

## **EASSW REPORT - TO THE IASSW**

**Jan - June 2020**

### **Introduction**

The first semester of 2020 was characterized by the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, that brought to lockdown and measures of restriction of mobility in all European countries, at different levels. Since late February, all EASSW activities moved online, learning new skills and facing the challenges due to the impact related to the pandemic. The main actions of the EASSW was in the consolidation of the new board and implementation of the new structure of working groups, according to the new strategic plan and the organization of the 2021 European Conference on Social Work Education (ECSWE). Some actions to support member schools during the pandemic were also settled. The two days meeting of the Executive Committee of the European Association of Schools of Social Work, planned to be in person in March in Tallinn was held on line.

### **Membership**

The EASSW currently counts ca. 150 school members, divided into 42 countries, with a slight decrease compared to previous years. Special efforts are on the way to contrast this trend, a special working group has been established and countries' contact persons to facilitate contacts and knowledge of countries picture.

### **Implementation of the Strategic and Action plan of the EASSW**

During the past period, the EASSW moved toward the implementation of the new bylaws approved by the General Assembly, in the direction of rising quality, transparency, inclusiveness and partnership in the European region.

Moreover, the new Executive committee *updated the Strategic Plan*, providing an integration to the previous plan, due to its valuable and comprehensive base. A new structure of working groups was also established, to provide EASSW with a clearer and more effective organisation and reference for country coordinators was agreed. The supplement of the Strategic Plan for the period 2020- 2023 was finalised in March 2020 and published on the website. The new Road Map with main goals for the next four years is in preparation and will

be approved in fall 2021. Both the supplement and the road map are open to discussions and proposals by members.

**The 2021 EASSW conference.**

After the decision to assign the organization of conference to the SOGOLAS (School of Governance, Law and Society) of the University of Tallinn, in Estonia, all the needed committee has been established and the works for the preparation on the conference developed. The IV<sup>o</sup> ECSWE (**European conference on social work education**) will be held from **15 to 18 of June 2021**, with the following title **“Innovation and resilience: preparedness of Social work education in uncertain times”**. The following chairs were established: Raymond Kloppenburg (Steering committee), Christos Panagiotopolous and Karmen Toros (Chair of the Scientific committee) and Karmen Toros (Chair of the Local Organising committee). Due to the unknown development of the covid situation and in the light of the results from previous conferences, it was decided to downsize the number of participants, and to try to focus the conference more strictly on topics related to education and social work education. The call for abstract will be launched in August 2020. <https://www.eassw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/EASSW-2021-Conference>

**EASSW series of books in cooperation with the publishing house Springer**

EASSW signed the contract with the publishing company Springer regarding publishing the book “Faces of Social Work Education in Changing Europe” as well as a new series of books with the overall topics on social work education. The book Faces of Social Work Education, bearing chapters from different parts of Europe and the introduction written by Walter Lorenz will be published in early 2021. The EASSW book series, whose editors are Nino Zganec and Marion Laging, was officially launched in the Springer website (<https://www.springer.com/series/16359>) and the first book of the book series (“European Social Work After 1989 East-West Exchanges Between Universal Principles and Cultural Sensitivity”, Lorenz, Walter, Havrdová, Zuzana, Matoušek, Oldřich (Eds.) has been published in May, 2020

**Strategic cooperation with other international organizations**

The EASSW continue the work on strengthening the cooperation with other European social work association. However, due to the pandemic, the project of creating the “European Social Work Coalition”, with the partners from the IFSW Europe, ICSW Europe, FESET, ESWRA and PowerUS, was postponed. EASSW President was invited to open the ESWRA conference in Bucharest and members of EASSW served in the process of abstract reviewing for the Eswra 2020 conference. The ESWRA conference is postponed to 2021, same dates and same place. EASSW president also supported the CareLeavers Network, participating to the international care leavers conference in Bruxelles, in February 2020 (<https://www.eassw.org/16789-2>)

**Representing the IASSW**

The president of the EASSW was invited to attend the celebration of the World Social Work Day in the Palace of Nations in Geneva next March 2020, representing both the IASSW and EASSW. The celebration was canceled.

Members of EASSW Board participated in IASSW committees and task forces and two delegates (Ines Amaro and Raymond Kloppenburg) participated to the KualaLumpur meeting in January 2020. EASSW also engaged in contributing to Global observatory report 2020, related to the social work education in Europe, under the coordination of Aila Leena Matthies from Finland. The consultation regarding the new agenda will be advertised among members.

**Research projects and support for the social work schools**

The EASSW continued to support and to finance small research projects according to its own rules and tradition. Two projects were approved in the first semester of 2020: 1) “How do future social workers perceive the causes of social problems?”, Coordinated by Hallam University, UK, in collaboration with Polten University, Aalborg Universitet, Kobenhavns Professionshøjskole UCC, Koln Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and Alicante University, and 2) “Comparative review of the social work curriculum and its relation to practice. A collaborative project between Finnish and Western Balkan universities”. Coordinated by the University of Tampere, Finland in collaboration with the University of Tirana, the University of Shkoder, the University of Prishtina and the University of South East European.

There are also other possibilities that the EASSW members are supported by e.g. through the available space at the web site of the EASSW, by organization of the regional meetings, by forming of so called “special interest groups” and by nominating of the members to the EASSW advisory board. Regulation and plans to implement and strengthen these opportunities have been identified and will be developed in the following months.

### **Conclusion**

The EASSW continues to be actively involved in current developments concerning the different political, societal and educational matters that have an influence on social work and societies in Europe. We use social media, web site and other channels to communicate with the interested public and to release our statements when needed.

Teresa Bertotti, EASSW President

July, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Teresa Bertotti', is positioned below the printed name.