

First European Module for structured PhD-Studies in Social Work

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“New Models of Activism in European Social Work” (PhD_ACT) is the first international 3rd cycle module for doctoral students of social work. This module develops perspectives on European transformation processes and the resulting challenges for social work: the networked examination of ambivalences of the European process of integration is a disciplinary and professional necessity, for which the module provides an adequate and sustainable structure. The critical analysis of social and political developments and their consequences for professional social services, which are confronted with growing structural inequities and disadvantages, is situated at the centre of the module.

The subject areas of *spatiality & community, cultural diversity & migration, demographic change & generations and employability & poverty* form the systematic framework for the localization of progressive analytical, theoretical and practice-oriented approaches to the field of Social Work in Europe. The central theme is the comprehensive advancement of social work against the background of current conditions and developments in the different countries of the EU. The Anglophone module creates a transnational working context in terms of critical science and reflexive professionalisation, furthering the integration of a trendsetting European perspective into ongoing dissertations. This intensive training unit for doctoral students aims at their ability to actively and critically participate in shaping the process of European integration.

The ERASMUS curriculum development programme, which is financed by the EU, will be developed during the next two years by the universities of Amsterdam (NL), Bielefeld (D), Bolzano (I), Gdańsk (PL), Ioannina (GR), Kaunas (LT), Lapland (FIN), Liverpool (UK), Łódź (PL), Messina (I), Vilnius (LT) and Wuppertal (D) and will be structured into three elements:

Basic Seminar: the Basic Seminar creates a professional and social theoretical knowledge base as well as a foundational and coherent perspective of analysis for the fields of European Social Work.

Distance Learning Unit: the Distance Learning Unit is the virtual knowledge pool and the discussion forum of the module. As the central e-learning element for the work on the four subject areas of the European integration process mentioned above it enables a continuous exchange between the locations.

Joint Conference: the doctoral students are participants and co-designers of the *International Social Work and Society Academy* (www.TiSSA.net) and the affiliated PhD-network, which was established in 2003. The Joint Conference, taking place in that context, provides the doctoral students with an enhanced academic framework for the presentation and discussion of their own work and the international supervision by renowned scientists. This makes the Joint Conference a synergetic forum of scientific networking as well as sound debates against the background of skills, standpoints and knowledge developed in cooperation by the doctoral students in the Basic Seminar and the Distance Learning Unit. Furthermore, this opens up wider vistas for Social Work in Europe. In the context of the preparation and realisation of the Joint Conference and in addition to their analytical work, doctoral students are provided with abundant opportunity of furthering soft skills like foreign language competencies, moderation abilities and presentation skills.

In its specific complementary form, PhD_ACT can be integrated into all existing PhD-programmes in the several countries. Thus, it will significantly contribute to a European orientation of Social Work.

The group will be managed and coordinated by the University of Bielefeld (Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c.

Hans-Uwe Otto and Melanie Abeling). For further information on the status of the curriculum development, ECTS-regulations, certification, conditions for entrance etc., please visit http://www.uni-bielefeld.de/phd_act or get in contact at phd_act@uni-bielefeld.de

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