

## **SOCIAL WORK IN EUROPE. COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES (6 ECTS)**

### **Introduction**

This subject is an international online course on it's learning with teachers and social work students from countries in Europe. The Educational programme have been developed by the VIRCLASS/SW-VirCamp Consortium Partners under leadership of Høgskolen i Bergen.

Rapid changes in European society, increasing mobility and local differences in social and economic factors influence the living conditions and thereby the social problems in various parts of Europe. This has serious implications for the field of social work and for the framework and the role of social workers, and makes the need for intercultural exchange more and more important if we are to be able to understand and combat social exclusion, racism and xenophobia. With an open learning environment, social workers living and working in very different situations will have the opportunity to learn from each other and to share information and knowledge important for their work with their clients. These professional challenges need to be met by different methods and educational programs for social workers. A European perspective on Social Work is important for professional social workers directly involved with clients from different parts of Europe and for bachelor and postgraduate students who will need an international perspective on social work for their future career. It is an e-learning course over 8 weeks starting 23 September 2013 and ends 18 November 2013.

### **Content**

The overall aim is to increase the consciousness of Commonalities and Differences and factors which contextualize and influence social work, such as social situations and living conditions, social organisation, welfare systems, economical and political systems, and the knowledge about theories and methods which social work utilizes. By mixed activities in a Virtual Classroom the study programme intends to increase communication, co operation and understanding among students and professionals in social work from different countries in Europe.

Social Work in Europe. Commonalities and Differences gives an overview of social work as it has been developed and as it is today, the role of social workers in different welfare systems in Europe from different country perspectives. Through comparative work with tasks, students learn from each other and interact.

### **Competences**

-Professional development: Students will be able to describe, analyse and compare social problems, social work and social work education in European countries Students will be able to expand knowledge and reflect upon commonalities and differences in historical development of social work and social work today Students will be able to compare commonalities and differences in chosen social issues, and the legal and social policy framework for social work and social work education

-Cooperation: Students will be able to work together with students and teachers from other countries in a virtual classroom Students will give and share information about their own country in a problem solving process

### **Method**

Students will be able to collect and present data in an international context Students will be able to use methods for comparative international studies

### **Organization and Study methods**

Through the whole study program students will work with a problem oriented focus, and by solving tasks they will reflect on situations concerning social work and being a social worker in their own country compared with the situation in other European countries.

Assessment

The the assignment will be a typewritten paper of 2500 words on a chosen subject taken from the content of this module and with a comparative perspective on their own country and two other countries from different parts of Europe, plus a reflection note of 1000 words with reflection on learning experience.

The final marks for this module will be given from A-F (F is not approved).

### **Credits and Certificate**

Credits and Certificate will be given by your own university as partners in SW-VirCamp. These modules can in combination with study abroad and/or placement abroad and the final BA theses written in English (or with an English abstract) in a comparative international perspective on social work give the students a BA with an international profile. Starts/ends

### **Curriculum plans**

For more information about the courses go to: <http://vircamp.net/e-courses-centre/>