# A Guide to Understanding the International Social Work Organizations

## International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

**Organizational Description**

IASSW is a worldwide association of social work education organizations, supporting social work education and social work educators.

**History of Organization**

IASSW was founded at the first International Conference of Social Work, held in Paris in 1928. IASSW has represented the interests of social work education and the values of the profession globally for nearly 90 years.

**Organizational Mission**

Mission is to represent and promote social work education around the globe in partnership with national, regional and international associations. To create and maintain an engaged community of social work educators and programs and to promote educational strategies and policies. IASSW’s vision is to promote and develop “excellence in social work education, research and scholarship across the globe, in pursuit of a more just and equitable world.”

**Organizational Priorities**

IASSW encourages the exchange of ideas and information, documentation of social work education, and organization of international conferences and seminars. The organization is committed to advocacy for human rights, equity, diversity and inclusion.

## International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

**Organizational Description**

IFSW supports its 126 country association members by providing a global voice for the social work profession.

**History of Organization**

IFSW was formed in 1956 (predecessor founded at the first International Conference of Social Work, held in Paris in 1928).

**Organizational Mission**

The Federations and its members strive for social justice, human rights, and inclusive sustainable social development through the promotion of social work best practices and engagement in international cooperation.

**Organizational Priorities**

Priorities include promoting social work to achieve social development, advocating for social justice globally and facilitating international cooperation. IFSW supports Associations, exchange of knowledge, promotes the social work profession point of view in international and national development and social action.

## International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)

**Organizational Description**

ICSW is a non-governmental organization focused on advocacy, human well-being, knowledge-building and technical assistance projects carried out at the country level and internationally.

**History of Organization**

ICSW was created, in 1928, in Paris to address complexities and challenges of social work. ICSV was a founding member of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors and actively participates in major international cooperation meetings to promote social protection initiatives and most effective schemes across the globe.

**Organizational Mission**

ICSW strives for recognition and realization of all human rights, including fundamental rights to employment, income, food, shelter, education, health care and security. The priority concern of the organization is the reduction of hardship and vulnerability. ICSV helps vulnerable groups cope with risks and challenges of life, empowers its members to participate fully in society as responsible citizens with a greater civic voice and capacity to achieve meaningful results.

**Organizational Priorities**

Key activities of the organization include gathering and disseminating information, undertaking research and analysis, convening seminars and conferences, drawing on grass-roots experiences, strengthening organizations of the civil society, developing policy proposals, engaging in public advocacy and working with policy-makers and administrators in government and elsewhere.
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<tr>
<th><strong>INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK (IASSW)</strong></th>
<th><strong>INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (IFSW)</strong></th>
<th><strong>INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE (ICSW)</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Organizational Structure</strong></td>
<td>The executive committee comprises one Global President, one Treasurer and one Regional President and Regional Vice President for each of the five regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America).</td>
<td>The main organs of the organization are the General Assembly, the Supervisory and Advisory Board and the Management Committee. It's a worldwide non-governmental organization with regional structures where regional organizations are indigenous to the 9 ICSW regions, and have their own decision-making bodies. The membership is classified into several different categories, covering national committees, international non-governmental organizations and individual members.</td>
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<td><strong>Relationship to the United Nations</strong></td>
<td>IASSW has a team of representatives at the United Nations headquarters that has consistently participated in UN and NGO meetings since 1947. IASSW is also represented at the UN in Geneva.</td>
<td>IFSW works with the World Health Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. IFSW is also accredited to the International Labour Organization, UNICEF, the Council of Europe and the European Union.</td>
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<td><strong>Websites</strong></td>
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<td>ICSW has the highest level of consultative status with the United Nations in relation to the work of the Economic and Social Council, and actively participates in the work of its functional commissions such as Commission for Social Development and Commission on the Status of Women, delivering both written and oral statements, and organizing side-events on the priority themes.</td>
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<td><strong>Developed by the NASW International Committee.</strong></td>
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<td>The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the United States with 130,000 members. It promotes, develops and protects the practice of social work and social workers. NASW advocates to improve public policies that strengthens society. The NASW International District provides resources to NASW members overseas. The NASW International Committee is a NASW Board mandated committee that interprets NASW policies and priorities in developing guidance for the implementation of programs in the areas of international social work education and practice and in advocating for the protection of human rights in the global context. It educates and encourages social workers on how international experiences enrich both their social work practice and the profession of social work globally. NASW is a member of the International Federation of Social Workers and works closely with IASSW and ICSW.</td>
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