

## **AIEJI XVII World Congress 2009 in Denmark**

Globalisation is a fact that we cannot ignore. Shady and criminal enterprises have discovered the opportunities of globalisation long ago. Sex, drug, woman, child, and human organs trafficking take place across all borders. Add to this that some countries profit more from globalisation than others. The rich countries often profit most from globalisation, whereas the poor countries lose out.

Globalisation is therefore seen as something frightening and repressive. However, globalisation is not just frightening and suppressing. Globalisation implies a number of opportunities that social educators across national boundaries should use to strengthen their professional development and fight social inequality and social exclusion.

That is why AIEJI's world congress in 2009 will focus on how globalisation can be used to strengthen our professional competences for the benefit of the people we are supposed to help.

### **The conditions of globalisation**

Three circumstances that are both created by globalisation and create globalisation will be used as a starting point of the congress theme:

#### **1) New territories – global networks**

The traditional geographic territory and the physical localisation are losing importance. The nation state is losing importance, whereas the global network society is gaining more and more importance. However, there are counter-movements. Powerful neo-national movements exist in even the most globally oriented nations powerful. But they are only powerful within the nation state. At global level the power is in networks across nation states and enterprises. These networks may be defined as territories of the global struggle.

Therefore the question is:

*How can social educators around the globe create networks that give power and strength to our struggle for a decent life for everyone.*

#### **2) New division of labour and new forms of power**

Today, the division of labour of an enterprise is no longer part of its physical limits and national context. Today, the division of labour goes between the high technological and creative production in the country of origin and then transfer of low technology and uniform production to the Third World. Production zones with slavery conditions and child labour in the Third World and modern network

production in the former industrial part of the world are created. Along with this development less visible forms of power are developed. The control is no longer exercised physically but more and more by ourselves and by the networks we are part of. Social educators are also subject to these forms of power and have to practice them in relation to the citizens they are supposed to help.

Therefore the question is:

*How do we develop our profession and methods in such a way that our work does not become part of the new forms of power but helps create a decent life for the persons we are supposed to help?*

### **3) New media**

The development of network production and the flexible society of control depend on the digital revolution. The media make us efficient and flexible producers just as the media development creates efficient consumers. Massive cultural influence is taking place through the media. Today ideas can spread all over the world within few seconds. The interesting thing is that the new media is one of the places where globalisation strikes back most forcefully. When the rich countries scrap their ships in India because no one wants to scrap them in their own country, as it is too hazardous and environmentally damaging, they cannot close their eyes to this action, because they are confronted with it right away via TV and images of the working conditions at the ship-breaking yards. There is no place in the world where we can hide our waste unseen. The excluded used to be hidden away too so that no one could see them. However, today it is becoming increasingly difficult to hide them away.

Therefore the question is:

*How do social educators create confidentiality and power in relation to the global media to ensure focus on social exclusion wherever it takes place? And how can the new media be used in the struggle against social exclusion?*

The congress will present examples of social educational practice which relate to these themes in various ways. The discussions at the congress will, among other things, be about how these examples and the social educational practice relate to the three above main challenges that globalisation presents to social educators.

Further, in its programme the congress will focus on the "the great in the small" in social educational practice; there will be presentations/workshops by social educators who have participated in or developed local projects which – even if they are "small" or "local" – reach far beyond themselves.