



Durban Bulletin.

34th Biennial Congress of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) Durban, 20-24 July 2008.

Fifty people attended a European regional meeting hosted by the European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) at the IASSW congress in Durban, South Africa in July 2008. Some of those attending the European regional meeting were members of EASSW and others came to the meeting to discover more about EASSW, share information and network with other Europeans attending the conference. Annamaria Campanini, President of EASSW, chaired the gathering assisted by other members of the Executive Committee attending the conference, including Jan Agten, Peter Hendriks and Sue Lawrence.

After a warm welcome and introductions, Annamaria told those present about EASSW and the facilities and benefits offered by membership of the Association: regional seminars, reduced conference registration at the EASSW bi-annual conference, information and news from members via the EASSW website, a new opportunity to apply for Project Grants of up to €4000 (details from web site www.eassw.org). Jan Agten, Secretary and Vice president of EASSW, provided

leaflets in several languages about the Association including details about membership.

Although only an hour had been set aside for regional meetings during the busy conference schedule, those present had an opportunity to meet others and exchange information about forthcoming events the details of which were noted for inclusion on the EASSW website.

The IASSW Congress was entitled 'Transcending Global-Local Divides: Challenges for Social Work Education and Practice'.

Over the 4 days of the conference, keynote addresses were given by Anfani Okosun, Ruth Manorama, and plenary sessions were given by Lena Dominelli, Dharja Zvirsek, Fikile Mazibuko, Elizabette Mota and Charles Mbugua.

The subthemes of the conference were:

- North-South relationships: Globalization, growth, inequality and poverty; the intersection of race, class and gender
- Contextual social work: Developing relevant and appropriate locally specific social work education and practice
- The universal and the particular: Social exclusion, human rights and social justice
- Innovative pedagogical strategies: Advancing social work education, research, knowledge development and practice (including field practice education, e-learning and trans-disciplinary work)
- Practice context: Child, youth and family centred work
- Practice context: Social work with older persons
- Practice context: Health as biopsychosocial well-being e.g. tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, mental illness, reproductive health
- Practice context: Individual, group and community based interventions (including advocacy and social activism at local, national, regional and/or international levels)
- Policy context: Social security, welfare policy and social development
- Institutional context: Governance, social work administration, management and planning

- Historical context: The influence of history on contemporary social work education and practice (country/regional specific perspectives)
- Special focus interest: International exchanges and cooperation in the development of social work education and practice
- Special focus interest: Systems of patriarchy, women and gender-mainstreaming
- Special focus interest: Preparing frontline social workers in areas such as wars, disasters, famines, epidemics

Hundreds of papers and workshops and about 50 poster presentations were presented under the conference themes. In all 1200 delegates attended the conference, which was held in the International Conference Centre in Durban. The conference was very well structured and organised by the Chair, Vishanthie Sewpaul and the Local Organising Committee.

On Tuesday 22 July the General Assembly of IASSW was held and the results of the election for the position of President a new secretary and two new members of the board of directors were announced. Abye Tasse from Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia was the outgoing president of IASSW and Angelina Yuen Tsang, Head of the Department of Applied Social Sciences and Associate Vice president of the Hong Kong Polytechnic, was elected as the new President. Helle Strauss was elected as Secretary.

Other events in Durban included a 'Reality tour' of the city, prior to the conference, visiting a Shack dwellers settlement and meeting some of the Shack dwellers (see www.abahlali.org). Field visits were offered after the conference to various welfare services and innovative projects. On the final evening prior to the conference

closure, a very impressive Beach Party was held for less formal networking: delegates were able to dance, sing, eat delicious local food and drink and enjoy the view of the sea and stars.

We all carried away our own impressions and memories from the conference – we were challenged, impressed and felt enriched both intellectually and culturally by having attended and felt privileged to have been able to make the journey, both financially and intellectually.

Sue Lawrence and Peter Hendricks,

October 2008.

News and announcements:

An East European sub-region of IASSW is being organized by Prof. Darja Zaviršek.

Prof. Linda Briskman of Curtin University, Australia, delivered the Dame Eileen [Younghusband memorial lecture](#) .

Prof. Shulamit Ramon, Of Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, UK, was the recipient of the 2008 [Katherine Kendall Award](#) .

A joint [congress](#) of IASSW, IFSW and ICSW will be held in Hong Kong, June 10-15, 2010.

The next deadline for proposals for IASSW funded [projects](#) of international collaboration in Social Work Education is Dec 1st, 2008.

See the latest issue of the IASSW [Newsletter](#).