



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



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I. NEWS FROM MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

Message from MHE Director

Dear readers,

We hope the New Year started well for all of you.
The Mental Health Europe team sends you its best wishes for a happy and mentally healthy 2009!

It has become a tradition that each year in the first issue of our Newsletter, we give an overview of the activities planned to take place in the New Year.

In the area of social inclusion, MHE will continue to work on its three overarching objectives: improving the organizational capacity and management of MHE; reinforcing the European social dimension of the renewed Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, to better respond to the challenges and needs of people with (a history of) mental health problems; continuous exchange and dialogue with EU institutions and other stakeholders on designing future policies in the employment and social fields to better reflect the needs of people with mental health problems. We were happy to receive also for 2009 core funding from the European Commission's Directorate General Employment and Social Affairs' **PROGRESS Programme** (Social Protection and Social Inclusion unit).

Five training sessions for the MHE National Focal Points will be organised in Vienna, Athens, Brussels, Copenhagen and Helsinki. All National Focal Points have been informed about the dates for their training session before Christmas 2008.

An empowerment seminar for people with (a history of) mental health problems will be held in Brussels on 13-14 March, in collaboration with ENUSP.

We will also organise a capacity-building seminar for all MHE members which will take place on Friday 12 June, linked with the General Assembly on 13 June in Brussels.

A training session for new MHE Board members is foreseen to be held at the beginning of October 2009.

MHE's Committees have been put on hold since September 2008; some of them will take a fresh start in 2009, others will be cancelled and Task Forces will work on specific issues within a given timeframe.

MHE members will be consulted, on topical issues re. the renewed Social Agenda and Lisbon Strategy, through the MHE National Focal Points.

An ongoing activity will be to strengthen collaboration with European networks and other stakeholders.

MHE will also launch a European Parliament elections campaign in collaboration with MHE members.

Another new initiative will be a campaign on the social determinants of mental health.

The working title is "Let's focus on ability!" to underline the positive focus of the campaign. Preparations for the MHE 2010 conference on mental health and poverty will start in 2009, with a first meeting with MIND in Leeds on 2 February.

As every year we will organise an awareness raising event in the European Parliament; the theme has however not been decided yet.

Other activities in the frame of our PROGRESS Work Programme 2009 are:

- bi-annual meetings with the European Commission (DG EMPL)
- the MHE website
- the MHE Newsletters
- MHE Communication and Position Papers
- MHE Press releases
- contacts with newly elected Members of European Parliament
- liaison with forthcoming EU Presidencies (Czech Republic, Sweden)
- follow-up on the EU Mental Health Pact

- collaboration with the Council of Europe (European Social Charter, Social Policies Grouping) and attendance of meetings of the Council of Europe's International NGOs Conference

Mental Health Europe will continue to be involved in the following EU funded projects led by other organisations:

- ProMenPol (Promoting and protecting mental health and supporting policy through integration of research, current approaches and practice) (DG Research)
- CAMHEE (Child and adolescent mental health in an enlarged Europe) (DG Sanco)
- DataPrev (Developing the evidence base for mental health promotion and prevention in Europe: a database of programmes and the production of guidelines for policy and practice) (DG Research)
- Value+ (Promoting Patients' Involvement in EU Supported Health-Related Projects) (DG Sanco)
- HELPS (Promoting the health of residents in psychiatric and social care institutions) (DG Sanco)
- DETERMINE (acting on the socio-economic determinants of health) (DG Sanco)
- Prometheus (Quality in social services) (DG EMPL).

Mental Health Europe was successful in applying for funding for a project in the frame of the European Commission DAPHNE Programme. Title of the project is "Empower the victim, teach the boss! The mental health impact of violence and harassment of women at the workplace".

More information on all these projects will be published in this and next MHE Newsletters.

And last but not least, Mental Health Europe will continue to be actively involved in the follow up activities of the **EU Mental Health Pact**, through its National Focal Points. MHE is one of the NGOs contacted by the European Commission to help carry forward the implementation of the Pact in the EU Member States.

As you can see, we have a very busy year ahead, but with the help of the whole MHE team, the Executive Committee and Board, and especially with the support of our members, we will succeed!

NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH!

Mary Van Dievel

MHE General Assembly 2009 and capacity-building seminar for MHE members

MHE's General Assembly 2009 will take place in Brussels on Saturday 13 June 2009.

The day before, on Friday 12 June, a capacity-building seminar for MHE members will be organised. The theme for the capacity-building seminar hasn't been decided so far. Your suggestions are most welcome.

The invitation and programmes for both events will be forwarded to MHE members in April.

MHE will be able to cover the travel and subsistence costs of a good number of MHE members.

More information to follow with the invitation in April.

Please already pencil these dates in your diary and make sure you can join us in Brussels in June!

MHE elections for General Assembly and Board

The invitation for the nomination of Voting Individual Members to the General Assembly has been sent to all MHE individual members on 9 January. Deadline for receiving nominations is 9 February 2009. Please contact us should you not have received an invitation.

The 9 Voting Individual Members will then between themselves elect 3 Voting Individual Members to the MHE Board. These invitations will be sent out at the beginning of March 2009.

And last but not least, also at the beginning of March, an invitation to nominate candidates for the Board from the Full Member organisations will be sent out.

If you are a MHE member and would like to have a say in the MHE Board and influence MHE's policies and activities, do not hesitate to nominate yourself. We need fresh blood in the MHE Board!

The election procedure should be finalised by the beginning of May 2009; the new Board will be presented at the General Assembly on 13 June 2009.

Membership fees 2009

All MHE members have received an invitation to pay their membership fee for 2009. Please contact the MHE Secretariat should you not have received this invitation or should you wish additional information.

Keep in mind that MHE members will need to have paid their membership fee if they want to nominate themselves for the Board elections and if they want to participate in the capacity-building seminar and General Assembly in June!

MHE welcomes new stagiaire

At the beginning of January, Eléonore Van Haute joined the MHE Secretariat, where she will work as a stagiaire until the beginning of July.

Eléonore is Belgian and she graduated from the Faculty of Political Sciences in Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), where she specialised in European Affairs, and she did a Euromaster at the University of Bath (UK).

She will assist the MHE secretariat in the coordination of the PROGRESS project and will work on a new campaign focusing on the abilities of people with mental health problems rather than on their limitations.

You can contact Eléonore by email at eleonore.vanhaute@mhe-sme.org

We wish her a warm welcome!

In 2009 Mental Health Europe will organize several regional training rounds for the MHE National Focal Points

The trainings will include an update on ongoing developments in the field of mental health and social inclusion policies on the European level and also to provide participants with lobbying tools such as how to approach national, regional and local authorities in order to bring forward mental health related issues. Fundraising tools and the use of the media will also be discussed during the training. Another focus of the training will also be laid on the upcoming European elections that take place in June 2009.

The trainings will take place:

22-23 January in Vienna

19-20 February in Athens

12-13 March in Brussels

26-27 March in Copenhagen

23-24 April in Helsinki

For more information and to register, please contact Astrid Mechel, Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

Mental Health Europe staff representations

On 20 January Astrid Mechel participated in the Social Platform's Social Policy Working Group meeting in Brussels.

On 21 January 2009, Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, represented MHE at the meeting of EU Health Policy Forum, in Brussels.

On 21 January, Roselyne Bourgon participated in the meeting with Aalborg Disability Council (at the European Commission) as well as in the meeting on EuRADE project organized by European Disability Forum at the European Parliament; last but not least she participated in the meeting of the Subcommittee on Human Rights in the European Parliament.

On 21 January 2009 Eléonore Van Haute attended the Meeting on European Research Agendas for Disability Equality (EuRADE) project organized by the European Disability Forum at the European Parliament.

On 22 January 2009, Mari Fresu attended the presentation event of the UK Foresight project "Mental Capital and Well-being", which was hosted by the European Commission in Brussels.

On 22-23 January, Mary Van Dievel and Astrid Mechel organised and participated in a training session for MHE National Focal Points in Vienna, Austria.

On 26-29 January, Roselyne Bourgon participated in the Conference of International Non governmental organizations of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg

On 29 January, John Henderson and Mary Van Dievel participated in a Round Table discussion forum on "Mental Health Reform in the EU: the Case of Greece" at the European Parliament in Brussels. John Henderson gave a presentation on the background and current challenges. The meeting was hosted by Evangelia Matzakis MEP.

On 29 January, Mary Van Dievel and Mari Fresu participated in the round table debate "The new frontier for mental health in the European Union: from stigmatisation to integration", hosted by Donnici and Matsakis MEPs at the European Parliament in Brussels. On this occasion, Mary Van Dievel gave a presentation on the MHE activities and policy positions.

On 29-30 January, Mary Van Dievel, John Henderson and Mari Fresu took part in a workshop on the NGO Contribution to the European Pact on Mental Health and Well-being, organised by the SUPPORT project in collaboration with DG-SANCO in Brussels.

II. REPORTS OF MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE ATTENDED BY MHE MEMBERS

The E.S.F. delivering the Lisbon reform strategy - Powering a new future

The European conference on social innovation and transnational cooperation was held in Lisbon (Pt) from 10-12 December.

This event marked the closure of 8 years the EU's Community Initiative "Equal". This programme was set up to promote innovation, partnership and transnational cooperation tackling discrimination, inequality, experienced by those who work and those looking for a job. The programme was very diverse with plenaries, discussion platforms consulting clinics, living labs and an ongoing market place. The opening session was introduced by José Manuel Barroso President of the EU, followed by the Portuguese Minister of Employment and the transnational college. Social innovation competitiveness and flexibility were for him the necessary tools to fight the recession, discrimination and social exclusion.

It is time for politicians to communicate visions, strategic messages and commitment. Being in Lisbon, the "Lisbon strategy" was often referred to as the possibility for innovative transferable cooperation for social inclusion change, and combating the risks of the current recession.

There were many discussion platforms and workshops where successful social innovations were reported.

I attended the "Empowering and citizenship" where I was very impressed by the project "Cirque du Monde", an empowerment project for young people (streetchildren of poor areas). It is based on the Human Rights principle: giving young people back their self-esteem and let them change the world. It is supported by the big company "Cirque du Soleil" always working in collaboration with local communities (NGO's or cities)

Another workshop was looking for the best definition of "empowerment". A difficult word that can be explained in many ways and is nearly not to translatable...

Several workshops were dealing with disadvantaged groups in the labour market : women, victims of trafficking, prisoners, women involved in prostitution, migrants, minority ethnic groups, Roman people, elderly, young people leaving institutional care, etc.

Finally there was an ongoing marketplace, with rooms for consultation, information, and exchange of experiences, competence and ideas of the different Equal partners.

Mental health was not represented as such, but all the presentations I heard and saw, were very good examples of improving the mental well being.

The Lisbon Meeting on social innovation "Transnational cooperation was a key moment for valuing the projects and putting them at the centre of economic and social policies.

Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Advisor

Report on the MHE event at the European Parliament "Ensuring Mental Health in Youth in Modern European Societies"

On 3 December 2008, Mental Health Europe held a debate on "Ensuring Mental Health in Youth in modern European Societies – Turning the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing into Reality" at the European Parliament in Brussels. The event was hosted by Poul Nyrup Rasmussen MEP, former Danish Prime Minister, and Giovanni Berlinguer MEP, member of the Committee for Health and Environment.

The focus was on one of the thematic priorities of the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing, namely the mental health of youth. The event fostered discussion between representatives from the EU Institutions and key experts on policy perspectives in this field. A fruitful debate with the participants took place as many relevant comments and remarks were made to address the issue of youth mental health from different perspectives.

The full report of the event can be downloaded from the MHE website, publications section:

<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/reports-from-mhe-seminars-and-other-mhe-events.html>

For further information or to receive a copy of the report by email, please write to Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

National Focal Point training 2009

French situation in mental health services: Mental Health Europe calls for protecting the rights of persons in facilities!

After having called the Greek government to take measures to put an end to the dramatic situation in the Mental Health sector, (see press release on MHE website <http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/Press%20release%20MHE%20calls%20on%20Greek%20government%20to%20put%20an%20end%20to%20the%20dramatic%20situation%20in%20the%20Mental%20Health%20sector.pdf>), Mental Health Europe sent out a press release addressing the French President and government to underline its concerns about the announcement by Nicolas Sarkozy during his speech at the hospital in Antony (France) regarding the creation of difficult mentally ill unities and his will to facilitate compulsory treatment.

Press release soon available on MHE website: <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>

III. PROJECTS UPDATE

Presentation of the CAMHEE project at the European Parliament

On 9 December 2008, key representatives of the European Institutions and mental health experts and stakeholders gathered together at the European Parliament in Brussels to discuss "Modern approaches in promoting child mental health". The event, hosted by Ms Jolanta Dickute MEP, was organised in the frame of the European Commission funded project "CAMHEE - Child and adolescent mental health in enlarged European Union". Aim of the debate was to present the first achievements and preliminary results of the projects. Current developments and modern approaches in the European Union in the field of child and adolescent mental health were addressed.

The CAMHEE project joins 35 partners from 16 European countries. Mental Health Europe is involved as associate partner. The project focuses on four key areas of work: 1) parenting and help for the families where parent(s) suffer from mental health problems; 2) (self) destructive behaviour prevention in school settings; 3) best practices in the field of child and adolescent mental health and economic evaluation and 4) country profiles of participating countries in the field of child and adolescent mental health.

The day before the event, on 8 December, the project partners met in the Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union (Brussels) where they discussed the project activities, shared the results and planned the forthcoming work and events.

For more information visit the CAMHEE project website <http://www.camhee.eu> or write to Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

2nd ProMenPol Policy Workshop: "Policy Based on Real People - Mental Health Promotion and Policy that makes a Difference"

Since 2007, Mental Health Europe has been actively involved in the European research project "PROMENPOL - Promoting and Protecting Mental Health". This project, funded under the 6th Framework Programme, focuses on mental well-being promotion and protection strategies in three life stages and three contexts, i.e. the workplace, school and residences for older people, and aiming at producing a proposal for a 'cross-sectoral' mental health policy platform. Each year ProMenPol runs a half-day policy workshop in Brussels that follows the Annual Practitioners Conference. On 11 December 2008, the second annual ProMenPol project's policy workshop took place in Brussels.

At this event, with the title "Policy Based on Real People - Mental Health Promotion and Policy that makes a Difference", the preliminary results of ProMenPol were presented, in particular the online database of mental health promotion tools and the pilot projects. Moreover, the follow-up developments of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being were discussed together with representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament, NGOs, the International Labour Organization (ILO), national ministries and third parties.

The presentations given by the keynote speakers at the 2008 ProMenPol policy workshop are available on the ProMenPol website at

<http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/?i=promenpol.en.news.643>

For more information, please visit the ProMenPol website at www.mentalhealthpromotion.net or contact Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

The VALUE+ project – State of the Art

The VALUE+ project, led by the European Patients' Forum (EPF) and of which Mental Health Europe (MHE) is a partner, is close to its first year of implementation.

Much has been achieved during this first phase, which focused on collecting information on the level of patient involvement in health-related projects co-funded by the European Commission. Different approaches were used for this purpose:

- Literature Review: reviewing the available literature on this subject was a very useful starting point to have an overview and a framework to plan the project work. The review is currently being finalized.

- Survey: various European Commission's funding programmes were analysed to identify projects related to chronic diseases that have been implemented in the period 1998-2008. Once the projects selected, a questionnaire was sent to the project coordinator and a patient or patient representative. The questionnaire asked for facts, views, good practices and lessons learnt around patient involvement. The survey including the analysis of the information will be finalized between February-April 2009.

With a number of projects still being implemented, VALUE+ agreed to cooperate more closely. The first step has been to identify the challenges and needs that these projects have in relation to involving patients in a meaningful way. Based on this assessment some actions to improve such involvement will be carried out. The assessment is still taking place.

- Focus groups: another approach used was a focus group with patients. The participants came from a few projects included in the survey. Getting their view on patient involvement in general and then more specifically in a project context was extremely valuable. Moreover, their personal experience helped to get more of the human dimension than it was possible with questionnaire only.

The preliminary findings were shared at the Autumn Advocacy Seminar of the European Patients Forum (EPF) in Vilnius, in November 2008. The seminar convened patients' leaders from the Baltic countries, Poland and the Czech Republic. More information can be found at <http://www.eu-patient.eu/projects/valueplus/events/index.php> where the report will be available this month.

Further approaches will be used in the course of this year: interviews with project coordinators and patients; more focus groups and a review of the funding programmes' work plans as well as evaluation reports.

The outcomes of this multi-sourced assessment will be translated into practical tools that will support different stakeholders in achieving a meaningful patient involvement in consultations, projects, policy making and any other action where patients should be strongly present.

For more information on VALUE+, please contact Liuska Sanna, EPF Programme Officer at liuska.sanna@eu-patient.eu or visit the project website at www.eu-patient.eu.

DETERMINE: An EU Consortium for Action on Socio-Economic Determinants of Health

Among other European projects, Mental Health Europe is a collaborating partner of DETERMINE (2007-2010), an EU wide initiative to stimulate concrete action on the social and economic determinants of health inequities. DETERMINE brings together a Consortium of over 50 health bodies, public health and health promotion institutes, governments, and various other organizations and networks from 26 European countries.

The overall objective is to achieve greater awareness and capacity amongst decision makers in all policy sectors to take health and health equity into consideration when developing policy. This demands greater cooperation than ever before between health and other sectors. The Consortium builds on the work of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health (SDH), and is being co-funded by the EU Public Health Action Programme.

At the half-way point of the initiative, Consortium members have engaged in a wide range of activities that contribute to a better understanding of how to improve health equity in the EU through a SDH approach. A number of Consortium Members have identified policies and actions beyond the health sector in their countries that address the social determinants of health inequalities. Other Consortium Members have identified approaches to address health inequalities that they consider "innovative" (in the context of their countries), and three small-scale pilot projects were selected via a call for proposals that can contribute the reduction of health inequalities via a SDH approach. These pilot projects are currently being implemented. In addition, a large number of Consortium members conducted interviews with decision makers outside the health sector to assess their understanding and attitudes towards health equity and their role in achieving this. In addition, Consortium Members have gathered examples of economic arguments from their countries that could be used to convince policy makers to invest in the reduction of health inequalities via a SDH approach.

The attention of the DETERMINE Consortium will now turn to the development of Capacity Building and Awareness Raising programmes. Consortium Members will implement these programmes in their countries, as part of the effort to mobilise others sectors to take part in efforts to improve the health and welfare of *all* members of society - and not simply the best or better off. The third DETERMINE Consortium Meeting, where these activities will be discussed, will take place in Prague on 13-14 May 2009, under the auspices of the Czech EU Council Presidency.

Further information and all DETERMINE outcomes, including an Action Summary Report on the first year of work that has been translated into 11 EU languages, are currently available on the DETERMINE Portal: www.health-inequalities.eu.

For more information about DETERMINE, please contact: i.stegeman@eurohealthnet.eu

IV. NEWS FROM MHE MEMBERS

The Flemish Association for Mental Health has a new Director

Jan Van Speybroek has been appointed by the Board as the new Director of the Flemish Association for Mental Health (VGGG). He is a clinical psychologist and worked in different settings in the mental health area, for instance in two psychiatric hospitals in the Gent region. The last 7 years he was working as the director of a community mental health centre in Kortrijk, West-Flanders.

He will take up his new position on 1 February 2009.

Advocacy France changes its e-mail addresses

The new e-mails addresses to Advocacy France:
Advocacy France advocacy.france@erenis.fr
Martine Dutoit mdutoit@erenis.fr

V. NEWS FROM OTHER EUROPEAN NGOS

EDF – European Disability Forum

European Disability Forum: Non-discrimination Legislation Campaign: French Presidency report for EU Minister Meeting

On 16-17 December the 27 EU Ministers on Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) addressed draft Directive on equal treatment. They met for the last time under EU French Presidency and discussed, among other issues, the progress made on the draft Directive on equal treatment. Due to the closed doors form of the meeting, the French Presidency published a report on the state of play on the Directive and outlined in this report the changes that it proposed to the Member States on the most discussed parts of the Directive including on the division of competencies, legal base and subsidiarity as well as on provisions relating to disability. The Presidency proposed to better align Article 4 provisions with the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A monitoring work on the Czech Republic Presidency advancements on the directive's proposal will be done by EDF.

For more information, see the website of EDF campaign

http://www.1million4disability.eu/news.asp?langue=EN or EDF website <http://www.edf-feph.org/default.asp>

MDAC – Mental Disability Advocacy Centre

MDAC launches UK sister charity

On 12 January MDAC launched its sister charity "MDAC-UK" at a fund-raising event at the House of Lords in London.

The event was hosted by Baroness Elaine Murphy, herself a former professor of psychiatry and now a member of the House of Lords. MDAC staff presented on their human rights work, with a focus on Bulgaria, a country on which MDAC-UK has chosen to focus their fundraising efforts in the first instance.

MDAC-UK has been established to provide a way of supporters in the UK to contribute tax-efficiently to advance the human rights of children and adults with intellectual disabilities and mental health disabilities abroad.

Source: MDAC

VI. EUROPEAN UNION

2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation

Encouraging people to be as creative and innovative as possible in education, employment and cultural activities are three main aims of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation launched on 8 January 2009 by the Czech Presidency of the EU and European Commission.

The aim is to innovate in areas such as the economy but also social and individual well-being. There will be promotion campaigns, events and initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels. The Year addresses a wide spectrum of related themes such as:

- Fostering artistic and other forms of creativity through pre-school, primary and secondary education including vocational streams, as well as non-formal and informal education maintaining engagement with creative forms of self-expression throughout adult life
- Cultural diversity as a source of creativity and innovation
- Information and communication technologies as media for creative self-expression ensuring that mathematics, science and technological studies promote an active, innovative mindset

- Developing a wider understanding of the innovation process and a more entrepreneurial attitude as prerequisites for continued prosperity
- Promoting innovation as the route to sustainable development
- Regional and local development strategies based on creativity and innovation
- Cultural and creative industries including design – where the aesthetic and the economic coincide
- Innovation in public and private services.

Source: *EU creativity dedicated website*, <http://create2009.europa.eu/>

EPSCO Council draws conclusions on age-related diseases such as Alzheimer and active inclusion to combat poverty

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) met on 16-17 December 2008.

Conclusions were adopted on public health strategies to combat age-related neurodegenerative diseases and Alzheimer's disease in particular, in the context of the ageing of the population and the growing health and social burden that these pathologies present for all the Member States, who emphasized the importance of improving the competencies of professionals in this area to guarantee a higher quality of medical and social care. The Member States asked the Commission to adopt an initiative, as of 2009, at Community level on research, the exchange of best practices between Member States, and the improvement of the quality of epidemiological data on the prevalence and incidence of these diseases.

Regarding the Active Inclusion Recommendation adopted in October 2008 (please also refer to MHE's position paper issued on the occasion of the 7th Roundtable on Poverty and Social Exclusion that took place in Marseille from 15-16 October 2008: http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/MHE%20position%20paper%20on%207th%20European%20Round%20Table%20on%20Poverty_Marseille_2008.pdf) the Council calls on the European Commission and the EU Member States to implement comprehensive national strategies to promote the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market and to implement appropriate monitoring of the application of the common active inclusion principles as well as to support, via PROGRESS and the European Social Fund, the exchange of good practices and the launch of experimental transnational programmes in the area of combating poverty and social exclusion.

Fundamental Rights Agency: Mental Health as focus for 2009

In 2009, the Fundamental Rights Agency will develop a legal study to examine existing legal and other instruments, policies, measures and practices for the protection, promotion and respect of the rights of disabled mentally ill persons focusing particularly on whether or to which extent mentally ill people are considered legally disabled, and therefore benefit from the prohibition of discrimination. In order fully to understand the multiple dimensions of this phenomenon and consider appropriate responses in terms of legislation, policy and practice, the FRA will develop a major research project with a quantitative and qualitative dimension that will span over three years. The scope of the project might be extended over this three-year period to include: multiple discrimination against young people, additional combinations of grounds of discrimination such as race and religion or disability and sexual orientation, and areas such as access to housing, social security, education, goods and services. The project will be initiated in 2009 with work in-house in order to develop appropriate, innovative and robust methodological approaches for its research work in 2010.

For more information see the FRA Annual work programme 2009

http://fra.europa.eu/fra/material/pub/WP/wp09_en.pdf

VII. COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Czech EU Presidency priorities

The Czech Republic took up the Presidency of the European Union on January 1st, lasting until 30 June 2009. The key priorities are the three 'E's': Economy, Energy and Europe in the world. The motto is a 'Europe without barriers'.

Economic and Social Cohesion Policy

A topical theme of the first half of 2009 will be the form of the economic and social cohesion policy after 2013. The Czech Presidency intends to continue the debate as to whether the current goals, strategies and priorities reflect the development and needs of the EU and whether and how current challenges should be reflected in that policy. Building upon the adopted European Economic Recovery Plan, the Presidency will try to finalise negotiations about the legislative proposals submitted in the plan. The concept of regional cohesion and the possibility to simplify the administration of the Structural Funds will become another theme of the discussion.

Social Services as a Tool for Active Social Inclusion of the Most Disadvantaged Persons and as an Employment Opportunity

The Presidency will focus on services as a tool for preventing social exclusion and for active inclusion of the most vulnerable persons and, at the same time, as an area of growing employment opportunities (given the demographic trends in the EU) and will pay attention to the process of strengthening the networks of such services provided in a natural social environment. The Presidency will address the issue of the availability of social services in terms of location, financing and type. In the context of an active inclusion policy, the Presidency will support the combination of policies in the areas of labour market integration, workforce mobility, motivation to find a job, support for an adequate income and high-quality, accessible and efficient social services. The Presidency will organise a conference to discuss social inclusion issues and will propose the adoption of the Council conclusions. Attention will also be paid to the improvement of quality, availability and financing of long-term care, protection of the dignity and rights of persons dependent on care, and support for an active, healthy ageing and ageing well.

Financial Sustainability of Healthcare Systems

The key factors influencing healthcare expenditures are an ageing population, medical progress and innovation, and the growing expectations and demands of patients. The Presidency will focus primarily on the definition of financial sustainability and its objectives, and on the analysis of the resources available for healthcare funding. In terms of long-term care funding, it will be necessary to draw attention to the pressure it faces as a result of the growing demand for long-term care services, in relation to the negative demographic trends and the lack of providers of this type of care. The May 2009 high-level conference is to provide a forum for Member States to share experience and exchange information and best practices concerning healthcare systems and their financial sustainability.

The full text of the Czech Presidency's priorities is available at:

<http://www.eu2009.cz/en/news-and-documents/news/the-czech-presidency-presents-its-priorities-and-work-programme-4810>

VIII. EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DG SANCO

First Eurobarometer on mental health and children

On 13 January 2009 a new Flash Eurobarometer survey was published on the Mental Health and Well-being of Children and Young people. The survey examined parents' perceptions of their child's mental health and well-being in 27 European Countries. Approximately 12,750 randomly selected parents (including step-parents and guardians) were interviewed. Several aspects of the quality of life were assessed, like child's level of energy and fitness, depressive moods and emotions, stressful feelings, physical well-being, child's autonomy, as well as child's opportunities to structure and enjoy his/her social life and leisure time and participation in social activities.

The survey uses a standardised cross-cultural assessment tool, the KIDSCREEN-index. The results of the survey show wide variations both between and within countries. This survey tool

complements existing health data on the mental and psychological well-being of children and young people in the monitoring of population health.

This work contributes to the activities implemented in the context of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being, which has among its key priorities the mental health and well-being of children and young people.

To read the complete results of the Flash Eurobarometer:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/mental_health_en.htm

or

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

IX. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

MEP adopted the Catania report on situation of fundamental rights in the EU

By adopting the report drafted by Giusto Catania (GUE/NGL, IT) on 14th January 2009, by 401 votes in favour, 220 against and 67 abstentions, MEPs address fundamental rights in its various aspects, voicing recommendations on a broad range of issues like discrimination, immigration, social rights or gender equality.

MEPs express their concern over the "high number of fundamental rights violations in the EU", pointing to instances of serious discrimination against minorities and threats to privacy. The report contains some provisions regarding social rights and defines these rights as "indivisible, interdependent fundamental rights".

For more information see *LIBE Committee webpage*

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/homeCom.do?language=EN&body=LIBE>

or *European Parliament website, press release section:*

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/017-46094-012-01-03-902-20090113IPR46093-12-01-2009-2009-false/default_en.htm

Report on Mental Health adopted by European Parliament's ENVI Committee

On 22 January 2009, the European Parliament's Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) voted on the report on Mental Health (rapporteur Evangelia Tzampazi MEP). The report, which was under discussion since last November, has been adopted unanimously by the ENVI members and will be discussed soon in the plenary session of the European Parliament.

Despite the report is still much focused on the burden of mental illness rather than on a positive public mental health, Mental Health Europe is pleased with the result as a positive step towards the implementation of the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing. MHE has been engaged in the draft of the document and has tabled some amendments that have been successfully integrated into the report. In particular, MHE has encouraged and endorsed the European Parliament's proposal for the establishment of a multi-stakeholder consultative Platform to implement the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing, as well as the call on the Member States to support the strengthening of organisations which represent service users and carers in order to facilitate their participation in the policy and decision making process. MHE is glad that the report calls for the adoption of common European guidelines defining disability in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Finally, MHE welcomes the European Parliament's endorsement of the Commission proposal for a new directive against discrimination on the base of religion or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation beyond the employment sector and its call for the immediate adoption of this directive in order effectively to protect persons with mental health problems from discrimination.

However, MHE notices that the report is still putting too much focus on mental illness rather than on positive mental health and wellbeing.

The final report will be available soon on the European Parliament's website. The draft report and the amendments can be downloaded from

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees.do?language=EN>

For further information about MHE policy work on the report on mental health, contact Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

X. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

NEW Report on the integration of mental health in primary care, by the WHO and the World Organization of Family Doctors

A joint report by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organization of Family Doctors on the integration of mental health in primary care is being launched and is now available.

'Integrating mental health into primary care – a global perspective' presents the justification for integrating mental health, and advice on how to do so. Drawing on both the latest evidence and on in-depth analysis of 12 case examples of successful integration, the report highlights 10 broad principles to guide countries in their efforts to successfully integrate mental health into primary care.

The report can be downloaded from the WHO MIND website:

http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/services/en/index.html

Impact of Global financial and economic crisis on health

The WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan presented a statement on the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on health.

For further info: please contact Mr Dick Thompson thompsond@who.int

XI. UNITED NATIONS

Adoption of the Optional Protocol relating to Economic and Social Rights Pact by General Assembly of the UN

A step towards justiciability and reality of Economic, Social and cultural Rights!

The optional Protocol relating to the International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of the United Nations (1966) has been adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10th, 2008. The protocol allows individuals to contact the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' Committee of the United Nations if they see their ESC Rights being violated by the States after having used all the different ways of internal appealing. So, the justiciability of the rights to food, to work, to health, to education, to housing, to culture, for men/women equality, for a decent life and human dignity is considerably strengthened.

For more information, visit the website of SPIDH, the international permanent Secretariat Human Rights and Local Governments: <http://www.spidh.org/en/home/index.html>

XII. PUBLICATIONS

Lancet special issue on child maltreatment

On 3 December 2008, the Lancet published a special issue on child maltreatment. The issue has four main articles, one each on: the magnitude and consequences of child maltreatment, interventions to prevent child maltreatment and associated consequences, recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, and promoting children's rights to aid the prevention of child maltreatment.

To view the Lancet special issue, visit: <http://www.lancet.com/series/child-maltreatment>

New guide on "How to get involved in Europe"

The Community Development Foundation has recently published a document called "How to get involved in Europe: a guide for communities, individuals and those working with communities".

The key aim of the My Voice in Europe Project is to stimulate interest and deepen the debate on Europe at a local level using a community development approach. The project has worked primarily with women and young people with the aim of highlighting useful and accessible

tools to support those working in the voluntary and community sector who are interested in influencing Europe, or simply finding out a bit more about Europe and the EU.

For downloading the guide, visit:

http://cms.horus.be/files/99907/MediaArchive/Policies/Participatory_democracy/GetInThere.pdf

ECCL publishes a new resource on advocating for Community Living

On the occasion of the International Human Rights Day and the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Coalition for Community Living (ECCL) announced the publication of its advocacy manual for disability organisations and service providers entitled 'Creating Successful Campaigns for Community Living'.

The purpose of the manual is to assist individuals and organisations who want to achieve the changes that are needed to ensure that people with disabilities can participate in community life as equal citizens. It provides information and advice on how to conduct campaigns and other activities to attain the goal of community living for all people with disabilities.

For downloading the manual, go to: <http://www.community-living.info/?page=292>

XIII. WEBSITES/ONLINE INFORMATION

Revamped website on "Peer Review in Social Protection and Social Inclusion and Assessment in social Inclusion"

The aim of the new website is to make it more user-friendly and easier to navigate. The website is available in English, French and German.

For visiting the website: go to http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu/front-page?set_language=en

XIV. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NEW!! 17-18 February 2009

Conference: "Securing Europe's Healthcare Future", Prague (Czech Republic)

For more information: visit <http://www.sustainhealthcare.org/>

4-7 March 2009

XVII World IFTA Congress, "Reconciling Differences: Can Family Therapy Help Heal the World?", Portorož (Slovenia)

For more information: visit www.paragon-conventions.com/ifta2009

NEW!! 19-21 March 2009

18th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE IAFP "Ruptures and Relations - Group Dynamics and Forensic Psychotherapy", Konstanz (Germany)

For more information: visit <http://www.forensicpsychotherapy.com/activities/conference2009/> or contact conference2009@forensicpsychotherapy.com

NEW!! 26-27 March 2009

XVI International symposium about current issues and controversies in Psychiatry. Barcelona, Spain

For more information: visit <http://www.geyseco.es/controversias/controversias-e.htm>

27-29 March 2009

9th Workshop on Costs and Assessment in Psychiatry, "Quality and outcomes in mental health policy and economics", Venice (Italy)

For more information: visit <http://www.icmpe.org/test1/events/events.htm>

16-19 April 2009

12th International Congress of IFPE, "Well being and mental disorder: epidemiological tools in the global village", Vienna (Austria)

For further information: visit the Congress dedicated website, <http://www.ifpe2009.at/>

27-28 April 2009

6th European Conference on Promoting Workplace Health, "HEALTHY WORK - HEALTHY LIFESTYLE - HEALTHY BUSINESS", Perugia (Italy)

For more information: contact the Conference Secretariat, Tel +39 0755 857 365, Email loriseqr@unipg.it

06-08 May 2009

Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services (HPH) Viol, Crete (Greece)

For more information: visit <http://www.univie.ac.at/hph/creta2009/>

27-29 May 2009

9th Conference of the European Union of Supported Employment, Prague (Czech Republic)

For more information: contact the Conference Secretariat, Tel +420 224 942 696, or visit <http://www.euseconference2009.org>

NEW!! 22-24 June 2009

17th European Social Services Conference

Discover innovative 'best practice' project - and follow an interactive, international discussion on the social issues. Prague (Czech Republic)

For more information: visit <http://www.esn-eu.org/prague/eng/programme.html>

NEW!! 16-19 September 2009

39th Annual EABCT Congress

For more information: visit <http://www.eabct.com/Dbrovnik.htm>

NEW!! 28-29 septembre 2009

Mental Health & Social Issues: Rehabilitation, Social Participation and professional Integration Mersch (Luxembourg).

<http://www.social-psychiatry.eu/indexfr.html>

For more information: visit <http://www.social-psychiatry.eu/indexfr.html> (in French)

22-24 October 2009

6th European Congress Violence Clinical Psychiatry, Stockholm (Sweden)

For more information: visit <http://www.oudconsultancy.nl/stockholm/ecvcp/Invitation.html>

27-31 October 2009

XXV World Congress on Suicide Prevention, Montevideo (Uruguay)

For more information: visit <http://www.iasp.info/>, or send an email to info@iasp2009.org

Do you wish to share information, announce something or make a contribution to the MHE Newsletter?

Please send your contributions to info@mhe-sme.org