

INTRAC reflections

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INTRAC reflections: small beginnings

- Set-up in 2003 in Brussels in response to the evidence of poor outcomes experienced by young people living in and leaving care – building on the work of the Looked After Children project
- Between 2003-2006 brought together ‘leaving care’ researchers – from 17 countries - Europe, the Middle East, Australia, Canada and the United States – recognising the complexities and challenges of comparative work
- From 2003 onwards INTRAC meetings were held in different countries and developed a ‘way of working’ which has been central to its development and achievements

INTRAC reflections: a way of working

- From 2003 the ‘way of working’ has meant listening to others, engagement, balancing formal and informal activities – developing an enabling culture
- This approach has been reflected in the structure of meetings- sharing research work, exploring ideas, research themes, links with policy and practice – just mildly bureaucratic
- Annual meetings included policy discussions with senior policy staff - including conferences and seminars linked to INTRAC
- Discussing and supporting research grants and applications
- As the group developed INTRAC members have visited other countries, attending and contributing to events – a reciprocity

INTRAC reflections: spreading the word

- Analysis of INTRAC’S publications show that they laid the foundations of international and comparative work on young people’s transitions from care to adulthood
- *Initial mapping publication of 17 INTRAC countries in 2008 – adopting a standardised framework, and 4 thematic chapters*
- *This was built on in 2010 - a mapping exercise of 14 Eastern European and Central Asian post-communist societies using INTRAC’s framework*
- *In 2011 (Special Edition of Children and Youth Services Review) - containing both comparative and country papers*

INTRAC reflections: spreading the word

- *In 2014 Special Issue of Australian Social Work on Young People Transitioning from Out-of-home care; An issue of Social Justice*
- *2016 book (Young People Transitioning from Out-of-Home Care) – beyond INTRAC - countries from Asia, South Africa and South America*
- *INTRAC inspired ‘leaving care’ publications and contributions within both INTRAC member countries and wider afield*
- *Currently more publications - in press or planned – edited or authored by INTRAC members*
- *Web-site –remember that!*

INTRAC reflections: the next generation

- Between 2003 -2006 INTRAC included 3 doctoral students, who were supervised by INTRAC members - widened our country representation
- From 2006 onwards, in the context of increased awareness of ‘leaving care’, students who were supervised by INTRAC members joined the group and became members
- A very active doctoral group – strong identity - became an integral part of INTRAC – participating in training events, contributing to discussions and new knowledge from their research
- To date, on completion of their doctorate, students have become full members of the group

INTRAC - reflections

'INTRAC was inspired by the belief that reaching beyond a parochial understanding of young people's transitions from care to adulthood has the potential to improve outcomes for this highly vulnerable group of young people'

- Small beginnings, mainly 'Western' representation
- A way of working, a way of meeting, an enabling culture – a reciprocity
- Spreading the word – beginning and developing comparative and international work on 'leaving care' – inspiring the word
- The next generation – doctoral students
- Where next?