

## Information

### Associations of Social Pedagogy as evidence of development of Social Pedagogy in Europe

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*Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues* established in June 2018 is probably the newest association within social pedagogy in Europe. Together with *Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* (established in the Czech Republic in March 2013), the Slovak association represents evidence of social pedagogy development in the Central Europe. The development and promotion of social pedagogy as a practical activity or science is the common aim of majority of national or international associations in Europe. This is their important common attribute.

*Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues* was founded at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica as the outcome of long-term effort towards development of Slovak social pedagogy by the team of prof. Jolana Hroncová who is the president of the association. The members of this association are mostly social pedagogues practicing at elementary schools, non-profit organizations and academic staff at universities. The main aim of this association is to associate persons that participate on the university education of social pedagogues in the field of theory, methodology and further education; to associate graduate social pedagogues practicing at schools, institutions of educational counselling and risk behaviour prevention. The specific aims of *Slovak Association of Social Pedagogues* are: promotion of social pedagogy study programs development; cooperating on preparation and realisation of research and educational projects with domestic and foreign partners; initiation of legislative activities focused on the increase of social pedagogues' prestige ("[Občianske združenie,](#)" 2018).

Five years earlier before Slovak association, *Czech Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* was founded. This organisation associates university teachers participating on education in social pedagogy study programs. Every faculty in the Czech Republic where the social pedagogy study program is realised has a representative in this association. The president of the association is Jakub Hladík from Tomas Bata University in Zlín. The most important aims of *Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy* are: effort for social pedagogy development as a study program and science branch including applications into practice; effort for promotion of social pedagogy as a single profession to the rule of law; to create educational standards of social pedagogy as a study program; to create a platform for cooperation among domestic and foreign educators in social pedagogy ("[Asociace vzdelavatelů,](#)" 2018).

However, these two associations promote social pedagogy especially in the Central Europe. There are other organizations or associations in Europe within social pedagogy (e. g., in the UK, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, Croatia).

*International Association of Social Educators* is an organisation of individual social educators, their national organisations, related workplaces and educational institutions that work with developing the profession of social educators and the underlying principles of practice. Benny Andersen is the president. He is the president of *Danish Federation of Social Educators* too. The purpose of this association is: to unite social educators from all countries and promote quality practice that seeks to ensure the best for people served by the profession; to encourage the richness of diversity by promoting co-operation of people of different backgrounds and cultures through the international membership of the association; to contribute to the development of professional education and

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training to increase the competence of all social educators; to promote the organization of the social education profession and encourage networking among association members to increase international collaboration; to emphasize professional practice and educational methods based on the United Nation's declarations of human and children's rights ("[Objectives](#)," 2018).

*The Social Pedagogy Professional Association* is the UK association which supports and endorses social pedagogy qualifications and practice in the work environment. Professor Claire Cameron is the chief executive officer. The overall aim is to improve support of children, young people and adults, many of whom live in disadvantaged circumstances or are vulnerable. The main aims of this association are: to promote the best practice on theory and practice of social pedagogy; to work towards professionalising social pedagogy and to support organisations that are equipping workers with training to provide better care for disadvantaged people across the lifespan; to develop and to provide continuous professional development opportunities for social pedagogues through events, learning days, webinars, online communities, and resources; to enable social pedagogues, social pedagogy practitioners and those with professional interest in social pedagogy to share knowledge and experience, to connect with and support each other through various platforms ("[What we do](#)," 2018).

*Consejo General de Colegios oficiales de Educadoras y Educadores Sociales* is Spanish association which is among others focused on social pedagogy. The objectives are: to promote the social and professional appreciation of educators, social educators and social education; to promote and cooperate in the development of professional associations in the autonomous, state and international spheres; to define the profession of social educators; to establish the professional competencies and status of the social educators ("[Presentación](#)," 2018).

In Portugal, *Associação dos Profissionais Técnicos Superiores de Educação Social* was founded. The main objective is to promote and deepen the associative spirit among social education professionals, represent their interests and ensure their rights. In addition, it proposes to contribute to the improvement of professionals and to develop information at all levels, thereby promoting national and international cooperation with their counterparts or related entities ("[Quem Somos](#)," 2018).

I will mention the last example of an association which is focused on promoting and developing social pedagogy in Europe. It is *Croatian Association of Social Pedagogues* which has been a member of *International Association of Social Educators* since 2010. The aims of the association are: development and promotion of social pedagogy; improving social pedagogical practices; professional development of social pedagogues; research work in the field of social pedagogy ("[Dokumenti HUSP-a](#)," 2018).

The associations are important part of social pedagogy development on the national and international level. The need of associate practitioners, scholars and students is still topical. It brings obvious advantages like experience sharing, cooperation for issues promotion and open discussions.

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