

WACAT – Newsletter 3/2019

NEWSLETTER
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World Association of Clubs on Alcohol Treatment

Working According to the
Hudolin Concept



WACAT OFFICERS FOR THE PERIOD 2017 TO 2019

President: Helge Kolstad
Norway

Vice President: Zoran Zoricic
Croatia

Board members:

Irena Chubukova – Russia

Lasse Rossen - Denmark

Nicoletta Regonati – Italy

Aniello Basilice – Italy

Pubudu Sumanasekera - Sri
Lanka,

Francesco Piani - Italy

Substitute member:

Soontaree Srikosai - Thailand

**Nomination Committee for
the next WACAT Congress**

Marco Orsega - Italy

Birgit Juul Nielsen - Denmark

Anto Orešković - Croatia

International secretary

Francesca Francalacci - Italy

Keep it Simple!

It will be 40 years since the first Hudolin club was established in Italy. This meant a new development compared to Yugoslavia, where clubs were established 12 years before. The communities were different, the competition with other programmes was different, even science may have been different. A westernized club model was developed in Italy, whereas the Yugoslavian clubs continued as before. All worked with inspiration from Hudolin, although differences are obvious, until this day.

However, our communities have also changed. Yugoslavia is no more. Many substances in addition to alcohol are heavily abused, the concept of family is changing. The historic differences on both sides of the Adriatic are no longer important issues. Today, clubs can use the same methodology everywhere. In WACAT we work hard to unify the club movements after Hudolin. Our main focus is how to recruit and train the resource persons in the clubs.

Hudolin has also been gone for a long time. We do not know exactly how he may have responded to new developments. Now it is up to us to include new challenges in our methodology. This must be done carefully, involving the whole movement and still be true to the Hudolin Concept. We see that some clubs with little fresh recruitment have difficulties. On the other hand, there are other human problems which can be dealt with in our type of clubs.

In particular, addiction to gaming becomes more frequent. Treatment facilities and even clubs take up rehabilitation and aftercare with similar interventions as they use about substance abuse. It is likely that also other difficulties with financial and societal management may be taken in. This may well be combined with Hudolin. But we need to remember that one of the beauties of the methodology we have inherited, is its simplicity. One of my earliest experiences with Vladimir Hudolin was listening to his explanation of the clubs. It only took a few minutes. Main elements were that problems as well as solutions are shared by many, that we need a strong desire to change for the better, and that we must listen to those who know. We need to take in new challenges and extend our understanding of abusive practices. But we need to keep the basic structure simple. Come to the club regularly. Bring family and other relations. And learn together how to live a good life without artificial stimulants.

Helge Kolstad

WACAT Board Meeting in Matera

The WACAT Board had its meeting on 4th October 2018. It took place near the sole of the Italian boot, between the heel and the toe, in the ancient city of Matera. The old town may be one of the oldest urban dwellings in the history of mankind. People lived in caves along a river canyon; safe, but poor, in some caves right up to the 1960s. This was the site for the 27th AICAT National Congress, which the international Board members attended after our own meeting.

Reports from Around the World

Board members gave reports and glimpses of club activity. Zoran Zoricic reported that Hudolin programs are running in Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Croatia.

The situation in Scandinavian countries is the following: 2-3 clubs collaborating with Salvation Army in Sweden. Clubs in Denmark are stable, but fewer than before due to funding problems and some internal conflicts. In Norway there are stable clubs, but it is difficult to create more because there is competition with a great variety of other programs, however the clubs' program is the only one with a family approach. Right now they are investing both on developing the family approach and on opening up clubs "beyond alcohol". There are too few new entries. In Finland there is still some expansion, mostly as aftercare connected to rehabilitation in Blue Cross treatment centers.

Nicoletta Regonati reported that some surveys have been done to reconnect with clubs in Latin America. There have been no responses from Chile and Brazil. However, clubs in Ecuador seem to be working properly in different parts of the country.

Francesco Piani reported that the European school needs reorganization. At present it follows programs in India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Information from Russia tells that the Chairman, father Alexej Baburin, is frequently traveling to advocate and expand programs beyond Moscow.

In Italy there is less focus than before on disagreements. The national congress, which took place in Matera immediately after the meeting, gathered a good attendance.



Zoran Zoricic in front of Matera Old Town

Romanian Conference

Helge Kolstad and Francesco Piani participated in a congress, jointly organized by the club movement and a psychiatric association in Iasi, Romania. Several clubs which are meeting at a catholic center are working well. A program for women, organized by catholic nuns, is also working according to Hudolin principles.

Recruitment and training of club workers

A main focus of the meeting was the training of club workers. WACAT has done a survey among member associations. There seem to be three main training practices around the WACAT world

1. The model adopted by Italy, Scandinavia, Latin America, and other countries that took up the sensibilization course used in Italy.
2. The one adopted by ex-Yugoslavia: three short modules (3 days) for professionals, but they are also experimenting with modules for non-professionals (in which case, there will be four gatherings).
3. The Russian model, where training gatherings and supervision take place in Moscow, other training is conducted by distant education.

It was debated how we best can improve our training of club workers. It was agreed that proper education is a central policy for WACAT, but that we must accept that the training methods may differ. We need to find a way to involve the experts in charge of training, and help maintaining a common understanding of the Hudolin methodology and allow working methods to be adjusted to local conditions.

It is important to develop a sense of belonging to the system, even in countries where there are few clubs and a lack of contacts with close neighbors. It is also fundamental that we improve communication among the countries through websites, participation in congresses, etc.

There are difficulties everywhere in finding new servant-teachers. That is why it is a priority to create some standard guidelines for servant-teachers and how to recruit them.

Ecological Education

It is the vision of the WACAT Bard to boost the *Continuous Ecological Education* in clubs. Recruiting and training of servant-teachers (club workers) is a major task for club associations. WACAT should assist in setting up proper training programs. Several associations may collaborate on this. Also, WACAT itself must provide some international training sessions. This should be provided by the European school. Recently, it has been difficult to finance this. This need to be discussed further. The European School and AICAT are requested to look for possible options.

Websites and newsletters

The President and the Secretary has had a working session in Norway during last summer and prepared the filing and communication systems for WACAT. Two separate websites will be set up. Newsletters will be sent out regularly and also be available on the web.

Involvement of Trainers of Trainers

Experienced trainers who participated in the Italian Congress met after the Board meeting. The attendance was, however, too small to be representative. The board presented some statements on training, which will be taken up for discussions with trainers. The following statements and questions seem to be essential:

1. Club visits must be an obligatory part of training of servant-teachers.
2. Even professionals, with extensive education in rehabilitation work, must have additional training about the practical club work, including visits in clubs.
3. Different parts of the training may be done in different ways. Particularly important is the question about what needs to be done in gatherings at the same venue and time, and what can be done separately, e.g. on distant education or online.
4. Can training sessions be separated in several periods, e.g. 2-3 week-ends instead of a continuous week?
5. Training is a continuous and endless process. After the basic training, club workers must participate actively in supervisions programs, and meet regularly for exchange of experience and maintenance of motivation and understanding.
6. What skills should be requested for those who conduct the training (training of trainers)?

WACAT World Congress in Slovenia in September 2019

The WACAT Constitution prescribes that our Congress will have two main parts

- A Congress Gathering, assembling as many representatives of the national club associations as possible, and making recommendations to the next part
- A postal vote over the recommendations from the Congress Gathering, involving all WACAT members according to the Constitution

The congress gathering will take place in Bled, Slovenia, on the 12th September 2019, before Alpe Adria Congress (13th - 14th September 2019).

Proposals to the Congress will be prepared by the International Board during its next meeting, and sent out to the member associations in due time before the Congress,

Next WACAT Board Meeting in Copenhagen

The board decided to meet again at one more meeting before the congress. This will take place in Scandinavia, probably in Denmark during May 2019.

International Officers to Study Russian Training

President Helge and Vice President Zoran will go to Moscow in late January 2019 to study the training and supervision practices of the Russian Club Movement. Of special interest is the effort of developing distant education programmes for clubs in districts in the vast country of Russia, which are too far away from Moscow.

They will also visit the Russian National Club Congress.

Nordic Servant/Teacher course in Helsinki 10th to 13th October 2018

The family club organizations in Finland, Norway and Denmark held a joint course for new club workers from all three countries. Even teachers and resource persons came from the three countries. To overcome the language barrier there was a simultaneous translation service. It is expensive but worked very well. There were lectures of teachers from Finland, Norway and Denmark, one of them a new fellow. The presentations are based on material which has been used and developed over a long period. Basics are almost identical to similar courses in Italy. Presenters have, however, worked as club workers for years and can therefore supplement with personal experience. This worked very well and also stimulated to relevant questions and discussion. The feedback from the participants was very positive



Participants in Nordic ST course in Helsinki

A particular item was club work for people with gaming problems. This has successfully been tried in Finland, where one club is focused on such issues. They seem to have growing gaming problems in Finland. It was interesting to see how similar the discussions and topics in this club are, compared to the alcohol related clubs. For some families gaming problems come as a great shock and may create severe economic problems.

Lasse Rossen