



The members of the European Network for Social Action (ENSACT) have worked together since 2007 to promote **the human rights based approach** of social work, social work education and social policies, in line with the objectives of the global social agenda but with a view to producing practical solutions at the local and regional level.

As in many other countries worldwide, economic and social inequalities are increasing in Europe. The current crisis has intensified this tendency: as a result, we face major issues such as mass unemployment, poverty and growing social exclusion. There is an urgent need for social policies aimed at **reducing inequalities and strengthening cohesion**, through the promotion of universal access to basic social protection schemes and social services.

During the past few years in most European countries, governments have adopted measures to reduce public deficits, resulting in cuts in social expenditures. Many social services are delivered under severe financial constraints and professional standards are likely to be reduced: social professionals are suffering a depreciation of their mission. Service users and beneficiaries will also be affected by this situation, and will have ideas for improvement, which calls for **enhancing service users' involvement**.

Given the complexity of the social consequences of the crisis and the interconnection between all of these factors, there is a need for stimulating a much **stronger cooperation** between service providers, social workers, educators, policy makers, service users and communities. Each stakeholder has to be supported by the others in order to optimize a common efficiency.

The mission of ENSACT is to collectively promote these issues: a more inclusive society, a stronger role for service users, a closer cooperation between professionals. By acknowledging these issues as urgent priorities, we aim to increase the **visibility** of our actions and the **influence** we have on decision makers. Social action in Europe deserves to rank higher on the political agenda of European governments, European Union, Council of Europe and other relevant institutions.

Within the very large mission ENSACT members have, we agree to focus on effective strategies to improve the lives of vulnerable target groups that are most affected by the social situation in Europe including:

- People faced with unemployment, homelessness, poverty, drug and alcohol problems
- Disabled people
- Children and elderly people
- Minorities, migrants and refugees
- Women affected by violence, trafficking and prostitution

We aim to obtain our goals by:

- Networking exchanges (research, practices, effective interventions, education methods);
- Get-togethers involving all stakeholders, to discuss and share results;
- Feedback to national governments and European institutions;
- Collecting examples of good practice via the European Observatory;
- Increasing media attention for social issues.

Members of ENSACT



European Association of Schools of Social Work **EASSW** – www.eassw.org



European association of training centres for socio-educational care work **FESET** – www.feset.org



International Federation of Educative Communities **FICE Europe** – www.fice-europe.org



International Council on Social Welfare **ICSW Europe** – www.icsw.org



International Federation of Social Workers **IFSW Europe** – www.ifsw.org



PowerUs, service users in social work learning partnership – www.powerus.info