



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE – SANTE MENTALE EUROPE aisbl
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**MHE CONTRIBUTION TO THE EVALUATION OF THE WORK PLAN 2010
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AGENCY**

Name of organisation

Mental Health Europe

Policy area and main activities of Mental Health Europe – Santé Mentale Europe

Mental Health Europe is a non governmental organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health and well-being, the prevention of mental disorders, the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of the human rights of (ex) users of mental health services and their families and carers.

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Feedback on methods and relevance of research topics of the FRA Annual Report 2010:

1) Research and analysis;

Mental Health Europe would encourage the Fundamental Rights Agency to organise the collection of data on the numbers of people with mental health problems subject to violations of their fundamental rights as well as the collection of data on the extent and severity of the problems mentioned above.

Mental Health Europe is involved in the field of non discrimination and fights particularly against multiple discrimination towards persons with mental health problems. To this extent, Mental Health Europe would encourage the Fundamental Rights Agency to continue to collect and analyse data on multiple discrimination as it is a key area and very often not acknowledged especially in the field of mental health. The main grounds of discrimination studied are more often race or gender as well as age but unfortunately mental health problems are not included in the scope of such data. Mental Health Europe regrets this state and would recommend the Fundamental Rights Agency to monitor and to collect more data on the subject in order to better focus on the specificity of the multiple discrimination persons with mental health problems could suffer from.

Thirdly, Mental Health Europe would recommend the Fundamental Rights Agency to research about the balance between benefits and costs of the European Union when adopting the definition of disability included in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This definition is to be focused on and taken into account since it is a very inclusive and wide definition of disability and to that extent is including more aspects of the mental health.

2) Communication and awareness raising;

Threats to human rights exist very strongly for people with mental health problems; they are discriminated against in many fields including the field of employment because there is still stigma and prejudices regarding the mental illness. Therefore, the consequences on the life of persons with mental health problems are multiple: they are excluded from the labour market, from housing and as a consequence to other services like health services. Persons with mental health problems are a drop in the sea regarding the amount of human rights violations. Mental Health Europe would like the FRA to raise awareness about these global human rights violations and to make some particular points regarding mental health issues linked to human rights violations. The Fundamental Rights Agency should take into account and raise awareness about the benefits of an inclusive society even when financial or social crisis occurs. Raising awareness about mental health problems occurrence figures in a life time would be a valuable tool to inform about how people should stay included in the society. Mental Health Europe encourages the FRA to launch campaigns regarding the discrimination issue as it was done by the Council of Europe such as the "All equal all different" campaign or the campaigns launched during 2008 in the frame of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

3) Networking and education;

Education is a job to be handled by the Fundamental Rights Agency as it will help to learn to people what are the fundamental rights and who are the persons whose human rights can be violated. Education is the first step towards full inclusion of persons with mental health problems as it would help to fight against the stigma by educating on what is mental illness and which consequences are possible in the life of persons suffering from that kind of burden.

Mental Health Europe, February 2009