IFSW European Conference 2017 – Marginalization and Social Work in a Changing Society

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<u>Abstract for:</u> Workshop up to one hour for up to 150 or 70 persons

<u>Topic</u>: Social practice of behaviour and activation. Critical thoughts about current marginalization in the school to work transition.

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Social policies and social programs, like the school to work transition system, are built on certain understanding of social reality and interpretations of social problems, often discernible in the language used (Krasmann 2003: 71-77). Rather than see the problem of youth unemployment as a broader structural problem, the school to work transition system tends to problematise young people's behaviour which is why professional social workers are called to deal with them on case-by-case.

The transition system from school to work is based on a variety of measures and schemes for young people who have not yet entered regular training or are unemployed. The institutional heterogeneity means that the different types of measures follow different types of controlling and organisational principles. In reality, 50% of young people are still in the transition system 30 months after leaving school. Since the 2004 restructuring, the test of clients' acceptability has been seen as the central precondition of the measure. The main goal of this test is a 'realistic' assessment of the young person's strengths and weaknesses vis a vis labour market needs to identify reasons why he or she is having difficulties achieving labour market integration. A significant problem within this transition system is that social workers tend to reproduce the tendency towards disengagement: they often underestimate the qualifications and experiences of participants and ascribe motivational problems as individual shortcomings (Walther et al. 2004: unpainted). The assumption is that the `politics of behaviour` (Ziegler 2008) and activation policies (Kessl 2005) – and the categorisations and classifications on which they are built – have an influence on the thoughts and ideas of social workers vis a vis clients.

Referring to adolescence, a life time of increasing biopsychosocial changes and challenges, health and health promotion become an important issue for social welfare practise to enhance young people

to achieve labour market integration. Young people's aspirations and 'development task's' correlate highly with indicators of biopsychosocial well-being and become a particular factor for an analyse of the *real* option space for young people's school to work transition. Health related behaviours, emerging in adolescence, can take an important impact on the realization opportunities of the whole life. Risky behaviours, psychosocial strain and chronical diseases, to point out some examples, can effect the health of adolescent's extensively into adulthood.

The presentation emphasises to take a look in the structure beyond health in adolescence to get an insight in motives and strategies of health related behaviours, emerging in sociocultural contexts. The question for social welfare practise - we will mark out - is not only to enhance young people's resources to act healthy and achieve transition from school to work. Moreover, social welfare as a democratic human right practise has to enlarge the analytical view on the structural and particular subtle boarders in which young people live and how the option space for their real opportunities to fulfil an individual valued life emerge instead of these boarders. In a critical analysis social work is asked to overcome marginalisation of young people in focussing their capacities for school to work transition. Social policies and social programs were asked to raise one's voice against these politics of behaviour and activation.