

# Which training policy should be used for the international network of street workers ?

## 1. Principles

Any training policy is also a formation of policy.

With this catchphrase, we wish to encompass all the consequences of the fact that cultural capital plays a central role in modern economies. This is true for everything relating to the formation of this capital; training and street work are affected, as is the relationship between these two fields of activity.

Likewise, the capacity to portray what an imbalanced society tends to hide also affects policy formation; the way we justify this situation depends on the training policy that will be put in place.

The reciprocal link between training and policy comes into play at various levels, including the legitimacy of speech, which is not at all equal.

This is often built around a form of content, most of the expressions being particularly unsuited to street work, (technocratic thought, programme logistics to which the objectives/means/results trilogy bears witness).

Finally, a tendency to assimilate (producers of cultural capital, forms of knowledge), makes it difficult to construct a suitable training policy which is adapted to the issues of the situation in question; always liable to having to "mould itself" to similar, yet contradictory forms.

## 2. The main issue

This would seem to be enshrined in the recognition of "capital façonnier" which is specific to groups of workers. Here, as opposed to "capital foncier" property capital" or real estate, and "capital financier" financial capital", by "capital façonnier", we mean, among other things:

- Independently giving meaning and value to the work, in both its human and technical aspects;
- The forms of work which are invented and built by experienced groups.

These two dimensions affirm the groups' ownership of the creation of their cultural resources and as such, by putting forward the contribution of these groups in society's production; more specifically, the contribution made by these groups to the construction of all that is necessary for a product to exist: knowledge, creativity, social relationships such as trust, reciprocity, the very conscience of the group.

In this context, particular attention must be paid to groups which take the form of a network: they must overcome a difficulty which is specific to them, that is the argument between belonging and individualism. This problem may lead the network to resort to excessive "glossing over" of individual circumstances.

## 3. Consequences in terms of professional training

We can immediately see that a training policy can relieve a professional body of its capital façonnier, just as it can enable it to develop it, not only independently but also as we said, by linking its production to that of society as a whole.

Training in social work, such as street work, can therefore only:

- attempt to justify, diffuse and develop people's own knowledge built on the experience of the workers themselves;

- link this knowledge and the relevant practices to the production of society; insofar as this production has taken on a globalised dimension today, (that is, where the dominant model takes its strength from its geographic expansion and its capacity to integrate - Félix Guattari talked of "integrated global capitalism"), this dimension must also be made up of research and training;
- allow the issues and alternative policies which are being debated today to become clear; meaning of the State, roles of the charitable sector, reference paradigm (such as integration, social cohesion...), etc.

Furthermore, we suggest that all training policies in social work, because they concern community practices in particular, must respect the principle of relative homology which is at the heart of these practices.

It would in fact be absurd should the training practices employed not be congruous with the relevant social practices, in particular in the type of mobilised social interaction, (relationship of cooperation, reciprocity, respect for diversity) and in terms of the values that are mobilised (such as critical independence).

#### 4. Training policy and "network stakeholder"

Specifically, an international street work training policy which referred to previous analyses could be based around four pillars.

##### a) A certifying pillar

The issue of a recognised specific training which gives rise to a widely-recognised qualification is of course a central one; as things currently stand, we find it difficult to see how we could override national systems. The objective could be to link several qualification centres in a network, to allow for comparisons of programmes and processes. A voluntarist policy of mobility for students could be organised.

##### b) A "research pillar"

Here we are not talking about traditional university research, but rather a research policy defined by the International network and carried out in a number of countries. Here we are thinking about a kind of itinerant International College, which would work on an annual basis in the form of "seminars", following Michel de Certeau. It would study the "arts of doing" which are specific to a local situation, in the way that it deals with development issues and relationships across the relevant cultural, social, economic and political fields.

##### c) A "Continued training for employees" pillar

Un pilier « formation continuée de cadres »

Transmission is a major issue for a network which is equipped with an international training policy. In this context, we are thinking of a course for employees and network coordinators, along the lines of the "open university". Modular programmes could be devised and given by associations whose specialist knowledge on the issue would be recognised. A large part of the modules would be distance-taught. The course and module content would be laid down by the network's pilot group.

##### d) A "meetings" pillar

Finally, we think that the International Network should label the sites and themes of the different stages according to its members, linking up with the three previous pillars.

These pillars should be defined taking into account the fact that the fight for existence (of a training policy, of its protagonists, of its values) is often a fight with and against what already exists. A differential analysis (according to the different situations) of similar and contradictory relationships, as well as chain relationships with the existing practices and protagonists, should be performed.