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Application and selection of the participants

The following documents are required for application:

- application form in duplicate (including curriculum vitae) in German,
- two passport photos.

Application forms are available in the internet at www.agj.de (menu: "Fachkräfteprogramme ISP & CIP" or write to: ispcip@agj.de) and at the Embassies/Consulates General of the Federal Republic of Germany. All forms – completed in German – have to be returned to the German mission abroad.

The German Embassy or the respective Consulate General will invite the candidates for an interview in order to make a preliminary selection. Travel expenses for the candidate's journey to and from the German mission abroad cannot be reimbursed. In case of long distances it is possible to carry out the interview by phone.

Candidates are asked to send the documents in January/February so that there will be enough time for the German mission to arrange the interviews and to transmit the applications forms punctually to Germany.

The final selection of the participants will be made by the coordinators of the ISP-Program of the different German towns, i.e. by AGJ and in cooperation with the Federal Ministry.

Candidates will be informed about the results of the selection approximately at the end of May.

Anschrift der deutschen Auslandsvertretung:

Agency responsible for the International Study Program and financing

Because of the funds made available by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe – AGJ is able to cover the following elements of the study program:

- travel expenses for journeys **within** the Federal Republic of Germany to the extent to which they are necessary to the study program
- Room and support for meals. For the duration of the study program, participants will stay at hotels and conference centers (during the seminars accommodation mostly in **double rooms**)
- Insurance: Expenses resulting from acute illness occurring **during** the program are covered by health insurance. There is also accident and liability insurance.



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Organized on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth by: Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe – AGJ (Child Welfare Alliance)

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Living and
 Learning
 across
 borders

International Study Program of the Federal Republic of Germany (ISP) for Specialist Staff in the Fields of Child/Youth Welfare and Social Work



Foto: AGJ-Archiv



Foto: Handan Arslantas



Foto: Siret Naber



Foto: Handan Arslantas

Objectives of the ISP

Nowadays a contemporary practice in child and youth welfare as well as in social work requires international and cross-cultural experiences of the specialists who work in these areas. This concern constitutes the contents of ISP. The learning targets thereby are directed primarily towards a growing of professional and social competences through additional acquirement of professional and methodical knowledge, cross-cultural experience and its reflexion.

The Program

Every year, the German Government, i.e. the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, provides a total of **20 – 22 grants**. The activity is directed towards professional social workers and professionals in the field of youth work and youth welfare services principally from European countries. The aim is to take part in a study program of nearly 2 months in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Kinder- und Jugendhilfe – AGJ (Child Welfare Alliance), an alliance of child/youth welfare NGOs and GOs, responsible for child/youth welfare and social services is commissioned to implement this program. It includes seminars on different professional topics, visits to social institutions of interest and practical work in different German towns and in different areas: as there are f.e. youth and community work; different forms of socio-educational provision for children who are in trouble; work with persons in a personal or social state of need; work with young offenders and work with children or young people with special needs, etc. In this way participants can become familiar with the every day work life of their German colleagues. Coming along with this, there is also a cultural program provided, offering an insight to the political, cultural, economic and geographical situation of the Federal Republic.

Foto: Tuuli Hiihesalu



Who may apply for a grant?

- Eligible for a grant are all those who are engaged fulltime or on a volunteer basis in the field of social work and social help (Sozialpädagogik) in organizations or institutes for child/youth welfare and social work including special needs teachers.
- Candidates must have worked for at least one year after obtaining their professional qualifications.
- Further general requirements for participation are:
 - very good comprehension and speaking skills in the German language in order to be able to participate actively in discussions, seminars and in the practical work,
 - age: between 25 and 45 years.

Full time professionals considered for ISP include social workers, qualified youth workers, child care workers and special needs teachers. Other professions may also be considered if they are engaged in practical work in the areas mentioned above.

Experiences and Insights

The expectations which I had before the beginning of the program have been met in an extraordinary way. The practical training in Germany gave me many new ideas concerning my work at home in my country. It has been a nice and a useful time.

Helga Mezite, Latvia

I noticed a big difference regarding the information centers for young people. The program which is offered there, is very different from what is offered in Italy by a similar institution. Also in cases of similar programs as f. e. in career counselling, they practically manage it in a very different way in Germany. And – what I really want to take home – are exactly these concrete little differences.

Linda Rebecchini, Italy

I am very happy having participated in the ISP-Program 2006 and it was only after careful consideration that I decided: Yes, I'm ready to participate in it. Up to now, I did not regret my decision. During the introductory seminar in the first week together with 16 participants from different European countries, I realized already: we can teach each other so many things!

Malle Pehk, Estonia

Contents of the Program

Orientation or introductory seminar

In the introductory phase (nearly one week), participants are given a survey of historical developments and the political situation in the Federal Republic of Germany. Special emphasis is placed on the topic of child/youth welfare and on the different frameworks of assistance. Another topic is the exchange of professional experiences amongst the participants – i.e. an international comparison.

Professional Placement

Participants are divided into small groups when taking up their professional placements during 6 weeks in different German towns in specific child/youth welfare and social work organizations and institutions according to their personal professional experiences and training. During this practical placement the participants are advised by experienced qualified colleagues working at these institutions.

Evaluation Seminar

An evaluation seminar gives the participants the chance to come to terms with the new impressions, skills and experiences acquired during their stay in Germany, to reflect upon them and compare them with the experience of the other participants. Hoping that this will enable them to draw conclusions and provide stimulus for their own practical work at home.



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The ISP-Program takes place once a year in September/October.