

Comparing Social Work On A European Level Right of differences or Conformity?

Public workshop in the context of the PRAISE-meeting in Bielefeld-Bethel 12 November 2004.

Social work compared on a European level, the right of differences or conformity – these were the keywords of a public workshop that took place in the context of a European “Praise”-meeting in Bethel.

The audience consisted of the members of the PRAISE-project from different European countries, social workers from different fields of work – some of whom (meeting as a “virtuous circle”) have contributed to the project with their own examples of “good practice” – students and teachers of the Berufskolleg Bethel.

After a short introduction into the goals, procedure and structure of the PRAISE-project the focus of the public workshop lay on an intercultural comparison and first evaluation of case studies of social work in Europe.

The speaker, Dr Vito Di Chio, presented differences and common items of “good practice” based on the collection of case studies from five different European countries. Starting from perspectives of social work and positive actions of the European partners he dealt with the following questions:

- What does “good practice” really mean and which different connotations does this have in the European context?
- Which are the current impulses for our own actions in the social field?
- Which are the underlying basic cultural conditions of the examples in question?

The following discussion centred on problems like the possibilities of intercultural transfer, cultural differences, the theoretical background of the evaluation, the scientific basis of the methodology of narration and exemplary comparisons from the view of social workers.

The lecture was held in German, translations into English, French and Italian were at hand, the discussion was translated into English / French and vice versa.

Public reactions on the workshop:

- an article in the local press (“Westfalenblatt” – see annex)
- a report on the local radio station (“Antenne Bethel”)
- an article in the magazine “Ring” is planned for December

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