



**CHINA-EUROPE FORUM 2009.**

**Social Work Education in China and Europe**

**Report of first meeting of delegates, Beijing**

**July 17 - 19 2009.**

## European Participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>
Prof. Annamaria Campanini	Università di Milano Bicocca e Università di Parma	Italy
Dr. Jan Agten	Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen	Belgium
Dr. Susan Lawrence	London Metropolitan University	UK
Dr. Jérôme Wenz	Association pour les Formations aux Professions Educatives et Sociales (AFPE)	France
Dr. Liv Else Schjelderup	Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stavanger	Norway
Dr. Unn Cecilie More	Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stavanger	Norway
Dr. Violeta Gevorgianienė	Department of Social Work, Vilnius University.	Lithuania
Dr. Silvia Fargion,	Faculty of Sociology, University of Trento	Italy
Dr. Elena Roldán	Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Escuela Universitaria de Trabajo Social	Spain
Dr. Helle Strauss	Copenhagen Collage of Social Work	Denmark

## Chinese Participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>City/Region</b>
Prof. Zhang Lixi	China Women's University	Beijing
Prof LiU Meng	China Women University	Beijing
Prof. Ma Fengzhi	Department of Sociology, Peking University	Beijing

Prof. Lu Xinping	Department of Social Work, Capiatal University of Economics & Business	Beijing
Prof. Zhang Mo	China Institute of Industrial Relations	Beijing
Prof. Hou Xin	China Youth University for Political Sciences	Beijing
Prof. Xu Yongxiang	School of Social Work, East China University of Science & Technology	Shanghai
Prof. Tan Zuxue	School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Southwest Petroleum University	Chengdu, Sichuan
Prof. Angelina Yuen Tsang	Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Hong Kong
Prof. WANG Si-bin	President, China Association of Social Work Education, Dept of Sociology, Beijing University	Beijing
Prof. Jiao Yang	China Women College	Beijing
Mr. Qin Xiaofeng	China Association of Social Work Education (CASWE)	Beijing
Ms. Guan Ting	PG Student Medical Social Worker	Beijing
Ms. Hu Fan	PG Student – Social security	Beijing
Ms. Wang Ying	China Civil Affairs College, Ministry of Civil Affairs	Beijing
Dr. Hu Jierong	University of Political and Social Sciences	Beijing

### Supporting Staff

Name	Organization
Mr. Pepe Liu Song	Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Ms. Shirley Fisher	Department of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

## **Introduction**

Angelina Yuen-Tsang, current President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work, welcomed all delegates and outlined the background of the China Europe Forum: to create a lasting dialogue between academics and professional groups in China and Europe, to facilitate greater understanding and cooperation.

### **Social Work and Social Work Education in Europe**

An introduction to the EASSW, the Bologna Process and to social work in Europe was given by Annamaria Campanini. (see PPT )

### **Social Work and Social Work Education in China.**

Ma Fengzhi gave an overview of China Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) and social work education in China.

1949 – 1980 – there was no social work in China during the Cultural Revolution. Since the 1980s ‘open door’ policy which opened up a market economy, ‘dan wei’ (the individual) shared responsibility with the state for pensions, health care and insurance. The Ministry of Civil Affairs is responsible for social work and Ministry of Education responsible for social work education. Before 1987 only 4 universities offered social work education, then there was an Asia Pacific Region Social Work Conference which boosted the prominence of social work in China. Since the late 1980s to late 1990s social work education was developed more widely, but there were very few jobs available.

Shanghai University had its first examination/certificate in social work skills in 2003 – this was more for blue-collar workers or social service practitioners.

In 2006 Central government implemented new policies giving more recognition to social work, with a national examination by Ministry of Civil Affairs – human resources – more at the level of social work – white-collar workers or cadres – at a more professional level. Salary scales and positions are being worked on and more jobs are now available.

The offices of CASWE are located in the Department of Sociology in Peking University. There are 4 main streams of CASWE– teaching, practice, research and professionalization.

(See PPT).

As social work is a western phenomenon, Chinese colleagues have been working on how to indigenise social work to the Chinese context.

Most social work teachers were not trained in social work, but in other social sciences, so work is ongoing on how to train educators in social work skills.

Research is being undertaken by CASWE in how to indigenise social work theory and practice.

CASWE has been providing social work support for the victims of the earthquake in China.

Jiao Yang - Social work education is way ahead of practice in China, as it developed first and practice is following. Social work training is not really related to jobs – and the graduates cannot easily find work. There is a lack of qualified and experienced social work educators. How to meet the international standard of social work is a

challenge, since there has only been three years since the national policy for social work.

Lu Xinping outlined the history of social work in China before 1949.

In 1920s a group of American missionaries came to China and identified a need for social services. The Americans funded a University in Beijing and started teaching social work in China in 1922 – very related to religion and in 1925 the Department of Social Policy and Social Work was established. American missionaries conducted social work education in the English language and medical social work was prominent. Students were sent to practice in hospitals and YMCA and YWCA in China. In 1926/7 there was an anti-colonialism movement and Chinese academics wanted to teach social work. Several schools of social work were opened in rural areas.

During WWII with the Japanese invasion the school of social work was moved from Beijing and services were provided for war victims and their families, including therapy. Services were also provided for minority groups. After 1949, the socialist state did not recognise social problems, so social workers and social work educators either went to Hong Kong, Taiwan or USA, or worked in other offices of the state. In urban areas, there were special institutions or special schools or factories for people with disabilities, orphans, isolated older people with no relatives, etc. But poverty, alcohol problems, etc were not acknowledged. People living in rural areas relied on families or the peoples' communes who shared expenses and took care of everyone in their area.

There is an association for social workers in China, CASW, who have developed a code of ethics. The government organises registration of social workers in the Ministry of Civil Affairs. At present there is no way a complaint can be brought about a social worker to such a body, but this is being developed.

Since 2006 efforts have been made to develop social work education to bachelor, master and doctoral level. The Ministry of Education is emphasising the quality of social work education, including the practice element. Government has funded social work labs because of a lack of practice placements. Different colleges are concentrating on different specialist fields, e.g., social work for women, workers, youth – this can be seen in the different names of the Universities. Specialisation happens at Masters level, with a more general bachelor programme.

In the indigenisation of social work there are two issues – local social work is what Chinese colleagues are doing now – indigenised social work is adapting the western notion of social work. Local social work is what Chinese colleagues are trying to generalise into what is acceptable to the public – so it's how to combine the local with what can be learned from western social work.

A case study illustrates some examples in which there are lots of tensions, as local providers feel they have already lots of skills and knowledge and do not want western theories and methods. Since 2004 a project has been started entitled 'Capacity building in women's federations at county level' - which is a joint project

with the University of Minnesota, aimed at the training of service providers at lowest level – in the county. One example here is that the western practice of social work is to have a professional relationship with service users, but local providers want to work from a perspective of being a friend or neighbour and build on informal relationships – they do not want the distance of a professional relationship. Confidentiality is not used in China as it is culturally inappropriate– another term is used to describe the terms of the relationship.

## Day 2

Zhang Lixi welcomed new Chinese delegates: to the Forum  
XU Yongxiang from East China University of Science & Technology  
LIU Meng from China Women University  
In the afternoon:  
WANG Ying from the Ministry of Civil Affairs  
HU Jierong from the University of Political and Social Sciences

Professor Si-bin WENG, President of the China Association of Social Work Educators, was present to answer questions about social work in China.

There are currently three major challenges for Chinese social work:

1. Indigenisation of social work – how can the western theories be adapted to the Chinese context? What is the best way to practice social work in a Confucian and Communist system?
2. Professionalisation of social work in China – what is the role of social work in China in tackling social problems? How can we find a balance in the provision of social work under the control of the Chinese state? How can we create jobs in the social work related field, as they do not exist at present?
3. How do we build research into social work in China – research currently is based upon sociology, but this is not social work – how do we build social work research in China?

The European delegates then presented social work in their own countries (see PPT presentations) from Flanders, England, France, Norway, Lithuania, Italy, Spain and Denmark.

After questions and discussion about the European presentations and professional context, Chinese colleagues gave presentations concerning social work education in China.

XU Yongxiang gave a background of the development of social work in China (PPT), followed by TAN Zu Xue from Southwest Petroleum University, the Province where the large earthquake happened in May 2008. She spoke about how her school developed social work education in response to the earthquake. (PPT). Over 1000 academics and students got involved in over 20 projects concerned with post-

disaster relief. Apart from working with government organisations, they were also involved with NGOs.

Professor LIU Meng then gave a presentation. She works for the China Women's University, which is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Many of the graduates of social work from her University do not find social work related jobs, which is a waste of resources and talent.

The University is affiliated to the largest women's organisation in China – the Women's Federation. Since 2000, they have worked closely with the Women's Federation on professionalising social work, by doing project-based research and experimental work. They translated books from English, published their own textbooks and developed training courses based on the textbooks.

Funding generated from the projects that were developed was used to send faculty to take MSW courses and paid for faculty to go to international conferences to disseminate their findings. They are also encouraging the Women's Federation to generate jobs for social workers.

WANG Ying then spoke from her perspective in the China Civil Affairs College. After 2006 there was a policy to promote the social work profession. Lots of social work academics are involved in the promotion of the profession with the Ministry. Regulation; assessment of existing social care workers; social work job creation; and the creation of pilot projects in 9 cities and 72 organisations as sites for these pilot projects. There are the four actions aimed at creating professional social work jobs. Each June more than 100,000 people will take the national examination to become a licensed social worker at the first level.

The Ministry of Civil Affairs has also created a Social Work Research Centre to work on the indigenisation of social work in China. The outcomes from the Pilot Projects and dissemination from conferences and research provide information for government.

Following the presentations from Chinese colleagues there were questions and discussions concerning commonalities and differences in social work from the various countries.

An example of one difference is that in Asian societies, it is common for social workers to bring gifts to help build up trust between the social worker and the family or service user.

The meeting was concluded by Professors Zhang Lixi and Professor Annamaria Campanini, who thanked the delegates for attending the China Europe Forum and contributing to such rich discussions and the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Professor Zhang also thanked Angelina Yueng Tsang for facilitating the Forum.

The Professors reminded us that we face some common challenges in social work, such as the indigenisation of the profession, poverty, economic crisis and people who oppose diversity in the population. This Forum was a very good beginning to a fruitful dialogue, which will continue in 2010 in Hong Kong.

WANG Si-bin thanked everyone on behalf of the China Association of Social Work Education for coming to Beijing to share experiences. Through the presentations of the Chinese colleagues a representative description has been given of the development of social work in China. He further invited delegates to visit the Hong Kong Polytechnic University- Peking University China Social Work Research Centre and to use the Centre when in Beijing.

He concluded by thanking the IASSW and EASSW for their support for the China Europe Forum.

Angelina Yueng Tsang thanked all delegates for participating in the Forum. She said while Chinese colleagues may be familiar with USA and UK, there can be more mutual learning about Europe, through the China Europe Forum, in order to learn from each other through further exchanges and visits. She invited colleagues to explore resources to facilitate lasting exchanges and to remain in contact via email.

Susan Lawrence  
18 July 2009.