



# COALITION FOR WORK WITH PSYCHOTRAUMA AND PEACE KOALICIJA ZA RAD SA PSIHOTRAUMOM I MIR

## MONTHLY REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

THIS REPORT ALSO IS AVAILABLE ON [HTTPS://WWW.CWWPP.ORG/MONTHLY-REPORTS.HTML](https://www.cwwpp.org/monthly-reports.html).

### INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We worked hard in October. We are moving forward.

The European Union completed the first steps for Croatia to enter the Schengen area. In our view, this should be made conditional on an immediate end to the violent pushbacks of migrants. Otherwise, the region continues to simmer politically, with elections coming at the end of the year.

Externally, we continue to work with clients, who have the issues that have become usual. We now are getting additional clients through the migrant situation. We need more personnel to work with them online and in the field.

We continue to work carry out supervision with one person in Croatia and another in Africa.

The migrant situation continues to worsen. The number of refugees is increasing. Governments continue to criminalize being a refugee and those assisting refugees. The conditions under which refugees living in all countries in the region are appalling. We continue to work with Advocates Abroad and No Name Kitchen. We consider the migrant situation to be a high priority.

We continue to work on the second Pragmatic Empowerment Training (PET) course, that is, communication. We also have had the manual for the first course, that is, the caregiver-client relationship and self-care, translated into Arabic.

We continue our relationship with the Global Psychosocial Network of Psychologists for Social Responsibility.

We finally had our chapter on piece building and trauma published by the International Leadership Association. Further, Charles Tauber was asked to be on the scientific committee for the InPACT Conference for 2020.

We gave several interviews to students.

<p><b>Mission to Croatia</b> M. Držića 12 32000 Vukovar Croatia Tel and Fax: +385-32-441975 Website: <a href="http://www.cwwpp.org">www.cwwpp.org</a> E-Mail: <a href="mailto:cwwppsummer@gmail.com">cwwppsummer@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>Office in The Netherlands</b> c/o Kupers Ds. S. Tjadenstraat C81 9663 RD Nieuwe Pekela The Netherlands Tel: +31-597-645790 Fax: +31-597-647029 e-mail: <a href="mailto:pabbv@telfort.nl">pabbv@telfort.nl</a></p>
--	---

We commemorated the International Day to Welcome Refugees, the International Day to Honor Refugees Who Died Underway, and Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We are dreading the highly nationalist commemorations of November, these in conjunction with Vukovar coming into Serb hands in 1991. While we mourn what happened, we see most of how the commemorations are carried out as the promotion of nationalism and ethnic division.

Internally, we have heard we will have basic funds for another year.

We continue to go on as best we can. For us, the migrant situation and the Pragmatic Empowerment Training (PET) courses are our highest priorities.

### **STATE OF THE REGION**

This month, the European Commission announced that Croatia has "taken the measures needed to ensure that the necessary conditions for the full application of the Schengen rules and standards are met". However, the European Commission's evaluation of technical preparedness is the first step, since member states must agree unanimously on Croatia's entry into the Schengen region.

In our view, Croatia's Schengen membership should be made conditional on the immediate end to the Croatian Government's illegal and violent push-backs of migrants. Such practices at the soon-to-become Schengen border not only directly violate provisions of the Schengen Border Code, but represent a violation of international and EU law, as well as the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees.

Loved by the right, ridiculed by the left, Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović made the long-expected announcement that she would seek a second five-year term as president of Croatia. Her opponents accuse her of turning a blind eye to hate speech and historical revisionism.

In a few weeks, the annual ritual of commemorating the anniversary of the Vukovar tragedy and the mass executions will begin. As we are in the pre-election fever for this occasion, it was announced that we also will get a new national holiday to mark the day of the fall of the city starting next year. In our view, this in itself is contrary to all logic and common sense.

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

### Clients

This month, we had eight regular clients. The issues that they were dealing with were the usual ones – physical, sexual, and psychological abuse as children, with their psychological state also influenced by the effects of the wars.

We also are beginning to get a number of clients from Advocates Abroad. These are highly traumatized asylum seekers from the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa. We would need a considerable number of trained personnel to work with them properly. We also would like to have several offices in Greece to work with them.

### Groups

The two groups that we have been working with this month are those from Snehalaya in India and a few students from the University of Belgrade.

With the group from Snehalaya, we are encouraging them to begin programs of peer counseling with the children and teenagers and with the caregivers. There was one exciting meeting with some of the children. We hope that these plans will go much further. There was a short pause for Diwali.

There are three students taking part in the University of Belgrade group.

The group from South Africa did not meet this month. It will continue in November.

### Supervision

Supervision continues with one person in Africa and another on the Croatian coast.

### The Migrant Situation

The migrant situation everywhere continues to worsen. The number of refugees continues to increase because of the continuing wars and other conflicts in the world. Furthermore, the European Union and individual countries continue to criminalize being a refugee and continue to criminalize those who are assisting refugees. The conditions under which refugees are living in most places are deteriorating. In some places, notably in northwest Bosnia, there is inadequate medical assistance, inadequate sanitary conditions, and inadequate food and water. Virtually every human rights organization has protested to the Croatian government against the violent pushbacks. In northwest Bosnia, a billboard was recently put up, “welcoming” migrants to Croatia. Please see <http://www.h-alter.org/vijesti/uz-granicu-s-bih-postavljeni-jumbo-plakati-dobrodošli-u-hrvatsku-ndash-hrvatska-puna-mucenja> .

Everywhere, there is inadequate psychological assistance.

We very much would like to do more. We can think of a large number of places where we would like to have offices and trained staff. We also very much would like to carry out education among staff and among the refugees themselves. We do not have the funds to do that at this time.

We continue to work with Advocates Abroad online and with No Name Kitchen.

With Advocates Abroad, we carry out an online supervision group weekly. We also have begun to work with a few clients.

We consider the migrant situation to be a high priority.

#### PET

This month, we continued to work on the manual for Course 2, Communication.

Further, through GivingWay, we got the manual for Course 1, the caregiver-client relationship and self-care, translated into Arabic. The manual is available on the website, <https://www.cwwpp.org/course-1-the-caregiver-client-relationship.html>

#### Miscellaneous

Charles Tauber attended an online meeting of the Global Psychosocial Network given by Niveen Rizkala on intimacy in Syrian refugees. Niveen also sent a journal article, which we posted on our Facebook page.

This month, we finally saw the publication of our chapter on trauma and peacebuilding for the International Leadership Association.

Charles Tauber had the honor of being asked to be on the scientific evaluation committee for the InPACT Conference that will take place in Portugal in 2020. He will review a number of papers as part of his duties.

We gave several interviews to a student from the USA studying in Italy.

This month, we commemorated the International Day to Welcome Refugees and the International Day to Honor Refugees Who Died Underway. We also commemorated Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. We find that commemorating such days makes far more sense than commemorating national days and days of military victories.

## **INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

### **Funding and Fundraising**

While the funding situation continues to be stressful, it lightened a little this month. We have heard from our long-term anonymous donor from the USA that he will finance us for another year. Still, we are not off the hook. The amount that we are receiving this person is sufficient only for our basic needs. There is a great deal more that we would like to do. In our view, we still cannot afford to employ additional personnel, whom we urgently need, as given below. We also very much would like to open offices in Šid, Serbia, Kladuša, and Tuzla in Bosnia, several parts of Greece, and in Africa, as well as in other places. With current funds, none of this is possible.

We received several small client contributions and others.

We sent a number of funding proposals and requests for cooperation.

We continue to seek for new sources of funds.

### **PROSPECTS FOR THE COMING MONTHS**

November always is a problematic month because of the anniversaries of the war, particularly around the 18th. These anniversaries evoke nationalism among the politicians and among the local people of all ethnicities. We also mourn the dead and those tortured. However, what usually happens during these commemorations is the misuse and abuse of genuine emotions to provoke ethnic hatred, primarily for political purposes.

We also are dreading the coming holiday seasons. Instead of working toward the true meaning of those days, they celebrate money and little else. We wish that those celebrating them would look at what the holidays *really* mean.

We also are dreading winter, not only for ourselves but for the people with whom we are working. Many, if not most of the migrants will be out in the cold and the rain and the snow.

We will continue to work on the PET program. Our priorities there are to improve the videos for the first course and to complete the manual for the second course.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND EPILOGUE**

We find the work that we are doing now to be extremely important. We will continue to strive for what we believe in.