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EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF USERS' INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIAL WORKERS' TRAINING

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Summary

This report compiles extracts from several sources to provide an overview of the European context of user involvement in social work training. The extracts quoted allow us to identify the context of user involvement in the field of social work in Europe. They highlight the orientations of school associations regarding the involvement of users in social work education and existing practices. A selective bibliography allows us to identify numerous analyses of the feedback, obstacles and perspectives of user participation

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1. EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF USER INVOLVEMENT IN PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES

1.1 USERS AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN PERSONAL SOCIAL SERICES

1.1.1 Definition of Personal Social Services (PPS)

This is a difficult term to define satisfactorily in a European context and even more so when used internationally. Within Europe there are important differences between regions e.g. between Nordic and Mediterranean countries. In the former there remains a strong emphasis on public provision, while in the latter traditional family responsibility for care is still more evident. To varying degrees changes in the role of women has impacted significantly on the need for and supply of social care services. (…)

A recurring question concerns the extent to which PSS are distinct from or similar to services provided within health, education, employment and social protection services. This is reflected in changing organisational structures, ranging for example from separate local authority departments for PSS – the 'PSS are distinctive' model – to arrangements where PSS are seen as essentially servicesprovided as part of a portfolio of services provided by health, social, protection, employment etc. Evers' (2003) view in his commissioned paper is that:

> 'Social services include all services that are (a) considered to be of special importance for society on the whole and where (b) personal interaction between providers and users has a key role. Using such a broad definition, health, education, occupational integration and cultural services become as well part of the picture beyond the usual three fields of child day care, care services for the elderly and various small areas of services for problem groups'.

There are differing views as to whether the distinctive or broad definition of PSS is the most appropriate. Note that in this report the shorter term 'social services' is sometimes used interchangeably with the term PSS.

1.1.2 USERS' INVOLVEMENT

Heikkila and Julkunen (2003) in their commissioned paper refer to Dahlberg and Vedung's arguments for increasing user involvement:

- The responsive organisation provides better quality services
- Service efficiency is increased
- The imbalance between users and the administration is changed (empowerment argument)
- The service system gains greater legitimacy
- Users become more confident and self-reliant
- Involvement is education in democracy.

Of course, users of PSS are not a homogeneous, undifferentiated group of citizens. They vary according to many significant characteristics so that some forms of involvement in PSS may be possible and suitable for one group but not another.

1.3 DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATION AND USER INVOLVEMENT

The term 'user involvement' is itself rather bland and needs to be examined within its context of democracy and the rationale for citizen participation in society.

1.3.1 DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

It is important to understand the subject of this report within its historical and political context. It can be argued that the roots of user involvement go back as far as the origins of democracy in Greek and Roman culture with their democratic practice of (some) citizens debating and deciding the important issues of the day on a mass debating and voting basis. This sounds attractive to many present-day alienated citizens in Western representative democracies but participation in Athenian democracies was confined to the more privileged groups

Member states of the Council of Europe are more familiar with 'representative democracy', although some have a much shorter experience than others. In Western European countries two sharply contrasting trends have emerged in recent years. On the one hand, citizen participation in democracy as seen in willingness to vote in local, national and European elections has – with some exceptions – declined to an almost alarming extent. There is now talk of introducing compulsory voting (e.g. as in Australia). On the other hand, demands by citizens to have a great

involvement in major public services such as health, education and social services have grown stronger. This contrast is probably and understandably not evident to anything like the same extent in the newer democracies in Central and Eastern Europe.

Since the end of World War II, there have been two distinct periods of 'grass roots' interest and activity to increase citizen participation and involvement as democratic rights. Internationally, the first period began in the late 1960s with fierce student protests in America, Paris and elsewhere against bureaucratic, non-participatory forms of higher education. This movement broadened into a lengthy period of community protest in the USA and in many parts of Europe, with local groups often using militant methods to achieve a greater degree of involvement and power in local political and services decision-making. Attempts by the authorities to offer limited forms of participation were usually rejected as tokenistic, as seen in the translated version of the Paris students' graffiti: "I participate, you participate, we participate–they profit".

This phase in the participation/involvement struggle achieved important but still limited gains, and declined with the near demise of left-wing politics in Western European countries during the economic crisis for capitalism in the late 1970s. The second more recent phase in this region started at a more indeterminate time in the 1980-90 period and is associated with the growth of 'third way' politics, the growing popularity of 'communitarianism (Etzioni 1995) and a widespread critique of both the paternalism of the traditional professions and the bureaucratic institutions in which they mostly practised. The growing importance and influence of markets have also played a major part in these developments. This continuing period has seen the growth of user movements in, for example, health and social welfare with accommodating responses from both the professions and the service organisations.

Countries in Central and Eastern Europe have rather different histories with a voice for the user only emerging as legitimate post-1989. Previously 'the state knew best' with individuals' needs and any service response determined by the prevailing 'communist' ideology. User involvement in countries in this region remains relatively weak due to the continuation of a dependency culture and the sheer pressure of the material needs of typical users of social services.

Hambleton and Hoggett (1998) amongst others have analysed this phenomenon in Western Europe – tracing its development from the 1970s to the present day They plot the different ideological and more pragmatic responses to the root problem of unresponsive public service bureaucracies, with explanation of the significance of the terms

client/consumer/user/customer/citizen. In his commissioned paper for the project Evers (2003) conducted a similar review, drawing out the implications for user involvement in the PSS. This is now considered in detail below.

Heikkila and Julkunen suggest it is important to distinguish between user participation, user involvement, and user empowerment. Participation is the weakest term as users are only partially involved and serve more as informants. User involvement always entails that the users' activity has an impact on the service process in some way. User empowerment may be seen as the most radical form of involvement as it may entail professionals giving up their power and control, with services being truly run and controlled by users. This rarely happens. A weaker but still important meaning of empowerment may refer, for example, to the power that follows users gaining more knowledge, information and skills.

1.3.2 Current strands in the debate concerning user involvement in social services

"Evers identifies five main strands of thinking on welfare and social services. The strands are: Welfarism, Professionalism, Consumerism, Managerialism, Participationism. Each is considered in turn together with their implications for different approaches to user involvement in social services."

"It is not argued that in any one country welfare thinking is dominated by just one strand of thinking. In reality, there are mixtures of strands – or mixed governance of social services – with changes and varying emphases over time. This is evident, for example, in countries in Central and Eastern Europe with their post-1989 break from the domination of state welfare and the development of democracy, civil society and citizens' rights. In most European countries, governments – to varying degrees – have a social policy preference for mixed economies of welfare and social services that open up a greater range of involvement possibilities for users. (…) These include seeing users as :

- citizens with rights and entitlements, central to real as opposed to token user involvement
- consumers to be empowered and protected, with choice and exit possibilities
- customers whose needs, views and preferences must be taken into account in well managed, modern public service organisations

- co-producers who take up their civic roles and concerns as members of communities in cooperating with service managers and professionals or by building their own services.

It should be emphasised that civil society with its associations and non-state social service providers has assumed great significance, particularly in most Western European countries but now in many Central and Eastern European countries. Civil society enables users also to act as producers of care services – a third sector along with the state and markets."

1.3.4 COMMON BARRIERS TO USER INVOLVEMENT

"Real sustained progress in user involvement requires awareness of the main obstacles to progress and how these may be overcome. (…) The following principal obstacles or barriers to user involvement are identified :

- Political/legal : There is either no legal provision for users' rights to be involved or legislation is inadequate.(…)
- Administrative : Unclear goals in the administration and lack of knowledge of successful methods for user involvement can form potential barriers. The classic form of bureaucracy can be implicitly (subtly) – if not explicitly – opposed to more than token involvement by service users.(…)
- Professional : (…) Two factors are particularly influential. Firstly, the continuing uncertainty in social work concerning its professional identity and status. Insecurity in social workers may well make them less inclined to be too open with users. Secondly, user involvement may be seen as an unwelcome additional demand on the time and energy of social services staff who are already hard pressed.
- Language : There are two potential language barriers to effective user involvement. Increasingly the first language of the social worker and the service user may not be the same so that it is essential that an interpreter service is readily available. (…) Moreover, some professional language may be over-technical and mystifying to many users, creating a serious barrier to good communication and joint working.
- Personal : Heikkila and Julkunen refer to how personal barriers can be traced to different attitudes and different views on involvement (…).
- Resources The point has been made earlier that genuine user involvement involves significant costs for both service providers and users. Either party may not wish or be able to afford these costs. For service providers costs are principally staff time and

associated costs attached to different user involvement systems and methods. For users there may be (unrecognised) financial costs plus non-monetary time, energy and the giving up of alternative uses of time involved in participation".

1.3.5 EU RECOMMANDATIONS

To overcome these obstacles, the report proposes several recommendations. One of them is directly related to the training of social workers

"Staff training should be provided to ensure the success of user involvement in social services. Training in modern user involvement principles and practice should be included both in initial professional training and in later in-service courses. Inadequately trained staff may otherwise seriously impede the implementation of an agency's user involvement program".

2. EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF USERS' INVOLVEMENT IN SOCIAL WORKERS' TRAINING

The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) is the worldwide organization of schools of social work and educators. It has represented the interests of social work education and the values of the profession globally for nearly 90 years. In this perspective, it develops policies and programmes. These include a concern for user participation.

2.1 USERS' INVOLVEMENT IN IASSW POLICIES

The IASSW in collaboration with International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has adopted a revised Global Definition of Social Work (2.1.1), a Declaration of Ethical Principles for Social Work (2.1.2) and Global Standards for Education and Training of the Social Work Profession (2.1.3) . In each of these documents, user participation is mentioned.

2.1.1 GLOBAL DEFINITION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

The following definition was approved by the IASSW General Assembly and IFSW General Meeting in July 2014:

"Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people.

Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.
The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels".

The participatory methodology advocated in social work is reflected in "Engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing." As far as possible social work supports working with rather than for people.

2.1.2 Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles

The following diagram summarises the Ethical Principles of Global Social Work.

Among the ethical principles of global social work is the promotion of the right to participation (n°5)

“5.1 Social workers work towards building the self-esteem, and the capabilities of people, resourcing people to participate fully on their societies, and promoting their full involvement and participation in decisions and actions that affect their lives.

5.2 Social workers contribute to the creation of meaningful spaces and processes for people’s participation in the formulation of policies.

5.3 Social workers promote the inclusion of people who are excluded from participating or benefiting from resources due to (discrimination).”

2.1.3 Global Agenda for Social Work and Social development

The Global Agenda is a joint initiative of the International Association of Schools of <social Work (IASSW – President Anamaria Campanini), the International Concil on Social Welfaire (ICSW – President Eva Holmberg Herrström) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW – president Silvana Marinez).

The global agenda affirms the objective of Co-building Inclusive Social Transformation. In this perspective, it specifies the following elements:

“Globally, nationally and regionally the professions of social work and social development together with our partners, will actively work with people, communitiesand social movements to advance a 10-year agenda of:

‘Co-building inclusive social transformation’

As global bodies with active membership in all countries, we recognize and commit to celebrating the strengths of all people and promoting their active role in leading sustainable development. We commit to working together to co-design and co-build thriving communities and societies for people and the environment.

Fostering the active participation of all voices, particularly those often marginalized, isat the core for the profession of social work and social development and is essential to co-design and co-build inclusive social transformation.

This would include the development of new social agreements between governmentsand the populations they serve that facilitate universal rights, opportunities, freedomand sustainable well-being for all people nationally and globally.

The role of the social work and social development in advancing and creating new platforms and spaces for all peoples, is of paramount importance for these new socialagreements to emerge.

The Global Agenda 2020-2030 is anchored in these commitments."

2.1.4 Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training

In the Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training, IASSW and IFSW precises:

"With regards to service user involvement Schools must:

- Incorporate the rights, views and interests of Service Users and broader communities served in its operations, including curriculum development, implementation and delivery.
- Develop a proactive strategy towards facilitating Service User involvement in all aspects of design, planning and delivery of study programmes.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made in order to support the involvement of Service Users.

Also aspire to:

- Create opportunities for the personal and professional development of Service Users involved in the study programme."

2.2 EUROPEAN EXPERIENCES OF USER PARTICIPATION IN THE TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS

2.2.1 Diverse organisations and models

Each European country has a specific organisation of social work education. Social work education in Europe is rooted in different legislation and social systems in different countries. Nevertheless, it has some similar structures that produce more or less identical degrees. The core knowledge does not differ much, but the variety is in the duration, organisation and placements.

Social work education takes place in the higher education system, and the status of social work education differs in the various national education systems. "In most countries, it is situated in

a singular and paradoxical position within the higher education system, being outside of universities while at the same time coming closer and closer to them. Social work education is fully recognised by universities, as in Iceland, Ireland, Sweden, the UK, Finland, Italy, Portugal and Spain. With regard to social work, Ireland and the UK offer the possibility of a first qualification in social work for both graduates and non-graduates. Only four countries (Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) offer more specialised studies in relation to the profession. In many other countries, students receive a general qualification that formally provides them with the skills required for a wide range of social work practices. However, this is the result of a long and controversial process of moving from specialisation to greater generalisation. Countries such as Germany, Ireland and the UK have adopted a more generalised approach, and the result is considered in these countries (but also in others) to be highly contested.

Only a few countries do not have a centralised management of social work education (Germany, Iceland, Italy, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, etc.), the most centralised form of control seems to exist in Ireland and the UK; in these countries the National Council of Social Workers (CCETSW) closely monitors the requirements and content of courses, as well as diplomas and degrees. Some countries regulate social work education by law (Denmark, Finland, France or Spain), while others (Austria, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden) still delegate responsibility for supervision and legislation to the Ministry of Education, Health or other specific departments (Norway, Turkey). Such bodies set knowledge requirements, either through the appointment of external examiners (in Norway) or, as in Ireland and the UK, through entry requirements, criteria and examinations, validation and recognition of professional levels and diplomas."

2.2.2 MULTIPLES INITIATIVES

Despite this diversity, there is a strong trend across Europe towards the development of multiple training pathways that are denser, more adapted to the diversity of learners and more open to participation. This was the finding of the UNAFORIS-EASSW international congress (Altweg-Boussac & Ward, 2019) "Social Work Education, Shifting the Lines for a Sustainable Future", which brought together more than a thousand participants from all over the world on 27, 28 and 29 June 2017. Organised with the central involvement of PowerUs, a key player promoting the participation of "relevant resource persons" in education and research, this congress provided

an opportunity to capture a large number of current issues for both education and the social professions.

Inclusive participation is now seen as a keystone of educational innovation. From this perspective, several initiatives presented at the colloquium emphasise the construction of professionalisation paths with and by the resource persons concerned:

- “In this perspective, several initiatives presented at the colloquium emphasise the construction of professionalisation pathways with and by the resource persons concerned: "pathways enabling the resource persons concerned to participate in the construction and analysis of the intervention by creating places for joint reflection with the students. We should mention, among others, the experience of creative mediation groups involving the people concerned, mentioned by Patricia Gayard-Guégan, a French trainer, as well as the "legislative theatre" which involves a diversity of participants (Caroline Burgy, training manager, Mulhouse Higher Social Institute, France);
- Internship tutorials by relevant resource persons: Norwegian experiences are particularly interesting in this area, including those presented by teacher Marianne Saestrang Lunde and colleagues (VID, Oslo, Norway), who emphasise the need to involve all participants in the planning process and throughout the practical experience. The team at the University of Esslingen in Germany has conducted numerous experiments along these lines (Laging & Heidenrich, 2017);
- The notion of a 'service learning project', developed by teacher Gordon Vincenti (Arhus College, Denmark), focuses on developing 'social capital' in a vulnerable local population by directly involving students. This model requires particular attention to the construction of a partnership cooperation process. It is reminiscent of the notion of "qualifying site" developed in the French-speaking world.
- In France, a typology of the various known and already implemented professionalisation methods was proposed by Florence Fondeville, research and development project manager (CRFMS ERASME, France), and Julien Catalan, head of social training at EMAP (Reunion Island). This paper reports on a collective work carried out within UNAFORIS showing the different forms that the professionalisation of learners can take, beyond the internship. It considers both the inclusive and participative dimensions, the different forms of innovative IN SITU activities in social intervention organisations

(aiming to work on gesture, posture, the ethical dimension), but also the experience and the civic life of the learners. New possibilities for developing modes of professionalisation are thus appearing in connection with the territory, with a problem or with certain specific audiences. In many respects, these reflections are in line with the analyses carried out in particular in the countries of the North.

Through these different trends, we see that the participation of resource persons is taking shape. Indeed, all the forms of participation identified by Peter Beresford (Beresford & Carr, 2012) are innovative, as they require a rethink of the posture of the training actors and the introduction of lasting change in the relationships within the training team and with the partners.

Numerous presentations on the scope of citizenship, the challenges and limits of participation allowed for debates on epistemological and ethical issues or on the guarantees of a favourable terrain for participation. It is a question of the levers for encouraging participation while respecting the dignity of the people, but also of the obstacles and resistance encountered. The interventions heard on this subject go far beyond simple testimony.

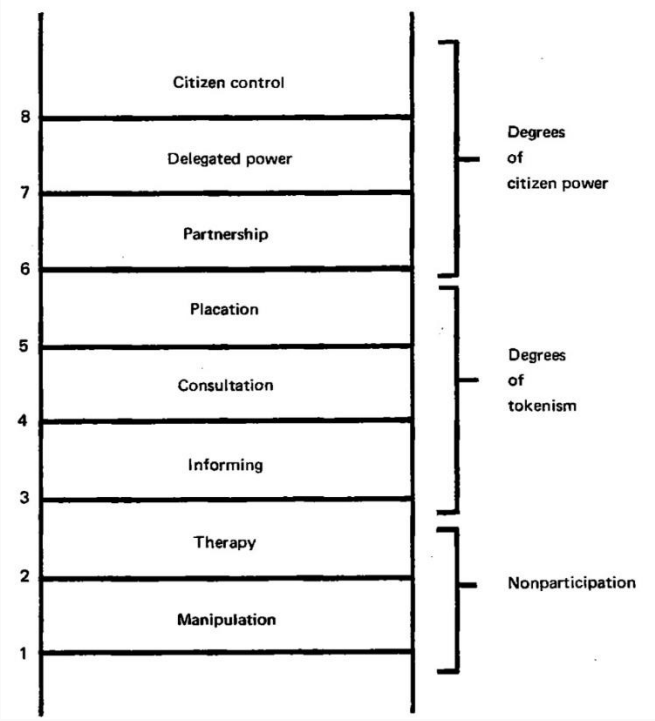
(...)

More ambitiously, participation leads to the development of a new paradigm for training, through the construction of an in-depth consultative process. In the Netherlands, the reference framework was reconstructed thanks to a nationwide consultation in three stages (following the "Delphi" method) involving all the players (resource persons concerned, field players, trainers) brought together in various forms of decision-making groups. This work, which is remarkable for its rigorous methodology and respect for the participatory process, was presented by Raymond Kloppenbourg, Professor of Social Work (Hogeschool Utrecht, Netherlands).” (Altweg-Boussac & Ward, 2019)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the report identifies a strong trend across Europe: the development of multiple training pathways that are more open to user and student participation.

Several authors have developed typologies aimed at modelling the diversity of actions carried out. One example is Arnstein's scale for citizen participation. Proposed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969, the Ladder of Citizen Participation is one of the most widely referenced and influential models in the field of democratic public participation (Arstein, 1969).



More specifically in the field of training, a group of authors (Rud, Colligan & Naik, 2006 : 11) propose a scale for student participation.

Finally Philippe Lebailly, on the basis of the analysis of various pedagogical programmes, suggests the following typology :

- Approaches that aim to particularly integrate experiential knowledge within education ; Approaches that aim at changing relationships and reducing distance between professionals and service users ;
- Approaches that tend to facilitate common intervention, co-construction and codecision amongst students, service users and professionals ;
- Approaches that aim at involving service users in the plan, the organisation and staff of the educational institution.

These typologies are not exhaustive but, by grouping together various forms of participation, they make it possible to propose a framework of analysis to best develop collaborative activities

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1. European Framework of User Involvement in Personal Social Service

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2. European framework of users' involvement in social workers' training

2.1 Users' involvement in IASSW policies

2.1.1 Global Definition of the Social Work Profession

Global Definition of Social Work — IASSW-AIETS.org

2.1.2 Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles

Global-Social-Work-Statement-of-Ethical-Principles-IASSW-27-April-2018-01-English.pdf

2.1.3 Global Agenda for Social Work and Social development

GlobalAgenda-Press-Release-.pdf

2.1.4 Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training

IASSW-Global_Standards_Final.pdf (iassw-aiets.org)

2.2 European experiences of user participation in the training of social workers

2.2.1 Diverse organisations and models

Jovelin, E. (2014). Le travail social en Europe. Quelles formations, quelles pratiques, quels modèles ?. *VST - Vie sociale et traitements*, 122, 26-32. https://doi.org/10.3917/vst.122.0026

2.2.2 Multiples initiatives

Altwegg-Boussac, C. & Ward, J. (2019). Innovations et participation des personnes ressources concernées, une dynamique européenne : retour sur un congrès de grande ampleur. *Vie sociale*, 25-26, 27-42. https://doi.org/10.3917/vsoc.191.0027

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Munday, B. (2003) State or Civil Society? Social Care in Central and Eastern Europe Canterbury: European Institute of Social Services, University of Kent.

Rudd, T., Colligan, F., & Naik, R. (2006). Futurelab: Learner voice handbook. (PDF) Futurelab: Learner voice handbook (researchgate.net)

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON SERVICE USERS' PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN EUROPE

Anghel, R. & Ramon S. (2009) Service users and carers' involvement in social work education: lessons from an English case study, European Journal of Social Work, 12:2, 185-199, DOI: 10.1080/13691450802567416
Within the larger context of the search to improve social work practice in Europe, this article presents a case study of a UK innovation in social work education with the potential to radically change social work practice. Following governmental requirements, Anglia Ruskin University has introduced systematic involvement of service users and carers in the training of a new undergraduate degree since September 2003. The conceptual and value base, the structure, staffing, and main activities are outlined; the main achievements and obstacles are highlighted. Mindful of the danger of slipping into tokenistic involvement, the project has included an action research evaluation component exploring the views of all the project's stakeholders thus establishing the project as an evidence-based educational innovation. The findings highlight the value of service users and carers' involvement on the qualifying social work degree, of the action research design of the evaluation, and the steps needed for the cultural change required for such an involvement to become more comprehensive and embedded in the degree.

Askheim, O. P., Beresford, P., & Heule, C. (2017). Mend the gap–strategies for user involvement in social work education. *Social Work Education*, *36*(2), 128-140.
A major strand in social work's history has been its paternalistic character, partly due to a philanthropic tradition, but also to the tendency to import an individualist expert model into social work practice. As a result, gaps have arisen between expert and experiential knowledge. In this article, so called 'gap mending strategies' developed by the international network PowerUs are discussed. PowerUs consists of teachers and researchers from schools of social work and representatives from service user organizations in nine European countries. The gaps as the network identifies them are presented and we share some processes within our practices that mend or maintain gaps between service users and professionals. Two main strategies will be explored in more detail—a strategy that has been developed in the UK of mainstreaming service user participation in all stages of social work education, and a strategy that has been developed in Scandinavia of developing joint courses for social work students and students from service user organizations. A main conclusion is that alliances between educational institutions and service user organizations will be important to get a fuller understanding of what gaps we are facing and how they best could be mended.

Brown, K., & Young, N. (2008). Building capacity for service user and carer involvement in social work education. *Social Work Education*, *27*(1), 84-96.
Requirements set out for the social work degree and post-qualifying framework specify the involvement of service users and carers on a number of levels. Research indicates that service user and carer involvement can benefit students, professionals and service users and carers themselves. To keep up with demands placed on service users and carers by higher education institutions and other social work bodies, the issue of capacity needs to be addressed. This paper describes a programme (Getting Involved) designed by Skills for Care to build capacity to participate among service users and carers new to social work education. It describes the experience of piloting the programme in Dorset by a team at Bournemouth University consisting of service users and carers and staff from the Centre for Post-Qualifying Social Work. Getting Involved is a welcome development and the outcomes of the pilot have been

extremely positive for all involved. The process of undertaking and evaluating the pilot raised issues concerning setting up programmes, project management, service users and carers as co-researchers and sustainability. These are discussed in terms of our experience and how they link with the literature. Lessons learnt and implications for similar work in the future are highlighted.

Chiapparini, E. (2016). *The service user as a partner in social work projects and education: Concepts and evaluations of courses with a gap-mending approach in Europe* (p. 144). Verlag Barbara Budrich.
To become a competent social worker it is essential to know the perspective of the service users. Therefore, service users are more and more included in field research projects and the instruction of social workers to-be. However, they are usually reduced to the role of informants and not actively taking part as co-partners. For the first time, this anthology gives an overview of courses in which service users and students share their experiences and work together on the same level using gapmending methods. The applications and evaluations of these courses in different European countries are discussed in this volume.
Microsoft Word - chiapparini_gesamt (oapen.org)

Cossar, J., & Neil, E. (2013). Service User Involvement in Social Work Research: Learning from an Adoption Research Project. British Journal of Social Work, 45(1), 225-240. doi:10.1093/bjsw/bct108
Service user involvement in research has triggered debate about epistemology, power relationships between researchers and participants, ethics and the validity of research findings. The social work profession encourages respect for service users and promotion of their rights—values which arguably should be reflected in social work research. This paper presents a case study of service user involvement in a government-funded adoption research project. The research team included a birth relative consultant group and the paper discusses both the process and outcomes of their involvement. The benefits and costs of service user involvement are highlighted. Reflections from the consultants about their experiences of being involved in the research are included. The discussion positions the project in relation to existing theories and models of service user involvement.

Duffy, J. (2012). Service user involvement in teaching about conflict–an exploration of the issues. *International Social Work*, *55*(5), 720-739.
Service user involvement is now a well embedded feature of social work education in the United Kingdom. Whilst many education institutions have fully embraced the involvement of service users in teaching, there is still work to be done in more fully engaging with service users who are seldom heard. This article highlights the opportunities and challenges associated with innovative work being piloted in Northern Ireland where victims and survivors of political conflict are routinely involved in teaching social work students about the impact of conflict on their lives.

Goossen C. & Austin M. J. (2017) Service User Involvement in UK Social Service Agencies and Social Work Education, Journal of Social Work Education, 53:1, 37-51, DOI: 10.1080/10437797.2016.1246271
Forming partnerships with service users became a requirement for social work education programs in the United Kingdom as of 2003, leading to the development of innovative approaches to social work education that involve service users as experts who are helping to teach the future generation of social workers. This article examines the perceptions of service user involvement and how it is implemented in the United Kingdom in the social service sector and the university setting, and concludes with implications for the United States.

Hatton, K. (2017). A critical examination of the knowledge contribution service user and carer involvement brings to social work education. *Social Work Education, 36*(2), 154-171.
Service user/carer involvement in social work education is supported by the Health Care Professions Council and currently, by the Department of Health. It is generally seen as beneficial but the reasons why this may be the case are often under-theorised and seen as un-problematic. This article seeks to provide a theoretical justification for an approach which values involvement as central to educational practice. It begins by looking at models of participation and how they can help us understand processes of involvement. It suggests that to move beyond tokenistic approaches we need to develop an approach which is based on equality and partnership. Drawing on European approaches to social pedagogy, particularly those utilising 'the Common Third', and debates around creativity and social power the article articulates an approach based on the co-production of curricula and assessment artefacts. This, the paper suggests, tests the students ability to empathise and communicate with people using services and utilises the latters' personal expertise to bring the curricula alive. The article outlines a theory of creativity, inclusion and power which the author believes validates the approach developed and which provides a model for evaluating the real level of recognition given to the service user/carer voice within the educational process, particularly in social work education. It is suggested that such an approach is consistent with the social work professions' commitment to the promotion of social justice and social change.

Heffernan, K. (2008). Responding to global shifts in social work through the language of service user and service user involvement. International Journal of Social Welfare, 18(4), 375-384. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2397.2008.00614.x
'Service user' advisory representation is required by law and/or regulation in British social, health and educational programmes. This is similar to client counsels or consumer groups in the USA, which are required in some, but not all, US social service sectors. Often users of welfare services are excluded from citizenship – both formally and in terms of actual restraints on their citizenship rights. There remains uncertainty, however, about how best to identify and enable such individuals to participate in service user involvement without continued marginalisation. This study seeks to contribute to our emerging understanding of service user initiatives by exploring preferred terms of reference and service user involvement from the point of view of persons often categorised as service users by social policy, health and social care providers and academics, but who do not necessarily take part in self-organised service user groups.

Humphreys, C. (2005). Service user involvement in social work education: a case example. Social Work Education, 24(7), 797-803
The financial resources provided by the General Social Care Council (GSCC) which supports the education and registration of social workers, has allowed for an increase in user involvement in social work programmes in England and Wales. This article discusses the sources of knowledge appropriate for social workers and social care workers including the significance of the service user knowledge base for social work theory and practice. A project is described which involved students in a consultation process with service users whose role it was to contribute to the students' learning in a particular area, specifically understanding their experience of social workers and the issues of discrimination which they faced and the processes which were helpful in resisting oppression.

Irvine, J., Molyneux, J., & Gillman, M. (2015). 'Providing a link with the real world': Learning from the student experience of service user and carer involvement in social work education. *Social Work Education, 34*(2), 138-150.
Social work has long placed an emphasis on involving users and carers in the education of practitioners, an emphasis driven by service users and carers themselves, the value base of social work, and by policy and legislation from successive governments and regulatory bodies. Recent changes in regulation and professional standards in social work suggest a continuing commitment to service user and carer involvement. This paper argues that in order to ensure a sustainable commitment, there needs to be greater evidence of the value and purpose of such involvement. Whilst there is a considerable body of literature on this issue in social work education, little focus is on any impact on current and future practice of social work students. The paper discusses a research project addressing this issue from the perspective of social work students. Findings suggest that the involvement of service users and carers in their training was perceived by students as overwhelmingly positive, should be enhanced and that they believed that these experiences were taken forward in their practice. The paper also identifies key points that could inform best educational practice.

Laging, M. "Service User Involvement in Social Work Education". *Sozial Extra* 42, 57–60 (2018). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12054-018-0027-1
The inclusion of addressees in the teaching of social work shows a variety of positive effects for the students and the addressees. Nevertheless, the success and sustainability of SUI projects are linked to a variety of structural conditions.

Laging, M. & Heidenreich, T. (2019) Towards a Conceptual Framework of Service User Involvement in Social Work Education: Empowerment and Educational Perspectives, Journal of Social Work Education, 55:1, 11-22, DOI: 10.1080/10437797.2018.1498417
A topic that has recently gained widespread attention in social work education is service user involvement (SUI), a term denoting the call to include users of social work services in teaching social work students. Despite the widespread use of the term SUI, this label includes a wide variety of approaches with different aims and scopes. A conceptual framework that distinguishes empowerment from educational perspectives in current SUI approaches is proposed, and a number of elements that should be discussed in each of these perspectives are introduced: theoretical background, role and tasks of the institution, areas of implementation and role of service users, and effects of SUI and their assessment. Implications for further SUI projects and research approaches are discussed.

Laging, M., & Heidenreich, T. (2017). Service user involvement in social work education: experiences from Germany and implications for a European perspective. European Journal of Social Work, 20(3), 387-395. doi:10.1080/13691457.2017.1283586
Service user involvement (SUI) in social work education has gained widespread attention in Europe and other continents. Nevertheless, experiences on including service users in social work education have not been reported from Germany or other German-speaking countries to date. This paper reports preliminary experiences with implementing SUI in a bachelor's programme of social work in a German University of Applied Sciences. The main goals of the current paper are (1) to provide a background for implementing service user approaches in Germany by introducing the structure of social work education in Germany; (2) to report experiences from a weekend seminar where service users worked together with students of social work in the framework of a curriculum of a German University of Applied Sciences and (3) to formulate some implications of these experiences for SUI across Europe. The main results were that introducing service user involvement into a German curriculum of social work is

possible but needs careful reflection and planning. Experiences gathered in the weekend seminar with service users were encouraging for service users, students and teachers. We conclude that systematically implementing SUI into German curricula of social work is important.

Lebailly, P. (2019). Issues, modalities, and conditions of participation in social work education: A report on practices in France and Europe. Vie sociale, no 25-26(1), 143-158. https://doi.org/10.3917/vsoc.191.0143
This article presents the lessons learned from experiences in France and Europe, in particular within the framework of the PowerUs network and a European Interreg project carried out by four training institutes in the Pyrenean regions of Occitania and Catalonia. Two essential issues about participation are presented: the recognition of experiential knowledge as knowledge in its own right, and the reduction of the gaps between professionals and service users (referring to PowerUs's "Mend the Gap" concept). A typology of the different techniques identified in these participation practices will aim to show the diversity and richness of experiences they represent. The analysis of current practices makes it possible to identify certain conditions to encourage the participation of service users in social workers' education. The most important one is to build on a real partnership with service user groups.

Levy, S., Aiton, R., Doig, J., Dow, J. P., Brown, S., Hunter, L., & McNeil, R. (2016). Outcomes focused user involvement in social work education: Applying knowledge to practice. *Social Work Education, 35*(8), 866-877.
This paper discusses an innovative approach connecting service user and carer involvement (SUCI) in social work education to social work practice. The research team, comprised service users, carers, social work students and module leader, worked collaboratively democratising the research process. At the University of Dundee, a core social work module facilitates students to spend 15 h with a service user and/or carer (host) gaining a unique insight into their everyday lives. During this time, hosts and students discuss two policy practice questions, responses to these questions are generating annual qualitative data, with study findings being disseminated at local and national level. The experiential learning students acquire from spending time with their host becomes the site of knowledge creation through involvement that is applied to practice. This paper reports on the narratives emerging from the longitudinal data (2012–2015, $n = 90$) on the changing landscape of social care in Scotland and the dissemination of project findings. We explore the intersection where the voices of service users and carers, student learning and social work practice coalesce. A model of outcomes focused SUCI is introduced as a template for meaningful, sustainable and outcomes-focused SUCI in social work education.

McLaughlin, H., Duffy, J., McKeever, B., & Sadd, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Service user involvement in social work education*. Routledge.
In 2006, *Social Work Education* produced the first special edition (vol. 25, no. 4) on service user and carer involvement in social work education, with all of the articles coming from the United Kingdom. In 2015, a mixed group of service users and social work academics wondered how, and if, the field had moved on since 2006. This publication confirms that it has. Since 2006, service user and carer involvement in social work education has become embedded internationally – this book contains contributions from Australia, Israel, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, the Republic of Ireland and Sweden, as well as all four nations of the United Kingdom. Many of the contributions are jointly written with service users and carers, highlighting the innovative practices which challenge social work academics, students, social workers and managers to think how we can all benefit from learning with, and from, service

users and carers. This book ably demonstrates that service users and carers can be effectively involved in social work curriculum planning, delivery, assessment and management. This is not to say that these issues are not without their tension, challenges or struggles, but working with these helps to ensure that the social workers and managers of the future can practice more effectively, meeting service user and carer priorities and needs. The chapters in this book were originally published as a double special issue of *Social Work Education.*

Robinson, K., & Webber, M. (2013). Models and effectiveness of service user and carer involvement in social work education: A literature review. *British Journal of Social Work, 43*(5), 925-944.
Service users and carers are required to be involved in all qualifying and post-qualifying social work programmes (PQ) in the UK. However, there is a wide spectrum of opinion amongst stakeholders about what constitutes meaningful involvement in advanced-level PQ programmes (Webber and Robinson, 2011). We reviewed the literature on service user and carer involvement in social work education to identify models and methods that have been used, and the evidence for their effectiveness. Through mapping twenty-nine studies included in the review against a modified version of Kirkpatrick's (1967) framework for the evaluation of training, we found widespread support amongst service users, carers, students and lecturers for involvement initiatives but little empirical evidence that it improves outcomes for students. Also, no studies evaluated its effect on social work practice or on outcomes for future service users and carers. It is vital that involvement, and indeed every other aspect of training, is evidence-based, particularly in the context of the current reform of UK social work training. Research is urgently required on the effect of service user and carer involvement on outcomes for social workers and the service users and carers they work with.

Service User Involvement In Social Work And Beyond; Exploring its origins and destinations. (2018). Zeszyty Pracy Socjalnej, 23(1). doi:10.4467/24496138zps.18.001.8635
This article offers a critical analysis of service user involvement in social work by exploring the modern history of its development. It does this by examining: a) the increasing pressures for more democratic politics and societies during the course of the twentieth century, making connections between efforts to widen suffrage and extend individual and collective rights; the development of representative and participatory democracy and, the emergence of new social movements, including those based on identity and relations with welfare, and b) the impacts on and relations of these with social work. It charts four key stages in the development of user involvement in social work specifically and public policy more generally, exploring by reference to the UK as a case study and international experience, both obstacles in the way of inclusive and effective user involvement and ways in which it seems to be being advanced more effectively.

Tanner, D., Littlechild, R., Duffy, J., & Hayes, D. (2017). 'Making it real': evaluating the impact of service user and carer involvement in social work education. *The British Journal of Social Work, 47*(2), 467-486.
Service user and carer involvement (SUCI) in social work education in England is required by the profession's regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council. However, a recent study of eighty-three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in England reported that, despite considerable progress in SUCI, there is no evidence that the learning derived from it is being transferred to social work practice. In this article, we describe a study that examines the question: 'What impact does SUCI have on the skills, knowledge and values of student social workers at the point of qualification and beyond?' Students at universities in England and Northern Ireland completed online questionnaires and participated in focus groups, spanning a

period immediately pre qualification and between six and nine months post qualification. From our findings, we identify four categories that influence the impact of service user involvement on students' learning: student factors, service user and carer factors, programme factors and practice factors; each comprises a number of sub-categories. We propose that the model developed can be used by social work educators, service user and carer contributors, and practitioners to maximise the impact of SUCI. We argue that our findings also have implications for employment-based learning routes and post-qualifying education.

Tyler, G. (2006). Addressing Barriers to Participation: Service User Involvement in Social Work Training. Social Work Education, 25(4), 385-392. doi:10.1080/02615470600593394
This article describes how an individual service user, employed by a university, assembled a diverse group of people wanting to make a difference in social work education, who designed and delivered a module together. It discusses the often simple, but always effective barriers to participation, that hamper the involvement of service users and carers in processes that impact on their lives. It goes on to give a very positive example of the involvement of young care leavers—a lesser-heard voice—in social work teaching, and demonstrates that while involvement is always a good thing, good involvement invariably leads to improvement.