Sociologie Românească

ISSN: 2668-1455 (print), ISSN: 1220-5389 (electronic)

**SOCIAL WORK INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (SWIC) 2019
“THE PLACE AND ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN THE 2020S
AND BEYOND”, THE FOURTH EDITION, BUCHAREST,
NOVEMBER 7TH-8TH, 2019**

Daniela GABA, Anca MIHAI

Sociologie Românească, 2020, vol. 18, Issue 2, pp. 206-208

<https://doi.org/10.33788/sr.18.2.16>

Published by:
Expert Projects Publishing House

On behalf of:
Asociația Română de Sociologie

**SOCIAL WORK INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE (SWIC) 2019
“THE PLACE AND ROLE OF SOCIAL
WORK IN THE 2020S AND BEYOND”,
THE FOURTH EDITION, BUCHAREST,
NOVEMBER 7TH-8TH, 2019**

Daniela GABA¹, Anca MIHAI²

Abstract

The 4th edition of the Social Work International Conference (SWIC) took place in Bucharest between the 7th and 8th of November 2019. The conference is organised by the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, in collaboration with the Association of Schools of Social Work in Romania (ASSWR). We present the main activities of the conference, namely the workshops, the keynote speeches, and the presentation of papers in the field of social work.

Keywords: SWIC 2019; Social Work International Conference 2019; CIAS 2019; Social Work Conference in Bucharest.

Between the 7th and 8th of November 2019 the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, in collaboration with the Association of Schools of Social Work in Romania (ASSWR), organized the fourth edition of the Social Work International Conference (SWIC¹). Researchers, educators, and practitioners in the field of social work, social policy, sociology, and connected fields were invited to contribute to this year's theme *The Place and Role of Social Work in the 2020s and Beyond*. This year's edition of SWIC was underpinned by a call for reflective analysis of social work's possibilities for

¹ Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, Department of Social Work, 9 Schitu Măgureanu Street, District 1, 010181, Bucharest, ROMANIA.
E-mail: daniela.gaba@sas.unibuc.ro.

² Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, Department of Social Work, 9 Schitu Măgureanu Street, District 1, 010181, Bucharest, ROMANIA.
E-mail: anca.m@sas.unibuc.ro.

tackling recent societal changes that either sustain existing social inequalities, or lead to the emergence of new ones, e.g. rising economic inequalities, demographic aging, increasing economic migration and its social effects, the rising number of displaced people, environmental degradation, the growth of technology, etc.

More than 60 professionals from twelve countries attended the conference: Belgium, Canada, Israel, Poland, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Romania. The conference format included two keynote speeches, parallel workshops, parallel sessions with oral presentations and poster presentations. Through its flexible format, the conference became, once again, a platform for knowledge sharing and professional networking among participants. The structuring of the programme into two parallel sessions throughout the two days of the conference, and the ample space for networking, as well as the welcoming venue of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, allowed for the emergence of lively debates and scientific exchange.

The first day started with workshops aimed at practitioners (especially, but not exclusively) from various fields of social work, it continued with the official opening of the conference, a keynote address, parallel sessions of paper presentations, and it ended with a social event. The second day started with parallel sessions, followed by the second keynote speech and a last round of parallel sessions, and it closed with a brief address from the conference organisers.

This year, social work practitioners, educators, researchers and students attended four workshops. Each workshop covered an engaging theme, and was accredited by the National College of Social Workers in Romania. Alexandra Mitroi (The Association for the Development of Alternative Practices of Reintegration and Education – ADPARE) brought a psychotherapist's perspective into the individualised intervention for supporting human trafficking victims, by diving deeper into the traumatic experiences of survivors. Naiana Vatavu, PhD (National University of Arts Bucharest, SPER Institute) engaged the participants by discussing the role of Art-therapy for children living with High Functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome. Professor Geanina Cucu Ciuhan, PhD (University of Pitești, Romania) held an interesting workshop addressing the emotional abuse of children in conflict divorce: what it is, how to identify it and its effects, as well as how can specialists efficiently intervene in the best interest of the child. The workshop held by Daniela Gaba, PhD (University of Bucharest; Neurofeedback Romania) and Aida Ivan, psychotherapist (Bucharest, Romania), presented the applications of neurofeedback therapies in working with drug users, stressing the untapped potential of innovative neuropsychological methods for improving the quality of life of people.

The official opening ceremony of the conference featured speeches from University of Bucharest leadership and governmental representatives: Professor Marian Preda, Rector of the University of Bucharest, Professor Romița Iucu, Vice-rector of the University of Bucharest, Alexandra Nemeș who represented

Elena Dobre, Director, Social Services Policies Directorate, Romanian Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, Associate Professor Darie Cristea, Vice-Dean, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, and Associate Professor Adrian Dan, Head of Social Work Department, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, Vice-President of SWIC 2019.

On the first day of the conference, Professor Darja Zaviršek (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Work, President of the East European Regional Association of Schools of Social Work) delivered an engaging keynote presentation on the importance of social work research in strengthening the social work profession. She mentioned the history of the development of social work education in former-Yugoslavian counties, with emphasis on Slovenia.

Professor Judith Metz (School of Social Work and Law, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, Chair of the European Social Work Research Association – ESWRA) engaged the audience on the second day of the conference with a compelling public lecture on *Living labs as spaces for knowledge production, education and practice innovation*, focusing on youth social work.

The parallel sessions throughout the conference included presentations connected to current challenges in social work practice, research, and theory, generated by social processes, such as migration, aging, digitalisation or rising inequalities. Two sessions addressed pressing issues related to social work in prisons. The contributions highlighted the relevance of the profession in the current context, when, despite the developments in technology and science, individuals and groups still face impediments to living a good life.

The breaks between the sessions, as well as the lunches and social dinner, allowed the participants to also engage in informal discussions. Like past editions of the SWIC conference, the 2019 event created spaces for in-depth conversations. During this edition, the networking and knowledge sharing dimension of the conference has been enthusiastically enhanced by conference delegates, both returning and new participants, to whom the conference organizers are thankful for making SWIC 2019 yet another successful event.

The intention of the organising committee is to maintain the SWIC conference as a platform for knowledge and experience sharing available to the social work academic and practice community, despite of the current context of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Note

¹ Conference's website: www.swicub.com.