

The international 'Social Work & Society' Academy (TiSSA) provides a forum for involving professionals and academics in innovative discussion on theory and practice at the cutting edge of the social professions. Its overall aim is to identify how the needs of a wide range of societies experiencing transition can be met through the generation of new knowledge, concepts and models.

The organisers of TiSSA suggest, that socio-economical developments indicate categorically that social work has to deal with its relation to the respective societies in a critical way, in order to build out a clear professional profile for the future, for a renewal of perspectives and to improve its agency. Any site of economic, political and social transition poses a challenge to social professions to reflect on new approaches to social work. In doing so, The international 'Social Work & Society' Academy focuses on

- *promoting a comparative approach to the analysis of social work and society*
- *enhancing the development of knowledge, skills and experience*
- *shaping organisational changes and new governance processes*
- *analysing quality criteria and reflecting on best practice*
- *encouraging the international dissemination and exchange of information on significant developments*

Official partner of TiSSA 2007:



Social Work & Society
The International Online-
Only Journal
www.socwork.net



Research Training Group
„Youth Welfare in Transition“
www.jugendhilfe-im-wandel.de



SocMag
The Social Work & Society
News Magazine
www.socmag.net

Invitation

Professionals, academics, PhD- and high grade final year students from Europe and beyond are invited to join the 5th TiSSA Plenum 2007 in Messina, Italy. Their exchanges will impact on theoretical and practical developments in their countries of origin. The members of the academy will have the potential to become a pool of intellectual and professional resources.

Participant fee for academics and professionals is **150,-€**. Reduced fee for students is **120,-€** including the PreConference of the PhD-Network. All participants are expected to pay for their own board and lodging. The TiSSA executive board will offer advantageous accommodation arrangements for all participants.

For easy online registration as well as further details concerning the papers, the program and organisation please visit our homepage www.TiSSA.net.

How to become a supporter?

TiSSA is an independent organisation. It is international and interdisciplinary and is supported by institutions and individuals, which share its aims and objectives. Universities or institutions willing to support TiSSA or to join the PhD-Network are sincerely invited.

Please contact us:

www.TiSSA.net



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TiSSA 2007

The international 'Social Work & Society' Academy

5th anniversary of TiSSA

**Migration, Minorities
and Refugees
Social Work under the
Condition of Diversity**



5th TiSSA Plenum

August 29 to September 1, 2007

and

**PreConference of
PhD-Network**

August 26 to 28, 2007

in

Messina (Sicily), Italy

Migration, Minorities and Refugees
Social Work under the Condition of Diversity
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Social professions on a global scale have to confront migration as a social fact. They have to address the social consequences of migration while being confronted with discourses of exclusion, forced assimilation and the alleged 'clash of civilizations'. The increasing mobility of people worldwide caused by a variety of reasons is mostly constructed as a social problem, not as a condition for modern societies to be acknowledged and appreciated.

In the enlarged European Union the struggle between the rich and the poor is carried out at the expense of the precarious life circumstances of refugees, minorities and migrants who are expelled to the lowest strata of society. Immigrants still face violent attacks from xenophobic neighbours and the discriminatory attitudes and practices of some local governments.

It is necessary to reduce the sense of isolation many immigrants feel from the majority they live in and from its political institutions. In addition, the realization of citizens' rights of formally equated minorities is to be scrutinised critically. Thus, societies tend to produce hierarchical relationships among the different ethnic, racial and religious groups. The resulting power relations are to be challenged by social professions through

- cross-cultural analysis
- enhancing intercultural competences
- developing principles for new policy approaches.

Based on this knowledge social professions have to avoid the culturalisation of social conflicts. Instead it is the role of social work to analyse how ethnic differences are transformed into social inequalities and to differ between the recognition of diversity and the formation of racism on the interpersonal and structural level.

The prevailing political discourse suggests that the concept of multiculturalism has failed. Social work challenges this discourse based on its own insights and experiences in analysing, confronting and reducing the social mechanisms by which alleged cultural differences are produced by processes of othering. It can only do so effectively, however, if it develops concepts and methods that mainstream intercultural competences and highlight their political dimensions.

The next annual Plenum of The international 'Social Work & Society' Academy (TiSSA) will be devoted to a trans-national exploration of these issues in Sicily, at the cutting edge of European migration conflicts.

PreConference of the PhD-Network
August 26 to 28, 2007

Together with *The international 'Social Work & Society' Academy (TiSSA)* an inter-university PhD-Network has been developed to an inspiring project with an extended international participation. In the course of the annual TiSSA Plenum the PhD-Network organises a three-days PreConference especially for PhD- and high grade final year students.

The PhD-Network of TiSSA

aspires to establish a broad international cooperation of PhD-students in

the field of social professions. Within the structure of TiSSA an active participation in current professional debates is promoted and supported. Emergent scholars get the opportunity to present their dissertation projects in a broad international context and to enlist contacts which are relevant for their research topic. Each year, international professors and experts are attached to the PreConference as 'supervisors' for the PhD-students. Thus a new generation of professionals can acquire and exercise those skills, which are necessary to cope with contemporary challenges of societies in transition and their impact on social services.

Active Participation

Besides the presentations of ongoing doctoral research projects (ODR) during the plenary sessions, there will also be the opportunity to prepare the dissertation project for the group sessions.

Supervisors will give short morning lectures about international social work research and education.

In addition, thematic working groups will allow all participants to prepare for an advanced TiSSA Plenum debate. According to participants' response, the working groups will be based on selected literature and empirical studies. This shared knowledge base will facilitate a common clearing process and thus enhance the analysis of the TiSSA topic.

All PhD students are expected to choose one kind of active participation. For presentations of ODR, the call for papers applies accordingly.

Partner of the PhD-Network:



New Models of Activism
in European Social Work
(PhD_ACT)

First 3rd cycle module for European excellence in PhD-studies of the social professions (ERASMUS CD-Project)
www.uni-bielefeld.de/phd_act/index.html

Call for Papers

The 5th TiSSA Plenum 2007 seeks to analyse the needs and perspectives of social work education, organisation, research and practice concerning „Migration, Minorities and Refugees—Social Work under the Condition of Diversity“. All colleagues are cordially invited to send an abstract.

Submissions can either represent reflected practical experiences, empirical research or theoretical concerns. The international scientific committee will validate all incoming abstracts (1-2 pages). Please follow the abstract guidelines on www.TiSSA.net. Presentations will be limited to 20 minutes. Points for subsequent discussions are welcome.

Location & Organisation

Messina is located in the north-east of the Sicilian coast. As one of the three big cities of Sicily, it has seen different cultures and the movement of many people throughout the centuries. With its old tradition of dealing with diversity and the geographic meaning as European border town nowadays, Messina is *the* place to reflect on current challenges of migration, minorities and refugees for social work and to discuss the perspective of diversity for social professions on a global scale.

Plenary sessions, panel debates and working groups excite the exchange and discussion of current developments and challenges in the social professions. Field visits give the opportunity to meet colleagues from Italy and learn about their approaches and projects of social work. The social program makes it possible to get an idea of the conditions of daily life and to visit tourist attractions-especially in Taormina.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us. We will try our best to support you.

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- **Melanie Abeling** (TiSSA co-ordinator)
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We're looking forward to celebrate the 5th anniversary of TiSSA together with you in Sicily!

5th TiSSA Plenum

Participation fee: 150€ (regular)/ 120€ (students)

Easy-online registration up to July 1st:
www.TiSSA.net

Submission of abstracts up to July 1st:
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