

Report IUW 2023 Linz

Introduction

The **International University Week 2023** is part of the **Socrates Network of European University Schools of Social Work**. From April 17th, 2023, to April 21st, 2023, we visited the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria in Linz.



Linz on the Danube is the capital city of Upper Austria and the third largest city in Austria. Linz has approximately 200,000 inhabitants. The University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria was founded in 1993 and has four campuses in Hagenberg, Linz, Steyr, and Wels.

Framework - What is the IUW?

During the International University Week, people from different countries come together. However, they have one thing in common: they all focus on the same topic in their study program, which in our case is social work. During the IUW, they expand their know-



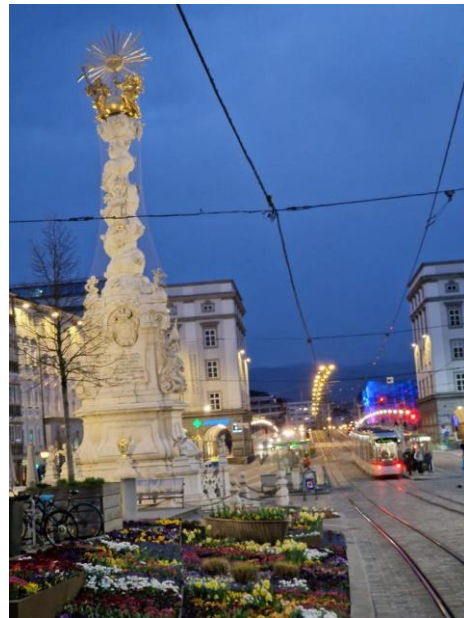
ledge beyond their studies by exploring social work in other countries. They receive professional input from lecturers from different countries. Through group work, active thinking and engagement with the content are encouraged. However, networking with other students is also a major focus of the IUW. A supporting program with various special events is offered, including shared lunches, excursions, parties, and much more. Sufficient free time is available to allow participants to individually plan their activities. Ideally, participants are accommodated in the same lodging, enabling them to connect with each other

outside the program. The IUW takes place over one working week, from Monday to Friday. The hosting universities change annually. Credit points are awarded for participation in the IUW.



Workshops

We had the opportunity to attend various workshops with the overarching theme of participation. However, there were also specific individual topics, such as collaboration with sex workers, memory training, or attention to barriers in social services. The workshops were almost always conducted in cooperation between professors and students. There was even a visit from two professors from the United States who offered a well-attended workshop on working with clients in maximum-security prisons.



Final Programme

Monday, 17 April 2023

- 8:30 Registration
9:30 Introduction - HS1
10:15 Break
10:30 Lectures / Workshops
- Manuela Linser / Daniela Wetzelhütter: Making Democracy Work: Empowering Young People in Residential Communities through Active Participation and Collective Action - HS7
 - Emilia Lehtonen / Virpi Ruuska: A Workshop Focusing on Participatory Pedagogy - SR D-102/103
 - Bart Loonbeek and UCLL students: Youthwork and it's diversity in Belgium - SR A-107
- 12:00 World Café
14:30 Lectures / Workshops
- Edgar Iglesias: User Participation in Social Work Organizations and Services: Why and How? - SR D-102/103
 - Thea Cecilie Tvedalen: The Value of Choosing Where to Work for Young Adults With Disabilities - HS7
 - Susann Detko / Steffi Heger: Do it Practically - Participation and Mindfulness - SR A-107
- 16:15 Welcome Dinner

Tuesday, 18 April 2023

- 9:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Jana Gabrielová: Older adults' participation in memory training - SR A-103
 - Annette Harth: Participation in Child and Youth Work – Experiencing and Learning Democracy - SR A-107
 - Christian Stark: Possibilities and Limitations of Participation of Services Users in Austria - HS7
- 10:45 Break
11:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Frederik von Harbou and students: Migration and Participation - HS7
 - PXL Univ. College: Student Workshop About Participation in Social Work - SR A-107
 - Elena Gaziková / Martina Mojtoová: Participation in social work with abused and neglected children - SR A-103
- 12:30 Lunch Break
13:30 Field Visits
- a) SOS Menschenrechte (*SOS Human Rights; Work with asylum seekers*) - HS7
 - b) Wärmestube (*Day center for homeless people*)
 - c) Aidshilfe Oberösterreich (*Counseling Center HIV/Aids*)
 - d) Notschlafstelle B37 (*Emergency sleeping shelter*)

Wednesday, 19 April 2023

- 9:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Phu Phan / Rocio Garcia: Client Collaboration within Forensic Settings - HS7
 - HUMAK students 1: Participatory in Europe - SR D-102/103
 - Jana Gabrielová: Older adults' participation in memory training - SR A-107
- 10:45 Break
11:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Elena Gaziková / Martina Mojtoová: Participation in social work with abused and neglected children - SR A-107
 - Christian Stark: Possibilities and limitations of participation of services users in Austria - HS7
 - HUMAK students 2: Get Creative! - SR D-102/103
- 12:30 Lunch Break
13:30 Mauthausen Memorial Site - for those who had pre-registered, others: free afternoon
19:00 Dinner for Lecturers at the restaurant "Pöstlingberg Schloß"

Thursday, 20 April 2023

- 9:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Jenni Hernelahti / Anna-Maija Lahtinen: Activity Based Methods in Integration and Inclusion - SR D-102/103
 - Susann Detko / Steffi Heger: Do It Practically - Participation and Mindfulness - SR A-107
 - Phu Phan / Rocio Garcia: Client Collaboration within Forensic Settings - HS7
- 10:45 Break
11:00 Lectures / Workshops
- Lisa Geutjens / Dennis Smolders: Participatory Work with Refugees - SR D-102/103
 - Steinar Vikholt: Supporting Choices in Life: «For» or «With» Clients With Intellectual Disability? - HS7
- 12:30 Lunch Break
13:30 Field Visits
- a) SUBSTANZ (*Substance Abuse & Harm Reduction Counselling Center*)
 - b) Exit Sozial (*Forensic Residential Facility*)
 - c) LENA (*Social Work with Sex Workers*) - HS7
- 20:00 Students party

Friday, 21 April 2023

- 10:00 Closing Session and Evaluation - HS1
13:30 Farewell Lunch

Field Visits

The workshops were not limited to the university alone. Several visits to operational facilities were arranged, including a warming center, the AIDS help organization of Upper Austria, the emergency shelter B37, the addiction counseling center SUBSTANZ, and the psychosocial outpatient clinic EXIT Social.

Special Events

There were also several special events, such as the World Café, where countries and their universities introduced themselves with stands full of local specialties. With prior registration, we were able to visit the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial Site. Special lunches were prepared every day, and on the penultimate day, there was a closing party at the CulturCafé Smaragd with a local band, a DnB DJ, and karaoke.

!Trigger Warning! (The following section contains aspects of inhumane acts and explicit violence)

Mauthausen Memorial

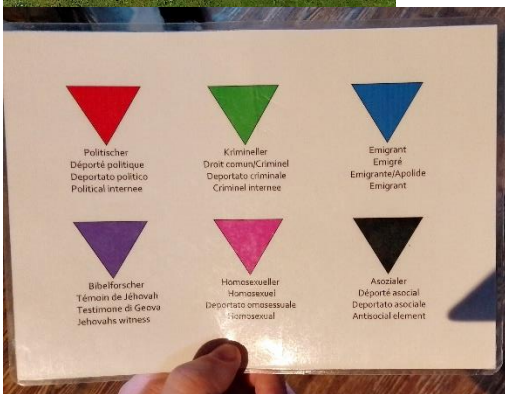


On April 19th, 2023, on a heavily rainy day, we had the opportunity to visit the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial Site. Under the inhumane regime of the Nazis, approximately 200,000 people were imprisoned in this facility under the most brutal conditions, with the aim of exploiting them and exterminating them through labor. Over 100,000 people were murdered through torture, hunger, disease, work accidents in the stone quarry, and executions. The incarcerated victims were forced to extract granite, thus financing their own tyrants and murderers. An important concept of the memorial site is not only to remember the past but especially to carry a message into the future. As individuals, we make countless small decisions every second and can thus influence the world. We must not hide behind the notion of being too insignificant and completely controlled by propaganda. In dark times, small lights shine particularly bright. Our guide at the memorial site emphasized the importance of connecting past events to the present. The concentration camp sold granite, obtained through exploitation, to German citizens. Although the conditions of its origin were hidden in advertising, citizens could have known the truth if they had investigated more thoroughly. How is it today? Is society now better and more observant? Even today, people have to work for others under precarious and life-threatening conditions. Raw materials are extracted in highly dangerous mines for our smartphones, but the workers don't benefit from it. Child labor is still prevalent in the cocoa used in our chocolate and in the "ultrafast fashion" industry. During the time of National Socialism, people were arbitrarily divided into categories. The incarcerated individuals in the concentration camp had to wear a symbol on their arms corresponding to their assigned category, which





created an imposed hierarchy among the inmates. The concept of "divide and conquer" was evident. What happens in modern political speeches? Are people categorized into groups from the outside? This information shook many participants and made them reflect. Despite the pouring rain, we were able to observe many monuments representing various nations. In conclusion, we were allowed to independently enter the museum. There was hardly anyone in our group of visitors who didn't shed a tear.



What does the IUW?



In conclusion, it can be said that the International University Week was a great success. The week brought together people from different countries. Both the teachers and the students were able to benefit from it. The workshops, group work, and the associated inputs contributed to a deeper understanding of social work. In addition to the outings, free time, and other group activities, many students were able to connect with each other. The

International University Week (IUW) has several effects and brings various benefits: Firstly, it promotes intercultural exchange: The IUW enables intercultural exchange between students and lecturers from different countries. This fosters understanding of other cultures, perspectives, and working methods. Furthermore, participants have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of social work by engaging with various topics and approaches discussed in workshops and presentations. They receive new professional input and can deepen their understanding. The IUW provides a platform for building international contacts and networks. Students can connect with peers and professionals from other countries, which may lead to future collaborations and professional opportunities. Overall, the IUW contributes to promoting understanding of social work, strengthening intercultural exchange, and supporting the personal and professional development of participants. It offers a unique opportunity to broaden one's horizons and incorporate global perspectives into one's own work.

