

Norwegian Social Work Education

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Norwegian social work education - background

- 1920 the first School of Social Work established.
1 year program. Established by members of a women`s liberation movement committed to the improvement of the living conditions for vulnerable groups
- 1950 the first SW education established by government directives.
2 ½ years program.
An important part of the construction of the welfare state.
- 1967 3 years program with the vocational title "*social worker*"
A national general plan for the education of social workers; marking frames and standards. (By the Department of Education and Research)
- 2001 a new grade structure with BA (3 years), MA (+ 2 years) and PhD(+ 3 years) (*The Bologna Process*)

- 2007 :

14.000 professional educated social workers
in Norway (Pop. 4 mill)

3.000 students in social work (BA, MA, PhD)

Objectives in Norwegian social work educations

- Abolition of poverty and social problems
- Adequate competence in assisting people with the solving of social problems
- Administrative competence for organizing social undertakings

Educating user-focused and reflective professional social workers who are qualified to work with the prevention, solving and reduction of social problems

Professional foundation

- Roots in Norwegian social history and international professional traditions, -in particular the development of social work in The US and England.
- The policy of the Norwegian welfare state has particularly influenced the professional foundation ;
 - Principles of equality
 - Justice and solidarity through mutual responsibility
 - Retaining regulatory measures in order to correct he biases in social development in society
 - Prevent undesirable effects of different social conditions and opportunities.
 - Economic redistribution by tax and duty system legitimesed ythrough democrtatic political systems
 - Provide additional support and care for vulnerable groups
 - A strong state provision where private and voluntary organizations are more rare

Places of employment for social workeres

Norwegian social workers are engaged within a wide field of activities and employments ;

- within health-, social- , children- and family welfare services in local communities
- within employment agencies, prisons and schools
- within specialised services as;
 psychiatric hospitals, prisons,
 rehabilitation programs for drug- or alcolhol addicts
 somatic hospitals
- within Universities and Research Institutions

Different traditions and directions in Norwegian social work

1. A psycho-dynamic tradition; linked to medical and psychological, individualistic perspectives for understanding and solving social problems. Social worker as a specialist in defining problem and solution.

2. An empowerment-, strength- and positive based tradition; linked to solution and future aspirations. Social worker as a specialist in establishing a partnership with users for the defining of problems and solutions.

Challenges in SW education and practice in Norway

- Implementing the UNs Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child