



Abstract

International social work, by *Annamaria Campanini*

The author describes the meaning and the importance of international social work by exploring its definitions, its historical perspectives and the evolution of focus in this broad area. The role and work done also by the international social work bodies and associations (Iassw, Icsw, Ifsw) in developing and promoting the Global agenda will be analysed as an effort to capture the dynamic interplay between global perspectives and local practice. The author considers the challenges for social work education in preparing professionals for future practice.

Key words

International social work, Global agenda, social work education

Life in a time of neoliberalism: social work in England, by *Gary Spolander* and *Linda Martin*

The authors consider the impact of neoliberal economic theory on social work care services in England and highlight the resulting challenges for the profession. In this context the paper seeks to highlight the impact of austerity policies, changes to the role of the state, increasing social inequality and disciplinary action, along with the development of marketised care services on the role and the resulting challenges for social work. They seek to critically consider the implications of neoliberal economic and political policy by concentrating, in particular, on how global capital allocation, the discourse of efficiency and effectiveness along with managerialism for social work practice and supervision.

Key words

Neoliberalism, England, social work, new public management



Social work education and practice in Italy: emerging issues, challenges and concerns, by *Alessandro Sicora*

The author describes social work education and practice in Italy, also in a historical perspective, and locates them in the present structure of the welfare system. Today the main ongoing challenge is to maintain adequate levels of support to individuals and families who are facing increasing difficulties. The role of an adequate social work education is of great importance in this task.

Key words

Social work education, social work practice, welfare mix, neoliberalism

Social work and welfare policy in Romania: history and current challenges, by *Florin Lazar*

Social work in Romania is deeply rooted in the religious charity of the 14th century. Social work education was established in the interwar period. After 25 years of ideologically based banning during the communist regime, social work education and the profession are being re-built, while also facing the challenges of global neoliberalism discourse and its local enacting. The author discusses recent developments and current challenges of social work in Romania.

Key words

Social work, Romania, social work education, history of social work, welfare

Social problems and social work in Russia, by *Irina L. Pervova*

The previous soviet contract between the state and the citizen was based on the obligation of the state to provide care for its citizens, but Russian citizens still have their expectations of the state-supported social services. In the sector of welfare services and care, in Russia significant developments have occurred since the late 1980s. Social services and the training of qualified social workers are key elements in these developments. A number of social services, social centers, social work



specialists have appeared in the last two decades. Higher education training for social workers is a major contributor to these achievements. According to the current legislation, the recipient of social services in Russia is a person or a family in a difficult life situation, defined as a circumstance that contravenes or may damage the livelihood of a citizen (family) and requires professional support and assistance.

Key words

Social work, vulnerable population, social services

Social work in Spain. Social cuts to public arena, by *María-Asunción Martínez-Román* and *Miguel-Ángel Mateo-Pérez*

The human rights are suffering severe cuts made in name of economics adjustments required by international policies. We are in a process of dramatic policy change. Universities and professional social workers are participating together with civil organizations in public debate criticizing the quality – or lack – of such policies.

Key words

Human rights, policy, social workers, structural violence, Spain

Social work in the United States of America, by *John Orwat* and *Amanda Besinger*

Social work in the United States maintains a longstanding history of education and practice on the policy, community, and micro level. Such education and practice is grounded in social justice and is driven by values that distinguish social work from other professions. The authors describe social work in the United States to include education, scope of practice, and the state of the workforce. They conclude with a discussion of trends for the future.

Key words

Social work education, social work in the US, social work practice



Brazilian social work, by *Joana Valente Santana* and *Maria Lúcia Teixeira Garcia*

The authors analyse three aspects of Brazilian social work. First, they provide an overview of Brazil, a country marked by extreme inequality that permeates the economic and social relationships of its population, including rapid contradictory economic growth and the preservation of inequality. Second, they examine the main challenges faced by the country's social workers. Third, they explore whether Brazil's undergraduate and postgraduate programs are oriented toward professional training that fosters a critical, creative, and propositional perspective.

Key words

Social work, Brazil, training policies for professionals

Social work education in Chile: towards a century of history, by *Paula Vidal Molina*

The author provides an overview of the history of social work education transformation in Chile. Starting from the paradigmatic analysis of organizations such as the *Escuela de servicio social* of the University of Chile, the author explores the orientations of social work schools in 1925 to 1960, 1960 to 1973 and 1973 to 2012. The structural reforms introduced by the military dictatorship had important implications for the most prominent Chilean public university and this is best studied through a historic lens which explores the origins, the changes that occurred between 1960 and 1973, and neoliberalism. All these influences have permeated social work education in Chile for almost 90 years.

Key words

Social work, history of Chile, academic background, University of Chile



Social work in Costa Rica: education, knowledge production, professional work, by *Maria Lorena Molina*

The central theme of the paper is social work in Costa Rica. The critical historical analyses conducted by the author explains the conditions in which both this profession and academic education originated and developed. The paper also analyzes the link between the theoretical and the practical training processes and social reality, social policy, and professional responsibilities.

Key words

Social work, university education, professional practice

Social work in South Africa: context, concepts and some critical reflections, by *Lambert K. Engelbrecht* and *Marianne Strydom*

South Africa adopted a social development approach towards social welfare after the first democratic elections of the country in 1994. On a continuum of social service delivery, the primary target group is the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable people. It appears however after two decades of democracy, that social development, as intended in government policies, differs drastically from practice realities. However, strengths imbedded in the social work profession throughout the history of South Africa are shielding social workers from despair and disillusionment that may erode their pride and professionalism.

Key words

South Africa, social development, social welfare, developmental social work

Social work around the world: a comparative perspective, by *Elsabetta Kolar*

Comparing is a way to increase knowledge. In this article the comparison is employed to underline commonalities and differences characterizing social work in the ten countries represented in this special issue. As highlighted in this publication, the form of social work depends on



the cultural and political views of social problems and service recipients, so that the cultural and socio-political framework, the social issues, the social work education and practice become the focus of this paper.

Key words

social work, social policy, social work education, practice, comparison