Quality and **A**ccessibility of Social **S**ervices for **I**nclusion

aXeSS

Accessibility of Social Services

Seminar in Salzburg, 23 – 26 February 2005

FH für Soziale Arbeit
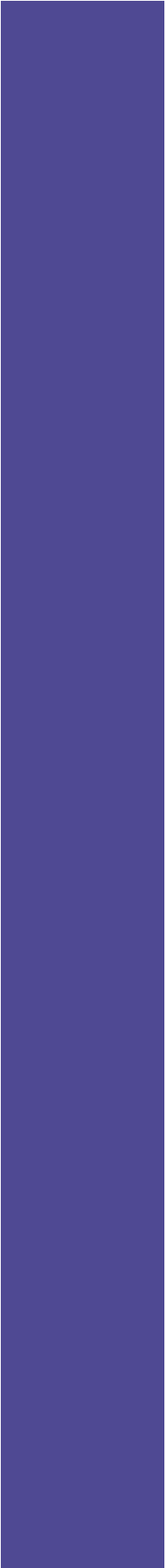
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- ## Lehen – study of a deprived area

The second Thematic Seminar of the Qu/A/Si project concentrated on the aspect of need for accessibility of social services in Europe. It was held in Salzburg/ Austria. The seminar started with a field visit to Salzburg-Lehen, the most densely populated part of Salzburg. Lehen's population is due to geographical, infrastructural and historical reasons the most socially deprived part of Salzburg. About one fifth of the children in Lehen live in poverty. The density of the population in Lehen brings about particularly urgent need for a well developed social infrastructure. The project partners were introduced to the social structure and facts and figures on the social well-being in Austria in general. For the Qu/A/Si project the in-depth study of services offered to young people in Salzburg-Lehen was inspiring and fruitful.

- ## The facilities of Spektrum

The project partners paid a very interesting visit to the Centre for children and young people which is run by the association "Spectrum" in Salzburg-Lehen. The most interesting was the approach to offer both open facilities for children and young persons to meet and guided and organised programmes for various age groups. The programmes and the centre are open for all children and young persons. Particularly interesting for eh Qu/A/Si partners was the public relations work of the centre and the internal way of overcoming social divisions.

With public events developed and conducted by the children and the young people under guidance of the staff the centre achieves public visibility. The adventure playground and the mobile "Play-Bus" are both award winning facilities run by the association "Spektrum" that create a high visibility and accessibility of all facilities including the centre. The most interesting is the development and production of the "Lehen-Rom". In form of a CD-Rom the "lehen-Rom" gives an introduction to Salzburg-Lehen from kids' perspective. The CD-Rom has been developed with children and young persons attending the centre. Under guidance a sophisticated and educating overview over all things interesting to kids in Lehen had been developed. The production had been sponsored both by private enterprises and public bodies like schools and the association "Spektrum" itself.

- ## Social Infrastructure 2010

The Qu/A/Si partners were introduced to a project on social infrastructure carried out nly by the "Fachhochschulstudiengang für Soziale Arbeit" and the association "Spektrum" together with other partners of the social welfare system and organisations interested in Salzburg-Lehen. Within the project a plan for a social infrastructure was be developed. Based on case studies done by students of the Fachhochschule, the social needs of the target groups were researched. The individual changes in the social infrastructure are planned to be realised by 2010. The approach combining the practice and innovation oriented research with reflection of research methods and professionalism is quite rarely done. The results of the project are regularly published in the press and are distributed to local decision makers.

The Qu/A/Si partners benefited from the experience of how to connect theoretical research with practical vision development of users and persons affected in the geographical location of

the project. The regular involvement of the public and the press was taken on as a recommendation by the Qu/A/Si partners.

The four aXess – Workshops of the seminar

The questions around the accessibility of social services were tackled within four workshops

WS 1 Participation in Organization/ Infrastructure, Networking
Input: *Maria Bard, S:t Johannes Församling*

WS 2   Distribution of Information
Input: *Barbara Reiterer, Caritas Europa*

WS 3 Supply/ Financing of Access.
Sustainability of Social Services
Input: *Michael Spott, Diakonisches Werk Deutschland*

WS 4   USA tradition of Community Organizing
Input: *Paul Allan Cromwell, Diakonisches Werk Deutschland*

- **Workshop 1: Participation in Organization/ Infrastructure, Networking**

The workshop started off with defining problem areas for participation and collecting means of distribution of information:

- Streets
- No public place
- No room for children
- Two different districts
- Apartment buildings
- People
- Relationships
- Anonymous life
- Television
- Communication?
- Different districts
- Listen to those nearest to the problem.

∗ The example of the firesouls of "Your new Hageby" in Norrköping: The firesouls start projects with the empoverished persons with help from the organiser. The projects concern

the problems identified by the people and are conducted by the people. There is the resource pool of organisations and persons helping the persons doing the project.

∗ Getting involved for others means to enable them to participate in society. Social welfare can prevent deprivation.
∗ Language was identified as another important means for participation. Access through language enables to make use of other skills for the community
∗ Participation in society can be fostered by offering the own skills for the community. Every person has talents and abilities that have to be respected.

- ## Workshop 2: Distribution of Information

Introduction

Facilitating access to resources, rights, goods and services is one of the four objectives in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Therefore the project aims to develop,
for the benefit of people at risk of exclusion,
 services and accompanying measures which will allow them ***effective access*** to education, justice, and other public and private services, such as culture, sport and leisure.

Effective access

In order to assure *effective access* to education, justice , public and private servicese individuals have to be aware of their rights . They have to be **informed** about their rights. This leads to the workshop theme: Distribution of information

Distribution of information – workshop

Overview workshop:

2 parts :
∗ example – comparing social welfare assistence
∗ aspects of the distribution of information (related to the visit to SPEKTRUM)

Part 1

Example – a woman called Mary

A single mother did not pay the rental costs for her flat for 3 months. She simply had not enough money because she did not get the unemployment benefit in time.
3 months ago she lost her job and applied for unemployment benefit. Before she quit she did not get her salary regularily.. The small company owes to her the salary for some weeks.
This woman has never been in a situation like this. She has no savings and no relatives or friends to help her.

The Social System in Austria knows a number of different measures to beware her of social exclusion

- Unemployment benefit

- Insurance benefit in kind of insolvency (Insolvenzentgeld

- Support from the Labour Market Service in looking for a job; active labour market policy

- Social assistance , money

A. Rights based on different kinds of insurance

- Unemployment benefit

- Insurance benefit in kind of insolvency

The person only has to know *where he or* she has to go.
Two instituons: Labour Market Service and Chamber of Employees

He or she does not have to calculate the monthly claim herself and she will be informed about how long she will get the money and so on.

In that case we can say the information is put across to her active

Example continue:
But unfortunately there was a delay. The person did not get the unemployment fee in time, because some papers from her company where missing. The paying from the insurance caused by the insolvence of the company an be expected in six month.

She gets into troubles. The bigger her trouble (fears to loose her flat) the more difficult it is to get the correct information

By the way: many people in that situation first ask caritas for help

According to the law this person could claim for social assistance.

Usually people do not know too much about the legislation in that field.
F.ex. I think it was the first time that I heard from that service when I start working in Caritas.
People have to make the application at a Social Security office (Sozialamt) , it is an office of the municipals.
The office does not advertise the service.

Most of the time other institution inform the later applicants that they are entitled to social assistance benefit.

Information is not provided passive; People have to look for it themselves.

The legislation is not very good: f.ex. people do not always get a **written reply** whether he/she gets social assistance and how much.
The applicants usually will not be fully informed about their rights.

Information is used to keep people away . Have to wait long, money must be paid back , going to this office ist stigamtazing
"dependent petitioner"

Questions, discussed in the working group
perspectives : Clients,authorities, Communities and providers

∗ Did you hear anything you can compare with the situation in your country ?

∗　　　Possible solutions ?

∗

∗　How to improve the distribution of information

- What do excluded need ?

- Who can provide them this things

Part 2

Aspects of the distribution of information (related to the visit to SPEKTRUM)

- Using information and communication technologies

- Information -→ bottom up; how to bring information form those who need help to decision-maker (bottom up) ? Social effects Report

- From Information to public realation (Corporate design, ….)

Results: at the end of the discussion, the group found some

- Demand: Reduce the non take up rate through

- transperant laws

- citizenship instead of stigmatising

- using informationms- and comm..technology

- "Social effect Reports" ; Sozialverträglichkeitsprüfung

B. Reiterer

Workshop 3: Supply/ Financing of Access. Sustainability of Social Services

- **Sustainability of social services**

Traces of the origins of the sustainability ides can be found long ago, e.g. in the work of Karlowitz: 1645 – Treaty of the generations: To preserve the forest for future generations.
In more recent history the protective systems both in Europe and in the whole world were adjusted to a more sustainable development, e.g. 1987: Brundtland-Report; 1992: Rio De Janeiro: The start of global environmental protection; Johannesburg 2002: The UN summit for sustainable development asked the UN General Assembly to start the "decade for education to sustainable development" until 2014. The goal is to integrate the idea of sustainability into the education systems in Europe on all levels.

Sustainability is the creation of circumstances that allow to meet persons needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Dr. Volker Hauff, chairperson of the council for sustainable development in Germany, made the attempt to find a new more integrating definition for sustainable development: Sustainability is a new perspective on decision making. It includes the emancipation of all stakeholders and empowers them to participate in the decision making process. The assumed view of future generations needs to be included in this. Here the question arises: How can we take into account the future generations' needs? We do not even manage to take into account all present needs.

The most important is to adjust the internal processes and make them coherent. The social resources need to be used well: Social knowledge.

Equal opportunities need to guarantee equal access to resources.

Participation: The possibility for stakeholders to take part in the process needs to be guaranteed.

Honest reflection of the own behaviour and of all procedures together with the willingness to try out something new.

Measurable processes and quality of the results lead to verifiable quality.

The quality of the process is not sufficient. Sustainability is to be guarded by the leading persons.

Workshop 4: USA tradition of Community Organizing

Purpose of community organising: Power is strength and is necessary. Therefore we need to build up power. This means to organise money and people.

- ## Organising as a three step process:

∗ listening
∗ Identify others with the same problem and identify possible solutions
∗ meeting with public officials

Identifying the problem: The people need to identify the problem themselves, but need help with organising. For this one-on-one visits are important.
The Social Service is the nucleus of the process. One function of the social service is acting as intermediary. The traditional limitations of the social services should be opened up.

Every service that serves the community is a social service, if it responds to the needs. The institutionalised structure of the services needs to be broken up. Service providers need to be called back to their original call.

The involvement of the people in need is the most important challenge the social services are facing.

As example of organising con serve the Conference of the European Poor Persons:

The people are organised in a work-group. Each year there is a conference where the poor people discuss with politicians.

Outreach: The policy needs to support a bottom up approach of the social service providers. The persons concerned must be involved in the decision on the services provided.

Information and organising planning meeting: The information on planning meetings needs to be distributed widely.

To get people involved takes building trust. The diversity needs to be reflected. Keeping the diversity is keeping safety. One of the roles of the social service providers is to deconstruct barriers and overcome them: **Create barrier free access.**

Making Social Inclusion work needs a change of attitude.
For guaranteeing good access to social services, we need to listen to the persons affected and suffering from the problems.

- **Questions that need to be asked to organise a community:**

* What are you doing to actively listen?
* Would you be providing the means and resources for persons going out to listen to the people?
* Would we be willing to change the attitude towards the persons turning to the social services and would we be prepared to reallocate funds towards outreach work?
* How would you think political systems could guarantee sufficient flexibility to react flexibly?
* What do you intend to do to take into account practical experience of both the persons in need and the social service providers?
* How are you taking into account the public interest?

Round Table debate

The seminar "aXess – Accessibility of Social Services" was concluded by a round table debate that summarised and shed light from various practical perspectives on the results of the seminar. The participants of the round table first were presented with the results of the workshops. The moderation of the debate was done by Albert Brandstätter – Secretary General of Eurodiaconia. Participants of the debate were:

- Dr. Erwin Buchinger – Soziallandesrat

- Dr. Huber – Vice Mayor and representative of Salzburg's Social Department

- Thomas Schuster – Director of the association „Spektrum"

- Herr Huka-Sila – EAPN Salzburg

- Dr. Peter Herrmann – European Social Organisational Science Consultancy

Question: How can we increase the people's ability of accessing services and goods?

Dr. Buchinger: Zugang zu sozialen Diensten
Sicherung der erfordelichen Budgets: Das ist die Thematik Europas: Wie kann ein europäischer Wohlfahrtsstaat aussehen? Der Weg für Österreich darf nicht sein, das Sozialsystem zu kürzen. Die Treffsicherheit und die Wirksamkeit muss gesteigert werden. Das Salzburger Land ist nicht

weit entfernt von Vollbeschäftigung: 3,2% (EU Standard) Arbeitslosigkeit. Armutsbekämpfung ist daher leichter anzugehen.

Wie sind die sozialen Dienste ausgestattet? Die Dienste sind überwiegend Vereine. Zugang zu sozialen Diensten: Immer wieder wird beauptet, es gäbe grössere Barrieren – übertriebene Sicht. Forschungen ergeben, dass die Barrieren nicht so gravierend sind.

Zugang der Einrichtungen und Träger zur Politik: Partnermeetings zur Abstimmung von Strategien und Finanzen, Sprechtag auf dem Markt (Dr. Buchinger) – interesting and valuable individual exchange

Dr. Huber

Politische Systeme und wirtschaftliche Systeme haben dementsprechende Auswirkungen auf die Ansprüche und vorstellungen der Bevölkerung.

Kosten-Nutzenrechnung ist bei sozialen Diensten schwer erreichbar. In Salzburg sind im letzten Jahr die sozialen Dienstleistungsangebote um 9% zurückgegangen. Dies ist teilweise die Folge von Budgetkürzungen.

Die Qualität der Dienstleistungsorganisationen ist teilweise nicht gut genug. Die Qualität muss mehr überprüft werden. Die Akzeptanz der Bevölkerung der Personen, die soziale Bedürfnisse haben, spielt auch eine Rolle für die Effektivität der Dienste.

Frühwarnsysteme in der Stadt Salzburg: Salzburg ist ein Brennpunkt. Die Leute nehmen die Angebote nicht genügend wahr. Die grundlegende Existenzsicherung für die Bürgerinnen und Bürger muss geklärt werden.

Der Abbau von Leistungen heisst, sich aus der Verantwortung zu ziehen. Aber auch die Anbietenden müssen bereit sein, sich weiterzuentwickeln.

Herr Huka-Silla

Problem: unterschiedliche soziale Netze, die sich aus der Verantwortung ziehen und die Bedürftigen in das soziale Netz der Sozialhilfe abschieben. Der Versuch, ein Sozialhilfegesetz zu entwickeln, ass die Menschen die sozialen Dienste nicht in Anspruch nehmen, liegt an falscher Implementierung der sozialen Gesetze. Durch bessere Ausbildung der im Vollzug Tätigen wird sich die Stigmatisierung der Betroffenen verringern.

Debate

Q: Information Campagne: Stigmatisation – What should the reaction be?
How do you react to the fact that the offered services are not taken advantage of?

Q: Austrian social report:
How do you react to the variant scopes and levels of use of social services?

Q: What is the system of information on available social services?

Herr Buchinger: Die Dienstleistungsorientierung in den Ämtern kann verbessert werden – Abbau von psychologischen Barrieren und Schutz der Mitarbeitenden

Die Barrieren sind nicht so hoch. Die Unterschiede zwischen den Gebieten bezüglich der Wahrnehmung der Dienste sind nicht so hoch. Sie sind zu erklären durch die Wohnungskosten, die höher sind in der Stadt als auf dem Land, durch die Lebenshaltungskosten, die unterschiedlich sind zwischen Land und Stadt. Stigmatisierung gibt es, aber andere Aspekte sind wichtiger.Stigmatisierung kann überwunden werden.

Dr. Huber

Kosten- Nutzenrechnung ist vor allem bei Prävention nicht möglich.

Stigmatisierung: Ausländische Büger haben Angst, sich an die Ämter zu wenden. Die Stigmatisierung wird nicht durch Schulung der Mitarbeiter aufgehoben.

Information: Es gibst Material für alle Bevölkerungsgruppen. Die Leistungen werden dennoch nicht wahrgenommen. Dies geschieht aus Scham.

Herr Huka-Silla

Die Sozialarbeiter haben normalerweise eine hohe Allgemeinbildung, aber nicht genügend Spezialausbildung. Weiterbildungsangebote werden selten in Ansprich genommen. Das Nicht-Wahrnehmen der sozialen Leistugnen liegt nicht so sehr an den unterschiedlichen Lebenshaltungskosten, sondern an der Stigmatisierung

Dr. Buchinger

Es gibt sehr wohl eine Spezialausbildung für die Sozialarbeiterinnen und Sozialarbeiter.

Q: How do you foster the change of attitude towards a persons oriented approach, that takes the individuals seriously? Would you provide the means for enabling the listening to the people affected. Would we be willing to change the attitude towards a person oriented approach?

Q: What is your opinion on personal budgets for disabled persons?

Q: Persons can only be informed, if help is available. Helplessness can have structural causes. In cities persons have better options and opportunities to access goods and services. Do we just want to ameliorate the information system or do we want to systematically foster the chances and opportunities of persons?

Herr Huka-Silla

In der Verwaltung fehlt es an dem Bewusstsein, eine Beratungsstelle zu sein.

Dr. Huber

Im Sinne der Information wurde ein Servicecenter installiert. Hier wird der Entstigmatisierung entgegengewirkt. Unabhängig können hier Informationen bezogen werden.

Herr Dr. Buchinger

Die Informationsverwaltung muss noch verbessert werden. Dienstleistungsorientierung muss vorangetrieben werden. Die Personen, die die Dienste am dringendsten brauchen, nehmen sie am seltensten in Anspruch.

Die Regionale Streuung der Dienste ist nicht ausreichend.

Summary: Social services take into account rights and responsibilities of individuals. They need to foster the opportunity of individuals to take charge. The question is how to understand service provision. Here a change of paradigm and attitude needs to take place.