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Crisis of the Welfare State – Crisis of Professionalism?

Under the condition of the so called ‘crisis of the welfare state’ social work faces new challenges especially with regard to Professionalism. Firstly, our paper considers the question what this welfare state crisis may consist of. Against this background we ask for the impacts of political transformations on social works professionalism. This question focuses three interfering dimensions: the direct relation between professionals and clients which is generated by the clients seemingly ‘individual’ crisis. This ‘individual’ crisis is not independent from institutional, social and political crisis, especially in terms of inequality and discrimination. This leads to the second and third dimension: the political and professional programmatics of how to regulate social problems and how to provide which forms of social work. Thus the correlation between welfare state transformations, associated with privatization, individualization and the rearrangement of social responsibility are taken into account to discuss the question of the interrelation of the welfare state crisis and social work professionalism.