

Glocalization Processes in Russian Social Work

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This paper aims to evaluate the changes in institutions and discourses as direct and secondary results of global/local interaction in social work in today's Russia. We consider the contribution of international co-operation to the development of local institutions and discourses, focussing on emerging discrepancies and contradictions between international and local actors. Contemporary society is simultaneously both global and local. The reality of the welfare state in a global world is changing. So are the realities and interpretations of social work. Different internal and external actors have contributed to the constitution of social work as a new profession in post-socialist Russia, where various international projects in the area of social work training and practice have been implemented. Global institutions and processes have an impact on national and local policies and practice in social welfare (Lyons 2006: 377). The result of their interaction is complex and diverse process of glocalization in social work training and practice. When the imported discourse on social work is recontextualized locally, it is "filtered, tested, grounded and reproduced" (Yan, Cheung 2006: 63-64) in the native frame of social, economic, political, and cultural references. On the other hand, such processes can undermine the idea of human rights as the core of social work as a profession. Based on a review of relevant literature and mass media, survey data as well as on interviews with social worker and managers in an industrial region of Russia, interviews with the social workers at the church parishes in 2011-2012, we conclude that when global social work values are embedded in local traditions, it can support the development of social work in Russia.