



IFS Europe Office: Report 2013

In 2013 the IFS Europe Office worked on the establishment of IFS Europe and fulfilled almost every defined point on the "Action Plan 2013". The working fields of the office were: *Communication and Coordination, Exchange, Policy Making, Exchange of Knowledge.*

Communication and Coordination

The first tasks of the IFS Europe Office were introducing IFS Europe to its members and building up the office in Berlin as a service point for IFS members in Europe.

Moreover an IFS Europe website, a facebook site and informative material were developed. After that the office contacted each European IFS member, updated contact dates and tried to reactivate non-active members. In most cases the contact with non-active members has been a one-time- action. In each active member country the office is in touch with at least one fixed contact person.

The contact among the members was on the agenda as well. According to that the office developed tools to strengthen the relations between the IFS Europe organizations. Two particular tools are "Spotlight On" and "Call For Participation". While "Spotlight On" highlights projects and events of member organizations, "Call For Participation" reaches out to find partners for new or ongoing projects. There were found partners for the following projects: "Young People in Europe" (Åhus fritidsgård Sweden), "Seminar for Youth Workers, Volunteers and Youngsters"(Fédération des Centres Sociaux de France) and "Youth Online" (Uniunea Femeilor Romania). In each mail the office encouraged the members to share more information and projects within the network. In addition to that, the office contacted members directly and asked them to participate and to share information.

The office initiated own projects as to integrate different members into one common project and as to communicate with them. It called out for a common IFS Europe photo presentation on the European Neighbor's Day in June.

During the year more than 40 visitors from all over the world had come to the ufafabrik and were welcomed by the IFS Europe Office. The office organized different programs for each visitor depending on personal wishes. It supported them by planning their stays in Berlin, if help was needed. The office, for example, contacted other neighborhood centers for them and arranged visits. Within the visits at ufafabrik the office represented its international work as well as the IFS and its movement and vision. It informed potential new members about IFS Europe as to enlarge the network within Europe.

The office took part in the European Forum in Bonn, in the IFS seminar "Equality and Empowerment - an EU Dream" in Brussels and in the conference "La Fabrique des Possibles" in Lyon. The office supported the Finnish Federation with the preparations for the seminar in Brussels and the French Federation in advertising its conference in Germany by translating the program into German. The office promoted IFS on different events and reported the seminar in Brussels and the conference in Lyon on Facebook and in reports.

Exchange

From August 25th to September 1st the IFS Europe Office welcomed ten experts from the United States, ten from Canada and ten from Germany who came from different IFS member organizations and were working with children and youngsters. The main topic of the exchange was "Participation within the children and youth work." The office did not only initiate the project and apply for it, but it also organized the whole week, took care of the participants, moderated and took also part in the exchange itself. The exchange is documented by a short film and by daily posts on Facebook.

Policy Making

All the year the office has dealt with important European subjects like youth unemployment. As to point out this specific issue, the office organized a panel discussion with the headline "Who gives the youth a perspective?". Keynote speaker was a referee from the European program "Youth in Action" who talked about strategies of youth within the European Union. In the end representatives from the EU, politics, economy and civil society discussed about the topics education and youth unemployment.

In the middle of the year the office was involved in the biggest wagon at the carnival of the cultures in Berlin. The motto of the wagon was "domino effect", that was about the Berlin Wall and diversity under a social historical aspect. In this project over 150 students from eight different European countries took part.

After deciding that "Human Trafficking" will be the common topic for IFS within the next year, the office has searched for relevant information and asked its members to share projects and information about human trafficking within the network. Currently the office is planning a project about human trafficking for 2014.

Exchange of Knowledge

The IFS Europe office published newsletters about activities within the network and installed an IFS Europe Facebook page to share knowledge and information within the network. It informed the IFS Europe members about news from the European Union, the UNHCR, the UN and about general socio- political issues.

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