finally, they are subject to various forms of transphobia that they are not even aware of. An empathetic approach based on awareness and respect, creating a safe environment, and accepting the client without judgment is essential for Social Work with transgender women.

Perceptions of the frontline personnel towards the generated impact of socioeconomic integration programme – *Yannis Perifanos*

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Socioeconomic integration of vulnerable individuals and population groups who face precarious situations is a part of Social Work practice and an essential step toward the transition to a sustainable society. Third-sector entities, also known as Social Economy (SE) organisations, develop socioeconomic integration initiatives. One of the many different genres of organisation types in the SE environment is the Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs). These entities deliver vocational training and soft-skills development programmes, addressing people who face exclusion in the labour market. The WISEs compile their financial and socio-political action goals with their social goals, aiming to benefit individuals and communities by providing work integration to marginalised groups or delivering goods and services with a social meaning (Cooney et al., 2016). However, since their operation is partially subsidised by public funding, the institutionalisation and the professionalisation indicated by public policies of labour activation over the last decades in WISEs created a proliferating pressure to utilise their social mission to achieve the insertion of excluded people into the mainstream labour market (Nyssens, 2007). Moreover, under the pressure of presenting the results of their work, WISEs are obliged to perform impact assessment procedures, which, in most cases, refer to top-down approaches using adjusted tools and practices from the private sector.

The present study aims to provide insight into the impact evaluation of socioeconomic integration programmes from the point of view of frontline personnel as a stakeholder group that contributes the most to the delivery of these programmes. Through semi-structured interviews with the frontline personnel, namely trainers, Social workers, and psychosocial support personnel, of WISEs based in the Walloon region of Belgium, this study attempts to explore how the frontline personnel of WISEs perceive the impact on participants and what could influence this impact to become more sustainable. The topics of the interviews covered the role dynamics, the environment and principles of the organisation, the organisation's impact goals, the personnel's impact goals, the participants' engagement and its contribution to impact generation, and views and suggestions for more effective methods and tools of impact assessment and measurement.

The analysis of the findings showed the tensions between socioeconomic integration and labour activation. WISEs' support to the participants in acquiring new habits, getting out of the house, and becoming more independent impacts their self-image, which could highly influence their socioeconomic future. The analysis also revealed the importance of the relationships in creating the impact, indicating that the personnel may be viewed as role models for the participants. The personnel's perceptions are influenced by their position, education level, experience, and the culture of the organisation, while the factors identified to contribute to lasting impact are the duration of training, the resources, and the status and motivation of participants. This article aims to initiate the discussion regarding the sustainable impact of integration programmes from the end of first-line personnel based on the need for more bottom-up evaluation approaches.

Working towards deinstitutionalisation using co-production and experimental methodology – *Vanja Petrović & Jasmina Bogdanović*

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Institutionalization is a lamentable fact of life for many users of mental health services living in Serbia. Fortunately, grassroots, user-run organizations like Prostor are advocating for change. Prostor's goal is to improve mental health protection in the country through deinstitutionalization, empowerment, and recovery. The organization holds a range of workshops – which teach skills such as knitting, sewing, cooking, embroidery, plant care, and living space maintenance – aimed at inclusion and improving quality of life. The cooking workshop is the most popular and is participatory. It teaches healthy meal preparation and creativity in cooking. The prepared food is eaten together at the end of the workshops.

In this paper, we wish to explore using experimental methodology how co-production, that is the inclusion of service users into the creation of social policies, and deinstitutionalization can work hand in hand to improve the lives of service users. We believe that these processes are complimentary in nature, i.e. that true deinstitutionalization can only happen if the lived experience of service is taken into account in the crafting of services. Further, we propose that experimental methodology, in this case cooking together, levels the playing field between us as researchers and service users, further allowing for the untainted service user lived experience to be captured.

We contend that cooking, as an embodied and always-relational method, challenges entrenched hierarchies present in Western academic research. Additionally, as an activity not traditionally categorized as "rational," it calls into question the categorization itself, making it uniquely capable of contributing to research on deinstitutionalization. Further, its intrinsically relational nature opens up possibilities for researchers for the reflexive exploration of positionality. Most importantly, as a method, cooking is collaborative, egalitarian, and participatory.

Building on the work of Lisa Heldke, Jennifer Brady and Annemarie Mol, we propose to cook with participants at a Prostor workshop. Prior to the workshop, we will meet with participants to discuss what we intend to do and ensure we have their full informed consent. The day of the workshop, we, the workshop leader, and the participants will journal, draw or in some other way portray their thoughts about deinstitutionalization and their experiences with mental health services in the country. We will undertake this journaling process before, once during, and following the workshop. These entries will then be collected by the researchers and transcribed and coded into themes and shared with participants for feedback.

Rethinking cooperation! Peer experts & social work profession – *Andrea Pilgerstorfer*

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The concept of empowerment, introduced by Simone in 1994, aims to create strong citizens and change social policy and power structures. Social Work is a profession that addresses people's psycho-social needs with the ambition to support social change and social justice, as defined by the International Federation of Social workers (2014).

To ensure fairness and respect, it is crucial to implement concepts such as 'participation' or 'service user involvement' in a way that is consistent with these values. Examples of this can be seen in the works of Griffin & Martin (1979), Mils-Paul (1992), Mead & McNeil (2005), Mead et al. (2014), Utschakovksi (2015), Penney (2018), Pilgerstorfer (2023) and others.

While service users in Austria are considered experts in self-help organizations, their expertise in social services is not jet guaranteed. In the last 10 years is a positive development visible, occasional projects for peer education are created, such as Ex-In®, an educational concept for peers in psychiatric services, and neunerhaus Peer Campus, an education program in Vienna's homelessness services that supports implementation processes for example.

My PhD project focuses on the discourse within the Social Work profession in Austria regarding the involvement of peer support/education specialists in social services. Through my research, I aim to answer the main question: 'How do Social workers perceive peer counsellors?' and 'What do they expect from them as team members?' I conducted 10 focus group interviews - with representatives of the Social Work profession in Austria - using a qualitative research approach. The analyses were made with grounded theory. In my findings I can identify four interplays, which overlap each other:

1.   There is a wing between empowerment and disempowerment. Social Work professionals are defining the tasks for peer worker. They are seen closer to service users and that might lead to lower respect as partner. Their capacity of self-perseption and competences to deal with different trigger-situations are called into question.
2.   Professionalization in Social Work Profession and the institutionalization process of social movements.
3.   The discourse of participation versus governmentalism and the question of also challenging the idea of neoliberal understanding of participation in Social Work and social services.
4.   Peer(-Support) Management. It is obvious, that the implementation of peer (support) workers in Social Work services leads into a change process. Therefore, there is a need of answering the requirements.

My contribution will explore the possibilities of working with peer experts to create services and transform the logic of institutionalized support to better meet the needs of vulnerable individuals in society. I would like to present the role of peers in Social Work teams and share my experience as trainer in peer education. The discussion about the chance to cooperate with experienced experts to contribute to the deinstitutionalization will be worked out and the limitations should be discussed. Social Work can be supported by peer experts to rethink its own professional standards by opening to co-production, which can lead to the de-institutionalisation of Social Work and in the same time to an employment for persons with long unemployment history and vulnerable people.

Deny, steer, redefine: how gay Arab-Palestinian men in Israel cope with social exclusion – *Dassi Postan-Aizik, Yasmin Aboud-Halabi, Nasser Marjia*

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Background and Purpose
Considering the vulnerable position of Arab LGBTQ populations around the world, Social Work research in this area is very limited. In Israel, despite abundance of LGBTQ research, the experiences of Arab-Palestinian sexual minorities are largely understudied. To address this gap, we conducted an exploratory study aimed at understanding of the experiences of APGM in Israel. Our earlier findings identified social exclusion of APGM in major life spheres both within the Arab-Palestinian society and in the broader Israeli context. Here we report on a subsequent part of the study, which focuses on two main research questions: (1) How do experiences of social exclusion impact participant's mental health? (2) What are the coping mechanisms and strategies participants use in their daily lives?

Methods
This exploratory qualitative study builds on data from in-depth interviews (N=20) with self-identified Arab-Palestinian gay men in Israel conducted by a diverse research team during 2020-2022. We employed purposive sampling to capture the experiences of study participants from various religious and cultural groups of Arab-Palestinians in Israel (Muslims, Christians, and Druze) from traditional communities in the geographic periphery. The data were analyzed using a constructivist grounded theory approach, which promotes deeper understanding of people's social, political, and experiential realities.

Findings
The study findings reveal that participant's daily experiences of social exclusion result in stress, fear, self-rejection, and depression. Participants described different coping mechanisms including engagement with the LGBTQ community and allies, social activism, inspirational music, and artistic expression, and seeking clinical support. Connections with Social workers were nearly non-existent, while other clinical therapy and counseling interventions varied widely in levels of acceptance, confirmation and support it afforded participants. Study participants described what we identify as three main coping strategies: a) Denying sexuality, b) Steering around multiple positions, and c) Redefining multiple positions. Study participants alternated between strategies as they progressed through various challenges and social settings. Building on multiple minority stress theory, our analysis examines the use of coping strategies and their associated mental-health implications.

Conclusions and Implications
The findings highlight the tensions between participant's multiple identities and identifies the mental-health ramifications of maintaining them is contested spaces. In the backdrop of growing political and ethnic conflict, APGM's multiple social minority positions may exacerbate adverse mental health outcomes. Despite the mental health impact of exclusion, and the importance of social support, there is a dearth of institutions and organizations for APGM and other multiple minority individuals, particularly at the community level. Drawing on community strengths and participant insight, we offer directions for policy change and suggest specialized local services. Social workers face considerable challenges in providing services to vulnerable populations such as APGM, however the professional mandate can promote the visibility of APGM, advocate for inclusion, and challenge prevailing discourses in local communities and formal institutions.

Deinstitutionalising of social work through an innovative approach in education: BuddyUp program between social work students and children from disadvantaged backgrounds – *Veronika Racko & Kateřina Mikulcová*

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We understand institutionalized Social Work as Social Work firmly connected to its performance in organizations that very specifically determine the roles of Social workers and the way in which they are supposed to perform their work. We perceive the institutionalization of Social Work as a concept that is very closely connected with the culture of the organization, which predetermines the approaches of Social workers to clients. Defined in this way, Social Work is still faced with the dilemma of defining its own role between controlling and helping.

The goal of our contribution is to present and evaluate a unique approach to the education of Social Work students using the BuddyUp program, which is based on the principle of an individual friendly relationship between Social Work students and children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The idea for the creation of this approach was provided by our three-year research (2022 – 2024) focused on Sibling relationships in homeless children and their connection with resilience (funded by GA CR 22-00941S), which shows two basic facts: a) relationships among homeless children are very an important source of their resilience; and b) the approach of Social workers to homeless people forms a very important framework for providing help and support in this difficult life situation. These two basic starting points form an evidenced-based framework for the introduction of our contribution.

We define buddying as an activity that emphasizes supportive, mutual relationships that contribute to improving the skills or knowledge of a younger/less experienced participant (a child from a disadvantaged background) with the support of a more experienced buddy (a Social Work student). Within the program, we work with the concept of a long-term supportive relationship, focusing on identified problems/needs. Buddying is part of a wider program (developed under TA CR TQ03000519) which provides professional support, ongoing supervision and ensures the safety and protection of children and students. This is supported by a participatory approach to the creation of the BuddyUp program and the close cooperation of educators and practitioners with students.

In addition to the positive benefits of the program, such as the provision of a safe close relationship, the support of prevention against risky behavior or the support of self-confidence in children from disadvantaged backgrounds, it is also necessary to evaluate the demands placed on students and the background they need to be provided for buddying. However, it turns out that this concept can have positive effects not only on children from disadvantaged backgrounds, but also on students themselves, on whom it acts in the form of prevention against prejudice or various forms of oppression in relation to Social Work clients, which can be unintended products of the institutionalization of Social Work.

Professional conflicts of social workers in hospitals. Results from a German participatory research project Post Covid-19 – *Anna Lena Rademaker*

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The aim of this presentation is to highlight the results of the German postCOVID@owl project and answer these questions: How was professional action perceived by Social workers during and post pandemics and to what extent did participatory approaches contribute to their professionalization? The research project "The hospital social service in crisis - insights for future-oriented care by Social Work in the interdisciplinary team in OWL post COVID-19 (postCOVID@owl)" has been funded by HSBI's own research fund HIF since 1 October 2021.

The project consists of two method strands. First, 20 expert interviews in 11 hospitals in 5 districts were conducted with specialists from social services in the East Westphalia-Lippe (OWL) region in North-Rhine-Westphalia (Germany) from 11/ 2021 to 05/2022. The expert interviews served to identify a.) structural conditions of collaboration in the interdisciplinary team before, during and after the pandemic and b.) subjective assessments of the implementation of pandemic crisis intervention measures with their effects on the work in social services and the quality of patient care. The analysis was carried out using qualitative content analysis and elements of Grounded Theory Methodology. In a second step, ethnographic protocols conducted by Social workers as co*researchers from OWL-based hospitals followed in 11/ 2022. They composed a total of 13 ethnographic protocols (6 hospitals in 2 districts) of cases from their professional practice. Analysis of the protocols is expected to be completed in summer 2024. Finally, a specialists' vision workshop took place in 11/ 2023 (8 participants) . The documentation was carried out using flipcharts and cards and was recorded using photo documentation. The evaluation is descriptive based on the documented artifacts. The presentation will focus on findings from the expert interviews and the vision workshop.

Theoretical concepts are based on transformative approaches to transdisciplinary and participatory qualitative social research, aiming to generate knowledge about the professional practice of Social workers in hospital social services as well as to use the participatory design to enter into a transformative process with actors from local hospital practice, which, among other things, makes it possible to initiate changes in the research process.

The results show that the professional practice of hospital Social workers is institutionally limited. Interviewees perceive themselves as conflicted actors in a constant tension field between institutional requirements and overall conditions and their professional knowledge and self-image (attitude). There is a need to rethink Social Work as part of the hospital care team in its own right in order to live up to its social value orientation of social justice. Overall, participants of the vision workshop emphasised that Social Work in hospitals had become even more important and said that this was due to the (multiple) crises resulting from social transformation. Poverty, health inequality, migration, economic crises, skills shortage and many other current developments collided in hospitals and had to be absorbed by a system and staff that was already overburdened.

Visions for a future-oriented care address a (1.) the sectoral policy level, (2.) the management of hospitals, (3.) heads of social services in hospitals and (4.) hospital Social workers themselves. The profession of hospital Social Worker is a key one that is becoming increasingly important in the face of growing crises and social challenges. Professional action requires strengthening the profession by creating a structural framework and promoting its professional development.

Deinstitutionalisation as a key reform in Slovenia – *Andreja Rafaelič, Andraž Kapus, Kaja Zoran, Maruša Tomc Arko & Nejc Berzelak*

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In Slovenia, deinstitutionalization of residential institutions for people with disabilities is a process that has been going on, in waves, since the 19600, Social Work being key actor and developer of knowledge in these processes. Still, in Slovenia there are 23,000 people with disabilities and older people living in institutions that violate basic human rights in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In recent years Slovenia has increased its efforts for deinstitutionalization process for people living in institutions. In past three years Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia was a partner organization in two pilot projects to transform two institutions from institutional care providers to a network of community services. Following these two projects Ministry of Solidarity-Based Future prepared, with the help of Social Protection Institute, a strategy of deinstitutionalization 2024 – 2034. The Strategy was prepared based on almost 60 years of experience of deinstitutionalization in Slovenia and the various guidelines of the European Union. The comprehensive reform of social care in Slovenia to support people in living in the community in their daily lives with support and to support the employees to work in the community begins with the strategy and related projects. The role of Social Protection Institute in the next years of the deinstitutionalization reform will be to coordinate all the activities, train different target groups, to grow an international network of experts and to support all institutions and stakeholders in the process of deinstitutionalization in Slovenia and to evaluate the process.

In the presentation, we will show the work of our "deinstitutionalization" team, our past experiences working on deinstitutionalization in Slovenia and other EU countries. We will present our approach to Social Work, research and field work with different stakeholders. We will also present the future plans for the deinstitutionalization reform and address the key challenges such as preventing re-institutionalization of care and Social Work, ensuring a safe and stable reform, and providing effective support to the service users.

The ideal and the possible parent: the perceptions and experiences of parenting of young people who aged out of residential care – *Tehila Refaeli & Agat Sold*

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Introduction

Care leavers, young people who have aged out of institutional care, i.e. residential care, experience unique challenges in transitioning to adult life in all life domains. Alongside these notable challenges, parenting among care leavers also brings unique challenges and difficulties. One reason is that being in an institution for a significant part of their childhood prevents or limits their experience of parental modeling and care. The present study is based on the "possible self" theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and aims to learn about the parenting experience of care leavers and to obtain a better understanding of their perceptions of parenting. As previous studies mainly interviewed young mothers, the sample here includes both mothers and fathers. In addition, as most studies on care leavers have focused on young parenthood, which mostly started before leaving care or just after, this study focuses on care leavers a decade after leaving care.

Method

The sample comprised 22 care leavers aged 28-31, who are parents, 11 women and 11 men. The majority (16-72.7%) were married or in a long-term relationship, the rest were divorced. The participants were recruited from a larger sample of care leavers that the researchers have followed for ten years, from the period of their leaving care. The data analysis was carried out according to thematic analysis to identify common concepts within the dataset

Results

Two main themes emerged: (1) the parental modeling the care leavers' saw and how it affected their current parenting style, and (2) the desirable parental model. The findings emphasize that the parenting experience of care leavers is characterized by moving between perceptions of what should be (the desirable parental model) and what was or what wasn't (the parental modeling they saw in their childhood), and how these perceptions affected their current parenting style. The participants' perceptions of the desirable parental model - 'what should be' in their parenting style - included a range between conservatism and progress, perceptions of gender roles in parenthood a compensatory parental model to make up for what they did not have. These were seen as different expressions of a desirable parental model. While these desirable parental models were based on the parental modeling to which participants had been exposed in childhood before and during their time in care, in some cases, the desirable parental model was an expression of both reflecting on the past and aspiring towards future parenting practices that they were implementing in the present.

Discussion and implications

While parenting is a challenging task for every young person, it poses an especially formidable challenge for many care leavers who grew up in institutional care, as they lack both role models and family support. They are thus missing skills needed for their parenting. The findings indicated young people's efforts to design their parenting and create their parental modeling, using their past experience as a negative or positive reference. The findings also highlighted the important role of exposure to family life while in care to help young people design their parental modeling. This is less possible in the institutional placements common in Israel and some other countries.

Ethnicity and childhood vulnerability: their relation to poverty and inequality in young adulthood – *Tehila Refaeli & Edna Shimoni*

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Introduction
To gain a deeper understanding of the reasons for poverty and inequality in young adulthood, leveraging administrative data can offer fresh insights and guide welfare policy directions. A literature review suggests a pressing need for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between factors that render young adults more vulnerable and their capacity to accomplish various life tasks. The objectives of this study were twofold: (1) to describe the situation of young adults from different ethnic groups in Israel in a variety of life domains, and (2) to investigate the childhood factors associated with the integration of young adults into various life domains.

Method
The research population comprised 525,292 young people resident in Israel who were born in 1987, 1990, 1993, and 1998. The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics created the dataset based on administrative data from the relevant governmental ministries (education, police, welfare, etc.). The study provides data on four significant milestones for young adults: 1) High school graduation at 19; 2) Beginning post-secondary education at age 24; 3) Completing studies at age 27; 4) Integration into the labor force at age 30. The study employed various statistical methods using SAS, R, and ISQL software to conduct descriptive statistics and logistical regressions. A series of logistical regressions identified several key variables related to the ability of young people to acquire academic or post-secondary education, achieve employment, as well as obtain services from welfare agencies.

Results
Two ethnic groups, young Arabs and young people of Ethiopian origin, showed significant inequalities in their childhood situations and also in their achievements in adulthood. Among other things, they are more often recognized by social welfare services due to poverty and economic distress both in childhood and adulthood, and also have higher rates of residential care institutionalization in childhood. The regression analysis revealed that care by a school attendance officer in childhood and marriage as a minor were negatively related to obtaining a post-secondary education. Being recognized by the welfare services and involvement in crime as a minor were also associated with low achievements in education and a higher chance of obtaining services from the welfare agencies as an adult.
Parental education was a significant predictor of achieving higher education, and better educational achievements in high school predicted a higher chance of various achievements in adulthood, such as obtaining a post-secondary certificate and employment at the ages of 24 and 27. In the regression models, being a member of a minority group often contributed less than other variables to achieving important life tasks.

Discussion
The findings suggest that the disparities in achievements among young people of different ethnicities stem from shared background vulnerabilities prevalent among marginalized groups, including low education levels and residing in areas with low socioeconomic status. Achieving social mobility poses a significant challenge in Israeli society. Consequently, individuals from any background already at risk during childhood struggle to attain various milestones in adulthood and break free from marginalization and poverty.

Reflections on social work: between social justice, institutionalisation and the reproduction of inequality – *Anna Cornelia Reinhardt*

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Social Work is a highly complex and highly differentiated entity (Deller/Brake 2014: 11). In no other academic profession (Kaminsky 2018) and discipline (Staub-Bernasconi 2018) is a specific academic interest in knowledge so closely linked to practical action (cf. Kaminsky 2018: 14). The aim should be to provide "help in coping with life within the horizon of social justice" and to reduce discrimination and exclusion in functionally differentiated societies (Böhnisch/Schröer/Thiersch 2005: 15). However, it is precisely this goal orientation that opens up a paradox: Social Work practice strives to reduce "human suffering, hardship and experiences of injustice" (Staub-Bernasconi 2007: 27). However, it is itself entangled in hegemonic relations of inequality and powerful institutions and thus operates in (re-)production dynamics of difference and exclusion (cf. Müller/Polat 2022: 381).

In addition, Social Work is always linked to state and social conditions. Modern societies generate a need for help in a variety of ways, to which Social Work reacts as a form of "organized help" in the field of tension between state, mandated tasks, its profession and the lifeworlds of the addressees. It is therefore fundamentally dependent on social conditions and the welfare state framework as to how and whether Social Work can contribute and develop in society (Böhnisch and Schröer 2013, p. 14). These dynamics limit the interactional, social and institutional space of possibility between professionals and their clients and can also be effective within it.

The aim of this presentation is to make a reflexive contribution to the field of tension of the (re)production and processing of social inequality and difference in Social Work in the context of a welfare state framework. Using the example of the field of "Social Work with refugees" in Germany, the extent to which Social Work's normative understanding of the profession - which results from the third mandate and is oriented towards social justice and human rights - is in a conflictual negotiation process with other mandates is discussed. It is demonstrated how there is a conflict between their ambition to provide assistance and the political and legal requirements aimed at controlling migration and limiting refugee immigration. This is because some refugees are subject to political and legal requirements that are not aimed at enabling social integration, but at preventing immigration and integration. This results in highly problematic institutional framework conditions and limits to assistance. In this context and in view of social change processes, political restrictions and, in some cases, populist discourses on migration, the question is discussed as to whether or to what extent Social Work as an independent subsystem needs to be rethought institutionally in order to do justice to its social values of social justice in politically conflictual times and the internal logics of reproducing discrimination.

Commercial commodification: Australian social work education in the neoliberal university - *Kim Robinson, Christine Morley, Phillip Ablett & Rudi Roose*

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Neoliberalism has converted universities from places of learning underpinned by democratic values of collegial critique and inquiry to places of business underpinned by corporate capitalist values. While this is well documented in the international literature, the specific impacts for social work education and academics within the current Australian context, are less well known. This presentation presents a critical analysis of the empirical data that was derived from a national qualitative study involving 30 interviews with social work educators in Australia. It discusses the rise of managerial-administrative control within universities, the metrification of academic work and performance, and the impact of a student consumer culture in the context of global marketization. While all disciplines are subject to these changes, the findings suggest that social work educators may face additional challenges related to professional value clashes with dominant neoliberal orthodoxies governing universities.

In the context of the theme of the TiSSA Conference 'Deinstitutionalising social work' we argue that social work can operate collectively as an agent which can deinstitutionalise, question, and transform these logics, and highlight the lived experiences of those academics who do so. We also argue that collective strategies to inform research and teaching practice can be rethought to live up to its social value orientation of social justice. The research highlights the adverse impacts for teaching and research (both of which are funnelled away from critical agendas), collegiality, academic freedom, morale, and health. While paradoxes within university organisational cultures are noted, social work educators' responses are varied. Our research highlights how some academics try to carve out spaces to resist problematic aspects of managerial practices (both overtly and covertly) to maintain integrity and carry on social justice-oriented work, while others acquiesce in order to survive the neoliberal colonisation.

How to transform the new 'total institution' – *Griet Roets, Matthias Remmery & Laurine Bourgonjon*

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In this symposium, we address how the current 'community turn' has gradually produced a problematic dichotomy in care policy and practice between 'segregated living in residential, institutional contexts' being framed as something to avoid, and 'inclusive living in the community' as a desirable goal.

Based on this historical sketch, the question can be asked how to deal with the complex contemporary challenges involved in the provision of care and support for the most vulnerable people with care needs. Our symposium investigates what we call the recent creation of 'new' 'total institutions' or 'Asylums' (Goffman, 1961; Deligny, 2017), which represent "places of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life". Regimes of time and space of residents are controlled and settled by institutional regimes, which lead to treating people with (chronic) care needs as objects of treatment rather than as citizens with a sense of autonomy. Our symposium however also explores pathways how to transform these (new) total institutions.

Asylums with/out Walls: giving asylum throughout contemporary landscapes of care

During the last decades, de-institutionalisation of care has been pursued across Europe, promoting inclusion for citizens with care needs. Research across Europe nonetheless shows emerging 'Asylums without walls' within the community, with reference to oppressive institutional cultures and professional regimes that circulate in our societies. Moreover, a residual group of citizens with care needs is created who cannot meet the requirements of inclusion since they have to behave more normal than 'normal' people, and continue to end up in residential care being cast as a 'last resort', leading to a revival of 'Asylums with Walls'.

In our contribution, we explore what this contemporary creation of 'Asylums with/hout Walls' means for people who fall between the cracks of contemporary landscapes of care institutions, and explore which pedagogical repertoires can counter these dynamics. Our analysis will be rooted in the biographical journey of Britney, which displays these logics of interventions. We will rely on the theoretical set of ideas created by the social pedagogue Fernand Deligny, who casts light on the etymological origin of 'asylum' (with lower case and with reference to the French word 'asile') as a refuge where asylum can be granted by creating circumstances for people's human flourishing.

Revealing the freedom of movement of youngsters in residential youth care: towards the creation of a socio-spatial citizenship climate

Recent research shows the importance of a citizenship climate in residential youth care, focusing on how youngsters shape, practise and experience their citizenship, influenced by the synergy between residential youth care and the wider living environment. In the slipstream of this development, this article implements a socio-spatial lifeworld orientation perspective rooted in the German 'Social Raum' orientation to explore how residential youth care can create conditions for youngsters to shape and experience their freedom of movement, referring to how they navigate through different socio-spatial relationships, circumstances and pedagogical milieus in their everyday lives.

Based on a qualitative study in a residential youth care facility in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium), this article discusses three key findings: (1) creating local coalitions and partnerships, (2) creating space for appropriation and (3) creating space for complexity and convivial encounters. The findings show that a critical and reflexive professional orientation and discretion on different organisational levels are crucial to develop conditions for a pedagogical climate in residential youth care that exceeds the organisation and also focuses on the wider living environment, in which youngsters shape, practise and experience their citizenship in their everyday lives.

Creating a place/space for human flourishing: A qualitative research study on the freedom of action of persons with young dementia in residential elderly care

As a response to the worldwide ageing megatrend, international research, policy and practice are focusing on concepts as ageing in place. The shift from formal to self-care and informal care entails a problematic dichotomy between independent and dependent elderly people. Driven by cost-efficiency- and safety-thinking, as well as the one-sided architectural design, elderly people end up in residential elderly care as a 'last resort' that is heavily under pressure.

We adopt a social-spatial theoretical perspective: 'place' not only refers to a given physical-spatial place where things happen, but is redefined as 'space' with reference to the symbolic meaning of socio-spatial relationships that foster the human flourishing of a diversity of people.

A multi-method qualitative research approach is used to gain in-depth knowledge on the socio-spatial transformation of residential elderly care facilities. Research findings will be presented on how residential elderly care facilities as a place can be transformed into spaces where people can flourish; more specifically, where residents enjoy living, staff enjoy working and a diversity of people enjoy living together.

Social work in schools – deinstitutionalisation of social work? – *Pia Rother, Jonathan Krause & Sofie Vetter*

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In recent decades Social Work in schools has become the norm in Germany (Maier & Zipperle, 2023). As a result, schools have become further institutionalized as a field of action for Social Work. This institutionalization can be seen as a multidimensional and contradictory process, which is largely the result of a negotiation process of contradicting perspectives and goals between Social Work and school. This can therefore be described as de- or reinstitutionalization of Social Work (Kessl & Richter, 2021).

As an example for these negotiation processes this empirical contribution focusses on a new form of support in the classroom (Rother, Vetter, & Krause, 2024), for which teachers were previously primarily responsible: A recent educational policy measure in Hesse/Germany is that, in addition to teachers, Social workers are also employed in the classroom in order to be able to fulfill the educational mandate of schools. This brings issues of jurisdiction over child support onto the agenda. With Abbott's (1988, p. 111) profession-theoretical approach, one can assume that professionalism also evolves with neighboring professions. The question of self-defined jurisdiction is the most important characteristic of a profession and is now being reframed here in relation to teachers and, if necessary, de- or reinstitutionalized.

Social workers' views on their positioning in all-day schools have been considered in research (Sauerwein & Thieme, 2020), but with little regards to support for children in class. The positioning of these Social workers appears to be particularly important because of their involvement in the classroom, although no attention has been paid to this on a scientific level so far.
Issues of responsibilities and practical implementation of support for students have already been explored. Also the relationships between teachers and Social workers in schools have been researched and often indicate a hierarchy to the detriment of Social workers, especially in the context of extended education where Social Work is also involved (Buchna, Coelen, Dollinger, & Rother, 2016). This new form of support for children by Social workers in class reveals a research desideratum. This is why we pose the following questions: what are the perspectives of Social workers on supporting children? Which processes of de-, re- or institutionalization of Social Work take place in this context?
On the basis of qualitative interviews (N=11) with Social workers at Hessian elementary schools (Germany), the establishing and structuring of their jurisdiction was elaborated. The results indicate underlying principles of action and thus the positioning of these Social workers. One result, for example, is the orientation towards the curriculum. This is an interesting result in that Social Work in particular has developed in contrast to school (educational) goals. These results focus on the discourse of the 'socialpedagogization' of schools, but also on the deinstitutionalization of Social Work.

Weaponized neutrality. An interpellation to civic education and its consequences for the professional- and self-images of youth work – *Jana Sämann*

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In recent years, political interventions into various fields of education, notably youth work, have surged, often accompanied by a call for 'neutrality' within educational settings. One striking aspect here is that usually, the stakeholders of such a demand for 'neutrality' are protagonists in a right-wing spectrum. Therefore, this presentation aims to address the repercussions of such interventions on the perceived notion of neutrality by professionals in youth work and to examine their responses to these demands. Utilizing empirical data drawn from both public debates and qualitative interviews conducted in Germany between 2022 and 2024, the presented research seeks to unravel power dynamics inherent in the discourse surrounding 'Neutrality'. It takes a dual approach, initially illustrating the effects of this discourse on the landscape of education work, followed by a reconstruction of the professional subjectivities invoked by such discourse. Building on this, deinstitutionalisation can be used as a frame to analyze and discuss the change of professional value orientation, which gets pressured to adapt in a non-/contra-professional way due to interventions from political parties.

The presentation is structured in three key points:
1. Youth Work as a Precarious Institution: Youth work is a constitutively precarious institution for various reasons. Firstly, its professional requirements necessitate a practice deeply rooted in conceptual openness, which poses challenges when navigating spontaneous situations and varied professional tasks (Kessl et al. 2014, p. 15). Secondly, institutionalizing conflicting expectations further complicates matters, highlighting the precarious balance youth workers must maintain (Schwerthelm 2021, p. 883). Thirdly, the reliance on external sources for financial resources and political recognition makes youth work vulnerable to interventions from political entities and, thus, closely connected to a tendency towards fragile institutions susceptible to external influence.
2. The Role of Youth Work in Civic Education: Both in disciplinary theory and within the framework of German social law, youth work assumes a pivotal role in civic education. German Social Legislation underscores youth work's mandate to encourage young people to "experience themselves as subjects of political action [and] acquire political-democratic action, co-decision-making and co-responsibility" (Sturzenhecker 2013, p. 349). However, empirical studies have revealed a dissonance between this constitutional mandate and the realities of professional practice, which is largely attributed to resource scarcity and a lack of comprehensive understanding among professionals regarding the potential for civic education in their daily interactions.
3. Political Interventions and Invocations for to Neutrality: Current political interventions that invoke a supposed 'neutrality of education' can be assessed as a strategic discourse employed predominantly by right-wing and extreme right-wing actors. However, those interventions can be categorized as non-professional interventions with theoretically little impact on professional discourse or practice. Moreover, disciplinary debates within Social Work and educational science clearly reject attempts to conceptualize civic education as 'neutral' (Hentges and Lösch 2021). Nonetheless, due to the structural precariousness of the field, such interventions hold sway over professional perceptions of civic education within youth work, potentially shaping professional actions and impacting young recipients. The spectrum of potential consequences is broadly diversified between (supposed) affirmation and (covert as well as offensive) resistance concerning this interpellation for 'neutrality'. Therefore, it could be fruitful for discussions about the power dynamics concerning political interventions which are (re-)shaping professional Social Work.

Realising rights in the shadow. Outreach Social Work with homeless precarious migrants – *Sophie Samyn*

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Ever since its decriminalization in Belgium in 1993, the responsibility for addressing homelessness falls largely on local authorities, which shape social policies, motivated by a combination of security and poverty discourses (Maeseele et al, 2014). These policies have focused on providing transitional and emergency shelter, welfare benefits (through the reference address), and, more recently housing solutions (through housing-first and housing-led programs). Despite these initiatives, numerous barriers persist, encompassing issues of stigma, difficult access, waiting lists and (welfare) conditionalities, leading to persistent homelessness and people who rely on support outside the system (Maeseele et al., 2014). Among the homeless are an increasing number of precarious migrants or individuals without legal residence (Hermans et al., 2020). Their presence has gradually increased over the past decades, following the cessation of foreign labour recruitment in the 1970s (Brochmann, 1999), and the increasingly restrictive migration legislation since the 1980s (Düvell, 2006; Martiniello & Rea, 2003). Although today most precarious migrants work, send their children to school, and unnoticeably move around (Adam et al. 2002; Devillé 2008), those experiencing homelessness navigate diverse and often destitute situations. However, through the territorial logic of the welfare state, they are excluded from formal social rights such as welfare benefits or social housing. In this study, our objective is to examine Social Work practices through a critical lens, particularly focusing on its foundation as a (human) rights-based profession (Vandekinderen et al, 2020; Hermans & Roets, 2020).

Our focus turns to a specific Social Work practice: Outreach Social Work (OSW) in Flanders, the Flemish speaking region in Belgium. These Social workers travers the urban landscape, extending their care to all those who slip through the cracks of the social safety net. We believe this is a particularly interesting practice due to the unique position these Social workers occupy, between institutionalized social policies and the lived experiences of marginalized individuals. The goal of OSWs is to realise the basic (human) rights of those in the margin by reconnecting them with 'the system', confront prevailing institutional logics, and signal barriers which complicate access to support, thus holding the state accountable for the well-being of its citizens. However, how does this pursuit translate when faced with precarious migrants who inevitably cross their path?

Remaking social work by applying an anti-oppressive lens – *Mara Sanfelici & Elena Allegri*

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Our presentation will discuss findings from a national study on Social workers' awareness of potential oppressive professional or organizational practices in social and health services in Italy.
The international definition of Social Work (IFSW, 2014) assumes that Social workers not only should promote social justice, but also have agency and competencies to tackle processes that produce oppression and social exclusion. Nevertheless, Social workers do not act in a vacuum, but are, at least in Italy, most of the time employees of bureaucracies that through categorization processes embedded in procedures and policies profoundly influence the objectives and the quality of their work, with possible clashes between the professional and the organizational mandates. Despite their service-oriented mission, social service organizations can contribute to the oppression of service users through negative interactions with staff and discriminatory organizational policies and practices (Ramsundarsingh & Shier, 2017). Moreover, in the last few decades, neoliberal welfare policies and the New Public Management approach are fostering individual responsibility and resilience as answers to social issues, obscuring the principle of collective responsibility (IFSW, 2014) in tackling socially constructed problems that affect people's lives, with the consequence to increase social exclusion and marginalization.

In order to counteract these regressive pressures, the ethical-political dimension of Social Work aims to change the devaluing social attitudes that are also present within social services, and asks Social workers to take a stand as well as to use different lenses from the mainstream discourses to analyze social phenomena and tackle potentially unjust institutionalized practices.

In the last decades, anti-oppressive and critical approaches - aimed at fostering social justice and challenge inequalities - have been quite influential in the Social Work literature (Dominelli, 2011; Baines, 2007, 2011; Fook e Pease,1999; Mullaly, 2017; Roose, 2022); however, several cultural, structural and organizational barriers seem to hinder the possibility of translating it into practice (McLaughlin, 2005; Strier, 2007; Weiss Gal, 2016; Ramsundarsingh & Shier, 2017). Some authors (Strier & Binyamin, 2014; Dumbrill & Yee, 2019) have focused on the relationship between the State and social services, to uncover how social policies, organizational structures, and practices are arranged to protect and extend the privileges of dominant groups, and to understand how Social workers within these organizations are at a risk of reproducing existing forms of oppression.

Our contribution adds to this literature, presenting the results of a research (authors, 2022) that aimed to explore Social workers' discourses about a) their role in tackling oppression and discrimination, in the everyday practice within the Social Work agencies; b) the organizational factors that seem to foster or hamper an anti-oppressive approach; c) possible strategies to influence policies or practices they consider oppressive and in contrast with the Social Work professional mandate. 12 focus groups were carried out in 2021, involving 115 Social workers employed in different settings. Our findings reveal a gap between the "perceived role" and what professionals can actually do, and shed light on tensions and ambiguities in everyday Social Work practice. Compliance and resistance often cover "grey areas", that are not necessarily mutually exclusive, performed in more or less hedged strategies, generally aimed to influence the organizational contexts, in order to "humanize" bureaucracies that not rarely tend to invisibilize or misrecognize citizens' needs. These results also allow to explore power relations within the social service agencies that foster or hamper Social workers' possibilities to promote social inclusion.

Rethinking the hierarchy of knowledge in social work - the role of academia in creating worthy institutions – *Orna Shemer*

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The academy, as an institution that trains Social workers to manage social organizations and handle social and personal problems, is one of the socialization mechanisms that establish hierarchies of knowledge. As a result, academic knowledge as well as professional knowledge are highly recognized, while knowledge from life experience is less recognized. The lack of recognition of this knowledge suppresses, silences, distorts, diminishes and separates contents that are part of the perception of reality held by people regarding certain issues in their lives. The meaning is not only the expropriation of people's ability to act from their knowledge, but also the transfer of knowledge to other hands that select, interpret, analyze, understand and present this knowledge.

The Merging of knowledge (MoK) model presents an innovative methodology that leaves the ownership of the knowledge among its owners, and at the same time also works to combine it with types of knowledge relevant to the research topic. The model deals with the epistemic injustices created by the existing academic and social institutions. The model enables the joint creation of knowledge between professionals, people with knowledge from life experience, academics and policy makers and this with the understanding that new conditions must be created for understanding complex social problems. The research process presents a challenging cooperative dynamic, which more fairly shapes the everyday power relations in an authentic and protected manner.

The lecture will present the experience gained in working with the model in the field of poverty, employment, disabilities and aging. The principles of the model and its stages will be presented and a critical reflection on its meanings in the field of Social Work, for example in terms of aspects of rights, efficiency and democratization.

Interconnected acts of care: unveiling a community ecosystem among sex workers – *Nour Shimei*

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Research question(s)
Sex workers confront a spectrum of societal stigmatisation, marginalisation, and vulnerability stemming from pervasive associations with violence, substance abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. This prevailing societal lens often sees them as a homogenised group and neglects their individuality. Rarely have sex workers been regarded as the experts in their own lives. Instead, they have historically been perceived by the Social Work profession as incapable of taking care of themselves and, therefore, in need of protection. This research centres on the phenomenon of daily 'caring for others' within the sex work milieu, seeking to elucidate the nuanced ways in which sex workers extend support to one another and to unravel the multifaceted dimensions of care across personal, occupational, communal, and political realms. This study endeavours to address the following research questions: How do manifestations of 'caring for others' manifest in the lives of female sex workers? What are the personal and societal implications of such manifestations?

Methods
This study employed an ethnographic approach, using participatory observation, at an aid NGO for sex workers in England, combining research and volunteering for one year. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both sex workers and professionals, exploring the theme of 'caring for others' among sex workers.

Results
Thematic analysis revealed varied altruistic practices between sex workers, wherein assistance to fellow members serves as a conduit for forging communal bonds, fostering a sense of belonging, and engendering alternative narratives to counteract societal stigma. Moreover, tensions emerge between forms of support grounded in reciprocal empathy emanating from lived experiences and assistance administered by professional entities.

Discussion and Implications
In this lecture, I will elucidate how aiding others among sex workers transcends individualistic gestures and resonates with ecological and communal implications. This examination underscores the pivotal role of community-based support networks, particularly pertinent for individuals ensnared within the labyrinth of negative societal categorisations, such as sex workers.
It is important to note that my aim is not to make an argument for or against the sale of sex or to take a moral stance on the issue. But to learn from the experience of sex workers and professionals about the different ways in which help is given to sex workers and what help Social Work can offer that meets the needs of sex workers.

Social workers' ethical reflections on authorities' interpretation of the principle of the least intrusive form of intervention – *Edda Stang and Tonje Steen*

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Our presentation will address how Social workers reflects on ethical codes and principles, when they are exercising a mandate based on the authorities' interpretation of what is the least intrusive form of intervention.

Using the case of child protection investigations carried out in Centers for parents and children in Norway, we wish to illuminate the intersections between practice and ethical thinking and reflections (cf. Evans & Hardy, 2017).

The presentation will be based on the main project: Centers for parents and children – a helpful investigation for whom? (Hilde A. Aamodt, Marianne B. Sommerfeldt, Edda Stang & Tonje Steen - Oslo Metropolitan University). The main purpose of this study is to develop knowledge on how parents experience the Center for parents and children as a measure when investigating the care situation of a child. The project will also explore how employees at the Centers for parents and children in Norway understand the challenges and opportunities in working with the families in this context. The paper we will present is one of several sub-projects derived from this.

Our paper is based on individual interviews and focus group interviews with employees at Centers for parents and children in Norway (26 interviews).

The paper will explore perceptions of what is least intrusive, of investigations in the home versus investigations at the Center for parents and children. According to policies and regulations the Norwegian child welfare, practice shall be based on the principle of the "least intrusive form" of intervention. When there is a concern for the wellbeing of a child, the least intrusive form of intervention shall be implemented.

The mandate and guidelines from the authorities are that investigations from the centers should primarily be carried out as a home-based measure. The authorities' guidelines show that home-based assessment is considered to be the least intrusive for these vulnerable families. However, what is the least intrusive may be perceived differently by the Social workers who work closely with these families. We will explore how this principle is understood when it comes to assessing and investigating the care competence of the most vulnerable families in child welfare. Further, inspired by Evans & Hardy (2017), we will explore how the employees maneuver between different interpretations of the principle of the least intrusive form of intervention, combined with legislation, other ethical codes, and their own professional judgments.

We will present some preliminary results at the conference.

Service user involvement in the decision-making process within child welfare system, as a form of restorative justice – *Stouraiti Alexandra*

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Service user involvement in Greece is established, but rarely practiced. In the Greek child protection system specifically, the trauma of the removal of the child from the birth family meets the trauma of institutionalization. Children are not placed directly in a foster family, but in a hospital or/and a private, old-fashioned institution, before being placed in a foster or adoptive family (if ever). Moreover, the legal right of the adult adoptee to get in contact with their birth family was established only in the mid-nineties, after a long bottom-up movement and advocacy. Nevertheless, the services of tracing and connecting them with their birth family still remain out of the scope of social welfare in Greece. Interventions in the direction of repairing broken social bonds, such as those that have been described under the rubric of Restorative Justice are urgently needed.

Restorative Justice may not be well established in Greece, but as an institution, it expands and applies way beyond the narrow window of the criminal justice system. The restorative practices compress the essence of democracy by functioning through participation and consensus. Restorative practices within the child protection system may take various forms, such as Family Group Conferences and Team Decision Making – which both include a discussion between the professionals, the child and the family, and community members. All restorative practices boil down to the expression of the participants' voice – a basic right even according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Besides, Social Work's upsetting past proves the existing risk of enforcing oppressive practices on vulnerable groups and families, oftentimes as a result of political pressure and choices, unless priority is given to the people and their needs, and unless feelings and concerns as expressed.

It is well known that social services are between social care and social control. In the child protection system, this pendulum tends towards the latter (Ioakimidis & Wyllie, 2023). Social Work has to become the "voice" of the child (Martins, 2016). The phrase "the personal is political", in the child-protection system means that the interference of the state in family matters turns private issues into public affairs – meaning, families turn from something personal, into something public and political (Pennell, 2018). Our research focuses on the lived experience of children and their families, exploring possibilities of a more active involvement of service users in the decision-making process within the Greek child protection system. We explore the depths of Restorative Justice and service user involvement to discover the divergences, as well as the common ground these practices share, aiming to introduce a new approach that amplifies deinstitutionalization to policymakers and professionals.

Is deinstitutionalisation of dementia care possible? – *Anže Štrancar*

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Efforts to move from institutional to community care often collide with the issue of dementia. People with dementia are often cited as an example of the impossibility of community care for some people. These beliefs stem from an underestimation of people with this stigma, of their relatives and also from an underestimation of the community to organise itself properly. On the other hand, they also overestimate institutions and the care they provide. It has been shown that a multiplicity of institutional rules leads to absurdities and institutionalism, the numbing of identity and the loss of social power and status, and that rules and regulations do not have the function of treatment or care, but of facilitating the work of staff and even of overcoming the anxiety of the staff. The same is true for the illusion of orderliness of the environment and of enabling control in dementia wards. The concentration of confused people makes for a rather chaotic environment. In Slovenia, several attempts have been made to humanise these wards and create a human-worthy environment, to ensure a staff attitude that takes into account the user's perspective and helps to preserve mental functions. These attempts point in the opposite direction of the need for the institution - the domestication of institutional space. They show that we can be more successful in caring for people with dementia where the person is at home. Deinstitutionalisation of dementia care needs to change the model of understanding dementia from a reductive (medical, remedial) to a transversal (social and community) one, to provide a safe environment free from coercion and confinement, to establish responses to people's needs that allow personalised care for all categories of need intensity. At the same time, enabling people with the stigma of dementia to express their will authentically and to regain their ability to function.

In this paper, I present the literature on deinstitutionalisation and the implementation of integrated care and the reorganisation of wards for people with dementia in the form of household communities, which has been produced at the Faculty of Social Work over the last decades. In this context, I present the research data collected in the framework of my PhD thesis, which are related to community care and the delay of institutionalisation. I will present the results of ten interviews with people with dementia, twenty interviews with their carers and twenty interviews with professionals who work with people with dementia. I researched the compatibility of existing community services with the needs of people with dementia to live at home and move into an institution as late as possible. I found that most existing services meet the needs of people with dementia in the community, but that they are too expensive and lack capacity. Family members of people with dementia reported informal care and the difficulties they have in caring for family members with dementia. Most do not agree with moving their family member to a care home, but due to the lack of community services, they have no other choice. Thus, for some people with dementia, living in an institution is the only option. Social and health professionals who work with people with dementia reported on their work and explained why institutional care for people with dementia is still the best solution in Slovenia, even though the European guidelines steer us towards community-based services.

Using a strength-based approach to social work with minority groups: the case of at-risk young-adult Arabs in Israel – *Yafit Sulimani-Aidan*

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Background
Social workers play a crucial role in enabling clients to uncover their personal strengths and those within their surroundings, while also working towards achieving social justice for marginalized communities. Although there has been growing focus on strength-based interventions, there remains limited understanding of how Social workers in practice implement these empowering approaches, especially when working with minority and collectivist populations. This qualitative study aimed to expand our understanding of how strength-based methods are applied when working with minority populations and within collectivist, traditional societies.

Methods
The sample for this study consisted of 20 Arab and Jewish Social workers and 19 managers from social service organizations or departments, all of whom are actively engaged in supporting at-risk young-adult Arabs throughout Israel. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather insights and perspectives from these participants regarding their experiences in working with at-risk young-adult Arabs using a strength-based approach. The analysis utilized theoretical thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Results
Two prominent themes emerged from the analysis. The first theme revolved around "Recognizing and incorporating strengths, assets, and resources throughout the intervention process," comprising two subthemes: 1) Personal strengths and resources of the young adults, and 2) Environmental strengths: Cultural and familial resources. The second theme pertained to "The dynamics of the connection between Social workers and young adults" and included three subthemes: 1) Establishing accepting, non-judgmental, and hope-inspiring relationships, 2) Cultivating collaborative relationships, and 3) Fostering goal-oriented relationships.

Conclusions and implications
The study's findings demonstrate that Social workers actively engaged in identifying and harnessing the strengths and assets within the young adults' environments and within themselves, with the aim of enhancing their lives. Additionally, these Social workers helped the young adults acknowledge their disadvantaged circumstances while also instilling in them a sense of responsibility for shaping their lives by leveraging their unique environmental, cultural, and internal resources. These findings are discussed in relation to the existing literature on strength-based approaches.

However, the findings also reveal that Social workers do not consistently apply systematic assessments or interventions that align conceptually with the strength-based approach as an official guiding principle. Furthermore, they apply these principles in a professional capacity only to a limited extent in their work. The implications for practice underscore the benefits and challenges associated with implementing such approaches and propose strategies for equipping Social workers with the necessary tools to promote strength-based interventions across all ecological levels.

Empowering integration through deinstitutionalised social work: a capabilities approach via participatory research in Berlin – *Jeany Rose Teguihanon*

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This presentation shares the potential of deinstitutionalised Social Work practices in creating venues for empowerment and shaping responsive services for young women with forced migration backgrounds. Traditional Social Work practice, often constrained by organisational bureaucracy, struggles to effectively address these women's multifaceted challenges during their integration journey.

Our study employed participatory research methods, creating a platform for young women (participants and peer researchers) to articulate their integration challenges and identify the fundamental freedoms essential for a valued life in Berlin, Germany. These freedoms extend beyond language acquisition and encompass crucial aspects like societal acceptance. This point is highlighted by participants' experiences, where societal barriers persisted despite language proficiency and integration efforts. This highlights the limitations of current practices in addressing these core capabilities, as defined by the capabilities approach (e.g., Martha Nussbaum's framework).

This methodological shift champions the aspirations and agency of young women, aligning with social justice principles. Our findings emphasize the critical role of inclusive, gender-sensitive, and culturally sensitive education in integration. While "Willkommensklassen" (welcome classes) are essential platforms, the research reveals their complexities. Ultimately, the research underscores the need for a fundamental reevaluation of Social Work policies and practices to better reflect the fundamental capabilities valued by these young women. These capabilities encompass educational opportunities and support systems fostering societal acceptance and integration.

By integrating the capabilities approach within a participatory research framework, this study advocates for a transformative Social Work practice. It proposes a more inclusive approach that continuously evaluates power dynamics and equips young women with the tools to advocate for systemic changes effectively. Our research compels the Social Work community to embrace these methodologies, promoting empowerment, agency, and social justice. It signifies a pivotal step towards deinstitutionalising Social Work and reimagining its practices and policies for a more inclusive and empowering future. This research contributes to academic discussions while offering practical insights for reshaping Social Work to better meet the needs of young women with forced migration backgrounds.

A less meaningful job? Changes in how social workers describe their work between 2003 and 2021 – *Pia Tham*

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The aim of the study was to investigate how working conditions, intention to leave and self-rated health among Social workers in child welfare have developed in a fifteen year perspective. A questionnaire based on QPS Nordic was collected in 2003 (n=309), 2014 (n=313), 2018 (n=305) and in 2021 (n=274) The results show that the Social workers in 2018 and 2021 on an overall level rate their working conditions as better than in earlier years. Work demands are described as significantly lower than in earlier years, while organisational climate, group work and support from co-workers and superior are seen more positively. However, despite these positive developments, the changes in how the Social workers rate their health and to what extent they intend to leave the workplace were minor. One of the few aspects of the working conditions which had deteriorated, especially since 2014 was how the Social workers rate positive challenges in work, the extent to which they perceived their work as meaningful or that their skills and knowledge often were useful in their work. Possible factors behind these results, for example the influence on NPM on social services is discussed.

Critical public management studies: a research agenda proposition – *Shachar Timor-Shlevin*

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Social service management has long been a complex endeavor, positioned between state mechanisms and marginalized groups, while holding a moral professional commitment to social justice. In recent decades, marketization and neo-managerial reforms aimed at reducing public spending have driven social services towards formulaic and "scientific" managerialism based on rational-objectivist and technical approaches to control their operation.

Yet, many scholars argue that these rational-objectivist modes of management are fundamentally oppose the nature, goals, and ethical framework of Social Work, which is committed to promoting social justice and providing humane and creative assistance to marginalized people. In other words, while the management of social services increasingly relies on an objectivist rationality rooted in economic and technical perspectives of cost-benefit analysis and measurability, the tasks of social services involve promoting social justice, establishing humane connections, and finding creative solutions to the complex life situations of marginalized groups. This fundamental tension between the neo-managerial tendencies of public services and the social justice commitment of Social Work is extensively discussed in the literature, highlighting the challenge for social services and Social Work as a profession to develop a contextualized and sustainable practice informed by social justice principles. However, there has been very limited exploration of the possibility of critical management, focused on promoting social justice, within Social Work and social services. Some scholars consider critical management to be impossible, assuming that managers in public services are primarily committed to economic and organizational rationales that prioritize cost-effectiveness or maintain allegiance to the existing social order. In the absence of such an option, the task of promoting social justice remains fragmented, seemingly divided between frontline professionals who resist the current operation of social services and the managerial tier that adhere firmly to neo-managerialism.

In this presentation, I will challenge this perspective by proposing the development of critical public management research, arguing that the possibility of critical management in public services is essential for fostering social-justice-based practices within social services contextually and sustainably.

First, I will provide a brief overview of existing knowledge and gaps in the literature regarding critical public management, discussing how managers in public services navigate the tension between neo-managerial obligations and the social justice commitment of Social Work, oscillating between silent compliance and pragmatic resistance to neo-managerialism. While this body of research offers relevant insights into the possibility of critical public management, it lacks a clear focus on social justice-informed rationality, as well as contextualized and sustainable options for such practices within the current construction of social services, deserving further and more precise examination.

Second, I will present some preliminary findings from a qualitative study conducted with critical managers in public social services in Israel, highlighting potential ideas and questions that could be developed within critical public management studies. This section will underscore several practical and theoretical opportunities arising from the development of critical public management research, such as: conceptualizing moderate acts of resistance as processes that operate through the gradual accumulation of power; exploring the concept of hybrid professionalism, aimed at integrating critical and neoliberal perspectives; and addressing Critical Management Studies (CMS), a field primarily focused on economic and for-profit management but rarely applied to public management, and mainly considered theoretical.

Searching reciprocity in the growth of social professionals and clients – *Hans van Iersel, Laura Koeter, Tine Van Regenmortel & René Schalk*

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Introduction
The turnover and absenteeism of professionals in the social domain are relatively high compared to other professional groups. This is even though the quality of care provided by society is considered of great importance. In a rapidly changing society, not only are help-seekers uncertain about their own situation, but social professionals also experience this uncertainty regarding their own performance. They are expected to perform their work at a high level of quality while continuing developing professionally. This study explores whether the growth of the social professional and the growth of the client can be linked to each other to provide possible answers to turnover and absenteeism among social professionals.

Method
Throughout 2022, semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen social professionals. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using Thematic Analysis according to the grounded theory approach. The software package Atlas.ti was utilized for analysis. The analyses were conducted by the first researcher with the second researcher critically reviewing all phases of the thematic analysis.

Results
The analysis resulted in 78 variables linked to text fragments. The conversation emerged as central in the relationship between the professional and the client, which served as the basis for constructing themes. A total of six themes were identified, three "within the conversation," two preceding the conversation, and one theme concerning the outcomes of the conversation. The most common relationships between the text fragments were selected and analyzed, leading to the findings that there is a relationship between the growth of the professional and the growth of the client from the perspective of the professional, and that there are at least five underlying variables related to both the growth of the client and the growth of professionals. These variables include the openness of the professional during the conversation, the bond the professional feels with the client, the freedom experienced by the professional in the conversation, the motivation experienced by the professional, and the expertise attributed to oneself of the professional.

Discussion and Conclusion
The research findings seem to confirm reciprocity in growth between social professionals and their clients. The implications present challenges for organizations and professionals, particularly regarding the intensity and duration of the relationship. Finally, the concept of "professionalism" indicated in the interviews plays a role, where this concept, surprisingly, is perceived more as inhibiting rather than promoting development.

Communities and community building in a Dutch neighborhood in a socio-spatial perspective – *Chantal Van Lieshout, Sabrina Keinemans & Griet Roets*

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Background
Although the concept of community has often been described by academics as vague and abstract, it is a popular concept among politicians and policymakers driven by deinstitutionalization. Policy makers see community as a promising strategy for achieving policy goals. In the Netherlands, for example, the achievement of policy goals, such as more informal care, seems to be the starting point for community building, especially in neighborhoods and districts with a large stock of social housing and a high number of residents with lower socio-economic status. As such, community building strategies are used for social engineering purposes. So far, little attention has been paid to the relationship between Social Work and the city as a social spatial practice in contemporary Social Work research in the Netherlands.

Subject of study
In contrast to this instrumental perspective as described above , the everyday life of residents in a neighborhood of low socio-economic status is the starting point in this ethnographic study of communities and community building. As community and community building practices are situated in a complex field of social, political and socio-spatial contexts, a socio-spatial perspective is used to analyze the socio-spatial quality. To do this, three steps have been taken in this study.
1. Providing insight in the physical environment - the 'matterscape' - the physical-material and spatial quality of the urban living environment. This includes the historical, material and objective conditions of life in a given area.
2. Providing insight in the 'mindscape' - the subjective impressions from the perspective of the inhabitants of the living world, or the inner reality constituted by lived experience or imagination. The symbolic constructions of communities (see Cohen,)
3. Providing insight in the 'powerscape' - the field of institutional structures, the relationships between the socio-spatial environment and power (Low, 2009).

These three dimensions are inextricably linked. Linking them together makes it possible to create a coherent overall picture in which the interconnections and interrelationships become transparent. The power of a socio-spatial approach lies in discovering the links between social, cultural, economic and political processes. By paying attention not only to the interactions between residents and their communities, but also to the interactions between residents, communities and their physical environments and the structures, institutions and facilities provided within them, an insight is gained into the dynamic fabric of not only material and social, but also social and political practices.

The outcome of this study can add value as an approach for Social workers, especially as a reflective model and foundation to improve the socio-spatial quality.

Presentation
I would like to share first findings based on the socio-spatial approach .

Mapping different professional logics underpinning practices and strategies in the combat against child and youth poverty – *Caroline Vandekinderen, Evelyne Deceur, Hilde Van Keer, Rudi Roose, Griet Roets*

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Research question

The prevalence of poverty and social inequality continues to present a central challenge to the social justice aspirations of diverse Western societies. In the light of the deep social and economic crises and risks that many European welfare states faced during the last decades, the proportion of people who are (at risk of) living in poverty is increasing rather than decreasing. As childhood is recognized as a specific domain of social intervention, there is a growing focus on child poverty, which remains a stubborn, complex and multi-dimensional problem for social policy makers in most Western societies. However, interpreting poverty as a fundamental violation of human rights involving both the lack of material (income, housing, …) and immaterial (social network, participation, …) resources, we argue that child and youth poverty must at any point be understood in relation to the poverty of their parents and/or of those responsible for their upbringing, and to the lack of social resources of the whole family. Therefore, our qualitative research focuses on the question how professionals at school and professionals involved in leisure time activities can mobilize resources for children, young people and parents living in poverty by intervening in their home environment and housing situation, school, leisure time, and possibly in relation to child welfare and protection interventions.

Research context

Our research unfolds in a specific neighborhood in Ghent (a city in Flanders, the Dutch speaking part of Belgium) where many complex social problems converge: there is an inflow of vulnerable citizens, 27% of the population is entitled to increased allowance and 32% of the housing is social housing. There is a large number of facilities/organizations and a great openness between these neighborhood partners. In this contribution, we specifically aim to gain insight into the everyday social practices addressing (child) poverty that unfold in this local context. Poverty is not a fixed and neutral concept, but a normative construction that varies according to the actors that define the problem and depending on the context of the welfare regime in which this takes place. As such, contemporary social practices with people in poverty are – although often hidden and obscured - governed by deep ontological, epistemological and ethical foundations. Therefore, we aim to identify and discuss the logics underlying social professionals' involvement in the combat against poverty in relation to its social justice orientation and within the context of current welfare arrangements.

Research methodology

We performed nine semi-structured interviews which were audio-taped and fully transcribed, with a diversity of social professionals active in the neighborhood. The professionals were partly selected through snow ball sampling and worked in very different context: schools, leisure organizations, PCSW, outreach Social Work, childcare, … Through the interviews, we explored which questions, difficulties and opportunities social professionals face with regard to poverty, housing, care, public space and how they actually respond to these issues. The data were analyzed in an exploratory and interpretative manner based on qualitative content analysis.

Research results

We discuss how social professionals develop practices and strategies (and the underlying professional or institutional logics) to support children, youngsters and their families living in poverty.

How do social work students experience stressful working conditions and realise self-care in their professional practice? – *Susanne Vaudt, Katja Weidtmann, Gunter Groen*

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Work in psychosocial professions is useful and necessary, meaningful, interesting and fulfilling, but often also particularly challenging and personally stressful. Those who, like Social workers, take on professional responsibility for others are confronted with stresses that make it necessary to treat their own resources with care. Therefore, a regular, attentive and self-caring approach to one's own demands and expectations, as well as one's own limits and stresses, should actually be a matter of course. This so-called self-care plays a central role for professionals in psychosocial professions. It aims both to act professionally in the long term and to maintain their own health and enjoyment of their work (Groen et al. 2024).

With regard to occupational stress, representative studies like the Stress Report Germany 2019 show that every fifth employee in social and educational professions states that they are working at the limits of their capacity (Lohmann-Haislah et al. 2020: 169). Typical stress at work is caused by permanent multitasking, constant disruptions and interruptions, work on Sundays and public holidays, on-call duty, heavy deadline and performance pressure with missed breaks and overtime. In addition, the social sector has difficult financial conditions and an increasing shortage of skilled workers. Specific challenges in Social Work include often demanding relationship work, complex pressures on clients and unclear motivations. The younger the employees are, the less professional experience they have and the more sensitive they are towards their clients, the greater the perceived psychological stress or risk of burnout syndrome (Allroggen et al., 2017; Simionato & Simpson, 2018). With a view to health, well-being and job satisfaction, Social Work students and young professionals in particular should be sensitized and encouraged to think and act in a self-caring manner early on in their training and career entry phase. Graduates who are both sensitized to the topic of self-care and "have" professional ways of dealing with stress in the fields of work thus build up a competence that has so far been neglected in the methodological repertoire of Social Work. Research in this area could therefore achieve several goals at once:

1. prevention of excessive demands in psychosocial fields of work,
2. further development of methods,
3. impulses for professionals who are already working in the field,
4. further development of management concepts in which the topic can still be expanded.

How do Social Work students experience stressful working conditions and realize self-care in their professional practice? We asked students of Social Work and related Bachelor's and Master's degree programs at HAW Hamburg who already have relevant professional practical experience in social services. The empirical study provides an interesting insight into the status quo of self-care among Social workers at an individual level, the majority of whom are at the beginning of their professional careers. At the same time, the data paints a multi-layered picture of the workplace setting. Promoting self-care among employees has become an important management and leadership task. Direct superiors have a central role to play here, insofar as they are perceived as a resource and not as a stressor by their employees. The survey results provide a complex impression of stressful working relationships, working conditions and the organizational structure of occupational health management. It becomes clear: Preventive concepts of successful self-care with a view to maintaining health, well-being and job satisfaction are highly relevant. This applies in particular for the group of prospective and younger Social workers . They therefore require more explicit consideration in training and further education, as well as a binding company-wide anchoring by employers.

Youth practices and networks in the (socio) cultural field: deinstitutionalisation as a lever in the realization of civil spaces? – *Griet Verschelden, Siebren Nachtergaele & Lieze De Middeleir &, Helena Calleeuw, Minne Huysmans & Pieter Meurs*

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In research, policy and practice, de-institutionalization has traditionally been seen as the dismantling of (socio-) cultural institutions and the creation of practices from bottom up, connected with the lifeworld of young people and the multilayered and plural urban fabric. So, deinstitutionalization in culture and leisure can be a lever in the realization of the right to culture and leisure for all young people, however is this always the case?

Deinstitutionalization refers not only to location and spatial embeddedness, or to a bottom- up perspective, but also to the professional logics of these practices. In this symposium, we discuss deinstitutionalization processes in culture and leisure, by focusing on the question if we can see these practices as public practices. Public practices are practices which are not so much aimed at reducing barriers but intend to question which systems create barriers, to open public debate on who can decide what (qualitative) culture and leisure is, to make societal issues public and to dismantle existing inequalities.

This viewpoint is inspired by public pedagogy in the work of philosopher of education Gert Biesta (Biesta 2012), seen as an enactment of a concern for "publicness", which we can interpret as a concern for the public quality of human togetherness, or the possibility of actors and events to become public. Becoming public is about the achievement of a form of human togetherness in which action is possible and freedom can appear, characterised by plurality. In the pedagogy of interruption cultural and leisure practices have a deconstructive responsibility for the creation of educational spaces and, by extension, their constant undoing. There is a double gesture incited by the pedagogy of interruption by which we critically engage with pedagogy as curriculum (or the prestructured rules of the institutions), so that our embedded structures within institutions undergo ongoing analysis, struggle, and antagonism without predetermined ends.

We can discuss the transformative aspect in cultural and leisure practices further by linking to the "agonistic pluralism" of cultural political scientist Pascal Gielen (2023). By agonistic pluralism Gielen refers to a cultural-political conception in which a vivid democracy is not limited to good debate in the public space, but translates into lived action in the civil space. Public space is primarily seen as a discursive space of words, of debate and of valuable arguments (the field of deliberative democracy). Civil space, on the other hand, is the domain in which citizens try out ideas formulated in the public domain from the bottom up.

Can these practices challenge, disrupt and break-up existing power relations? Do they gain insight into processes of inequality and exclusion in society? In what ways do they make young people's interests and concerns public, and do they bring social issues into discussion and dialogue? In what ways do they open up space for different voices, stories and aesthetics: political spaces in which there is room for difference, dialogue and cooperation, as well as disagreement (Çankaya, 2022) ?

<u>Mapping networks of youth collaboration in culture</u>

In our presentation we will explore networks of youth collaboration in culture.
We started our research from a broad research question: what are the interests and concerns of young people themselves? How do they connect their personal story with societal interests and concerns, and vice versa? What initiatives do they take themselves? What does culture mean in this context? How are these interests and concerns picked up and translated into cultural practice? What is the role of youth (cultural) workers in this? What is the role of (institutional and local) policy in this? In this contribution we propose an engaged research approach – soft cartography – to map youth collaborations in culture. A soft cartography does not imply an exhaustive, objective mapping that nails down places, but rather investigates subjective motives and cultural dynamics and thereby starts from the perspectives of all involved (Nachtergaele et al, 2024).

We connect these youth collaborations in culture to organizations and institutions that involves a group of young people for a certain period of time at regular intervals. Museums already have a lot of experience in working with youngsters (e.g. MAS in Jonge Handen), but our research also involves initiatives outside the museum sector and we also focus explicitly on practices from the humus layer in deep urban society, e.g. Art4Youth by Globe Aroma, Young Board by VierNulVier, etc.

Youth collaborations are given and take themselves a position to mirror cultural organizations, but we also see that institutionalization mechanisms creep into their actions and initiatives. Traces of the same institutional or professional logics continue to circulate in these bottom – up practices. Even more, in the field of culture, institutional logics are deliberately used to strengthen the visibility and even the impact of art and culture in society. Engaged cultural practices are distinctly aware of the institutional logics that structure the art system - as chronicled in institutional art theory (Danto, 1964; Davidts, 2006; Van Gestel, 2013). Remarkably, those cultural practices begin to incorporate those logics and employ them as strategies for positioning themselves in the arts field and cultural discourse.
How can you change structures, if you yourself are part of the institution (and its institutional logics)? Can you really reverse structures only when you understand institutional logics? Can you also gain a stronger position through more decision-making power, e.g. by operating at the center of the cultural and the arts field? In this contribution, we examine how questioning institutional logics or institutional critique can function to question and reverse (unequal and exclusionary) structures and mechanisms in culture.

<u>Making Democracy Work: A co-creative trajectory with civil society and educational actors to strengthen the experiential knowledge of democracy via diverse artistic forms with youngsters</u>

The aiming of this project is to bring the expertise of socio-cultural practices and the educational field on citizenship education and political participation closer to each other. Both have strengths and weaknesses in their approach towards youngsters.

The educational field in Flanders strongly emphasizes the knowledge on institutional forms of political participation. It emphasizes a so called socializing and qualifying approach to citizenship (Biesta, 2011). Some socio-cultural practices, and especially participatory art practices, strongly experiments with non-institutional forms of political participation and work with traces of deinstitutionalization initiated by the youngsters within their practice. They support bottom-up with young people how the political dimension of their lived experiences can grow and explore together how they can bring and facilitate the diverse voices of young people in the public sphere.

Next to traditional forms of political participation such as voting or being engaged within a political party, youngsters also explore other (new) forms of non-institutional political participation such as creating YouTube channels, organizing protest marches, avoiding consuming certain products, using artistic ways of expressing their unique concerns about society etc.

Youngsters that engage in these new spontaneous forms of organizing, in horizontal structures and subversive acting and so, develop as such new ways of multilayered emancipation movements (Kaulingfreks, 2017). The youngsters involved in these type of political activities have strongly diverse backgrounds which is in contrast with a less diverse group of youngsters engaged in more traditional forms of political participation. The latter group is mostly populated by men from a higher income category and with benefits on educational level (Waeterloos, Walrave & Ponnet, 2021).

Art is an important mediator for young people's political engagement. To strengthen their messages or ideas, youngsters often choose spontaneously creative media (Van Bouchaute, Görgöz & Cristiaensen, 2022). Working in another medium, gives extra opportunities to establish new (political) identities. Within the so called transitional space that is allowed by using artistic languages (Winnicot, 1971), new identities can emerge or can be created. The rules in this transitional space are created by the participants themselves and offers a broad range of possibilities 'to become'. So on one hand, the arts and creativity can help to reflect and express themselves and encourage them to create their own language (Van der Heyden & Degryse, 2021) and on the other hand, it helps creating distance from their own lived personal experiences (Selderslaghs et al., 2022). This makes it easier to transform their ideas and experiences into societal and collective challenges and themes afterwards. So, artistic languages lower the threshold to get to collective action (Trienekens, 2020) and create possibilities for new ways of political, bottom-up practices.

This approach to political participation and citizenship can be inspiring for the educational field. The dynamics of non-institutional forms of political participation and of the spontaneous organizing of ideas of diverse groups of youngsters is strongly underrepresented within the educational field. In this field the focus is more knowledge-oriented and is and less on mobilizing experiential knowledge that youngsters are living in their day-to-day live. This approach is also helpful to nurture the debate on what democratic citizenship can be. Such as mentioned in the introduction, the deconstructive responsibility for the creation of educational spaces and, by extension, their constant undoing.
In this presentations some insights of the first part of this project are revealed. More than 20 good practices were interviewed from the socio-cultural field, informal youth practices, but also from the educational field. We document these good practices as a first research output and present them as sources of inspiration. Next to insights for each practice, general insights and conditions to develop horizontal cracks and artistic practices within the educational field to nurture democratic citizenship were formulated. Some of these insights and conditions are also shared during this presentation.

<u>Deinstitutionalising Social Work research: Representation and participation. Young people voicing their neighborhoods in Brussels</u>

A renewed focus on citizenship and civic education has been noticeable since the 1990s. Citizenship education is seen as the transmission and teaching of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are crucial and necessary for responsible democratic citizens and for fostering social cohesion.

It refers to the promotion and maintenance of a certain 'citizenship culture', of common beliefs, knowledge, symbols and practices that are essential for a democratic society. In other words, democracy and its accompanying citizenship is something that can be learned. More even: if we want to keep democracy alive, it appears from this perspective that we have to (teach) it somehow. Today, we find initiatives of citizenship education throughout different domains in society: as a curriculum within formal education, as integration courses for newcomers and within the broad non-formal offer around democratic learning in socio-cultural organisations.

Despite the many educational projects and initiatives, there is a growing concern around what the literature calls the civic empowerment gap: the difference in civic qualities between people from different social backgrounds. In particular, minorities, people from migration backgrounds, people from socio-economically vulnerable contexts have generally less access to civic engagement than those who come from socially dominant and socio-economically advantaged situations. This is certainly true in cities, and therefore also in Brussels.

Therefore we wish to explore the transformational possibilities for and with young people of the higher up elaborated concept of civil space by Pascal Gielen (2023). We wish to do so by highlighting preliminary results from qualitative interviews with young people (n=194) in the Brussels region. Brussels has almost silently become one of the most diverse cities in the world with 74.3% of its inhabitants having roots in migration (Statbel, 2021), having a young population (Loeckx et al., 2012) and about one in three Brussels residents living on an income below the poverty line (Brussels Observatory for Health and Welfare, 2023).

In neighbourhoods (Sint-Gillis, Forest, Anderlecht & Molenbeek) that are strongly affected by mechanisms of social and economic inequality we engaged with the lived experiences of young people and the ownership they take over the political space they share with each other. More specifically we focused on the lived experiences in their neighbourhood, young peoples' sense of belonging and ownership over their environment, social networks and their aspirations for their neighbourhood. To do so, Social Work students in their 2nd year of training took up an active role within this research project alongside civil society organisations and the researchers from the Social Work department of Erasmus university of applied sciences As co-researchers, over the course of 2 years, students engaged in qualitative, individual 'interviews' with young people in the Brussels neighbourhoods around the canal (also known as the croissant pauvre). The students of our Social Work programme are largely in touch with this metropolitan reality as many both have their roots in these neighbourhoods and are also young people themselves: their peer-to-peer position makes them important bridge-builders between research and practice, and between Social Work and the community. With this symposium we wish to question the role of researchers as objective outsiders and highlight the shared space that can be constructed between knowledge institutions, civil society and young people.

Digital competences for social workers – *Jana Verplancke*

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Background and purpose
In an increasingly interconnected and technologically driven world, Social workers play a pivotal role in addressing complex social issues and providing support to vulnerable populations. This research project explores the critical importance of digital competences for Social workers in the 21st century. As digital technologies continue to reshape the landscape of Social Work practice, Social workers must adapt and develop the necessary skills to navigate this digital transformation effectively. Blended Social Work - in which we combine face-to-face and digital contacts - have become part and parcel of our society. We see a growing significance of digital tools and platforms in Social Work, emphasizing their potential to enhance communication, streamline administrative tasks, and expand outreach efforts. These evolutions underscore the need for Social workers to develop a comprehensive set of digital competences to work with their clients in a professional way.

This project aligns with the deinstitutionalization theme of TiSSA 2024 by proposing a framework that empowers Social workers to challenge and transform institutional logics that promote a neo-managerial agenda. By enhancing digital competences, Social workers can more effectively question and subvert the constraints imposed by prevailing Social Work strategies, thereby advocating for the autonomy and social justice values essential in our practice.

This research project analyses which specific digital competences are required for Social workers.It emphasizes the role of ongoing professional development and training to keep Social workers up-to-date with the rapidly evolving digital landscape. In the fields of healthcare and education these competency frameworks have already been developed. Conversely, within the domain of Social Work, the prevailing tendency often centers around the formulation of generalized terms, such as the emphasis on media literacy.
Therefore, our objective is to establish a well-defined framework for digital competences for Social workers.
These competences will not only focus on what is needed anno 2024, but also on the competences to be able to respond to future digital developments.

Presentation of project methodology
Between September 2023 and September 2024, together with the partners of 'Onlinehulp Vlaanderen' , we will develop a framework for digital competences of the Social Worker.
Our approach will be informed by empirical insights drawn from practical experiences in online and blended Social Work, desk research, the European Digcomp framework and the integration of 21st century skills .

Subsequently, this framework will undergo a comprehensive validation process involving representatives from local organisations, civil society and the government. We will concretise this framework in cooperation with the Social Work University Colleges in Flanders.
Finally, we will also refine this framework to competence expectations of employees with a graduate, bachelor's or master's degree.
This project will result in a clear framework for the digital competences of the Social Worker with a refined description of the underlying competences based on knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Lessons learnes and future challenges

- The absence of a well-defined competency framework poses a challenge, as it results in a lack of clarity for professionals, organizations, and government policymakers regarding the expectations to provide sustainable blended/online help and service delivery.

- A comphrehensive framework of digital competences of the Social Worker can inspire quality of recruitment and education, training and learning policies within welfare organizations.
- Although welfare work does not determine the final attainment levels of Social Work courses in higher education, the adoption of this competency framework can serve as a reference point for Social Work programs to consider which competencies they should or should not focus more on within their educational curricula.

Conclusion and implications

Both Social workers and the organizations and governmental entities within which they operate benefit from a clear, concrete and transparent framework for Social workers' digital competences.

Such a framework should not be viewed as a restrictive constraint, but rather as an inspirational tool that initiates a dialogue, from a common basis about the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in Social workers to build a sustainable and methodically sound blended help and service provision.

Take up of children welfare rights – *Martin Wagener & Carole Bonnetier*

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The communication is based on research from a collaboration between univversity (UCLouvain CIRTES) and a researc-actio-training service from the field (RIEPP Asbl) on the non-take-up of ECEC services for young children (0-3 years) and leisure time care (3-12 years). In addition to the lack of available places for children, there is also the question of the quality of these services and their adaptability to the diverse needs of families. Hence the interest in investigating the issue of non-take-up and, more specifically, the issue of non-demand, which allows us to go beyond considerations of accessibility and question the relevance of public provision. Underlying this is the need to adjust the services offered to families, to help reduce the risk of families giving up their rights, and to strengthen the implementation of children's rights.

Intersectionality, agency and take-up of benefits among families living in poverty – *Shlomit Weiss-Dagan*

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Non-take-up of benefits is a common problem in welfare states. Knowledge gaps are a fundamental factor in such non-take-up. Through a critical social structure and agency lens, the objective of the current study was to examine the contribution of different individual and social variables to the access of knowledge on rights among families living in poverty. Specifically, we focused on the intersection of nationality (Arab-Israeli versus Jewish-Israeli) and family structure (single-parent versus two-parent). The findings relied on a secondary analysis of an administrative database.

of a program for families living in poverty. The sample consisted of 1512 families, of whom 839 were Jewish-Israeli and 673 were Arab-Israeli. Our findings showed that nationality and family structure intersected and correlated with families' access to knowledge on rights. Jewish twoparent families had the most economic privileges, but Jewish single-parent families had the highest access to knowledge on rights. Arab single-parent families had the worst economic, personal agency and social support conditions and the lowest access to knowledge on rights. The conclusion of this study is that looking at the non-take-up of benefits through an intersectional lens can help us understand more clearly the social structure barriers preventing take-up.

Caregivers – profession or mission – *Kamila Zdanowicz- Kucharczyk*

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Managing professional family foster care is understood as a certain mission, a vocation, a sacrifice to care for needy children, while less frequently as a professional performance of care and upbringing work. W. Sullivan expresses, that today the professions have never been more important to the well-being of society. If professionals do not feel well, society not feel well either (Brante, 2022). When we think about caregivers in care institutions, we have no doubt that they are qualified, educated educators who professionally take care of children. Preparing for the role of a foster caregiver is also a difficult and training-filled path, however, we are not dealing with education to be a caregiver. Candidates undergo a qualification procedure and a series of training courses. The helping profession defined by E-M. Graf, M. Sator and T. Spranz- Fogasy (2014) as a professional interaction between an expert helper and a client for the purpose of promoting development or solving problems. However, until recently, the category of helping professions, or caring professions was mainly seen as Social workers, or nurses, with no mention of family-type foster care caregivers.
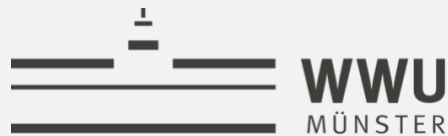
Nowadays, as we move away from the institutionalization of foster care and strive to provide family forms of care, it is worth considering whether to actually pursue the professionalization of professional foster caregivers, or whether to stay in the role of providing family care for needy children.

The main research problem was to consider the purpose of foster caregivers when they undertake to establish family foster care. The research was conducted through problem-focused interviews. The results of the pilot study will be shown.

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