

## **International Policy Practice Meeting 17 October 2023, 18:00 CEST (Zoom)**

The expert committee for political social work of the German Association of Social Work (DGSA) in collaboration with the Institute of Social Work and Social Spaces (IFSAR) at the Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences invites all interested students, scholars, and social workers to participate in the fourth International Policy Practice Meeting. This event will be a good opportunity to get in touch with politically interested and engaged social workers from different countries, discuss various professional options to bring about change in social policy, and to learn from outstanding researchers in the field of political social work. The meeting will last about three hours and consists of the following four presentations:

### **Luisa Klöckner (Cologne University of Applied Sciences)**

Political Action in Social Work from the Perspective of Political Difference

This presentation provides insights into an empirical study, which explores a post-foundational perspective on political action in social work. For this purpose, a qualitative research of the professional campaign #dauerhaftsystemrelevant was conducted in 2021. The discussion around political action in social work is used as a part of the theoretical framework of the thesis and will also be outlined during this presentation. Subsequently, postfoundational theories of political difference are used to introduce a contingency-sensitive and hegemony-critical perspective on social work, its relationship to politics and its political action. Furthermore, exemplary insights will be given into a content-analysis of publications of the campaign and interviews with campaign activists. Simultaneities and movements in the campaign activities between 'politics' and 'the political' will be pointed out. The results show that the concept of political difference can be used as an analytical continuum of social workers political actions. This offers a new possibility of interpreting and discussing political actions in social work, based on a post-foundational perspective.

### **Agnieszka Zogata-Kusz (Palacký University Olomouc)**

Towards the theory of policy practice in social work

Although there are a few publications in social work academic discipline that offer theoretical perspectives applicable to policy engagement of social workers, there has not been any theory of policy practice in social work developed yet. Founding on existing theories, mainly of policy process, in particular punctuated equilibrium theory and institutional development, this contribution presents the first attempt to construct such a theory.

### **John Gal (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) & Idit Weiss-Gal (Tel Aviv University)**

When Social Workers Impact Policy and Don't Just Implement It

In this lecture we will present an evidence-based theoretical framework for understanding why social workers engage in policy, both as professionals and citizens, and the impact of their actions. Drawing on concepts from social work and the political, sociological, psychological and the policy sciences, the Policy Engagement framework consists of four categories of factors that impact the engagement of social workers in diverse policy routes. The categories are Environments, Opportunity, Facilitation and Motivation. We will present the various categories and their components, describe the links between them and discuss their impact on the decisions by social workers to engage in policy change.

### **Simone Leiber (University of Duisburg-Essen) & Sigrid Leitner (Cologne University of Applied Sciences)**

A corporatist route of policy engagement? Lessons from the German case"

Corporatist forms of policy making are characterized by a standardized legislative process involving a range of selected stakeholders or interest groups, mainly represented by collective actors. In social policy, these stakeholders include welfare associations and other social interest groups, such as self-organized groups of (potential) social work clients. While social workers empower clients to speak for themselves, self-organized groups of social work clients are clearly not organizations of social work. But what about welfare associations? To what extent can they be classified as collective actors of social work, and do they offer an alternative route of policy engagement for social workers in corporatist welfare states? The presentation will address these questions theoretically and empirically by using the German welfare associations as an example of a corporatist route of policy engagement.

### **Registration and contact**

The meeting will be held online. Please register using the form on <http://www.policypractice.net>. You will receive a Zoom access code a few days before the event. We look forward to seeing you online. Contact: [tobias.kindler@ost.ch](mailto:tobias.kindler@ost.ch)