



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE
Boulevard Clovis 7, B-1000 Brussels
Tel + 32 2 280 04 68
Fax + 32 2 280 16 04
Email: info@mhe-sme.org
Web site: <http://www.mhe-sme.org>

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NEW! News about the MHE Newsletter!

Dear reader, we would like to inform you that from now onwards, the Newsletter will be published in English only. The MHE Newsletter was until now issued in English and French. This change is due to the very limited number of French speaking readers, the increasing interest from German and other languages speaking people, as well as the limited budget for translation.

Moreover, the new English version will be shorter and more focused on Mental Health Europe’s activities, policies and achievements.

All the current Newsletter readers will continue to receive this full English version.

Please note that a summary will be made and translated in French, German and Spanish and will also be disseminated to all the current readers the week after the publication of the English version.

We envisage translating the summary in one more language and would welcome your suggestions about which other language would be the most appropriate in your view.

Our new Information Officer Alessia Faravelli will be happy to receive your ideas!

(alessia.faravelli@mhe-sme.org)

Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director

I. MHE NEWS

MHE Vice-President receives a prize

Elizabeth Muschik, MHE Vice-President, was honoured by the University of Linz and received the "Hans Strozka Prais" for special developments in Social Psychiatry in Austria. This prize was paying a tribute to Elizabeth's long standing commitment and fight for the improvement of the quality of life of users and their families, and for the creativity of the projects she developed in Austria.

Open letter on human rights in closed institutions: MHE calls on MEPs to support the EU action in the field of mental health facilities!

Mental Health Europe sent an open letter to MEP on the European Parliament Written Declaration on human rights in closed institutions made by MEPs Maria da Assunção Esteves, Jo Leinen, Hélène Flautre and Giusto Catania. The aim of the letter is to convince MEP to sign the declaration which according to the rules of procedure will be adopted by half of the total MEP numbers signatures.

To read MHE open letter, please see on our website the following link: <http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/MHE%20open%20letter%20to%20the%20MEPs%20in%20support%20of%20the%20Written%20Declaration%20on%20human%20rights%20in%20closed%20institutions.pdf>

MHE – ENUSP Empowerment seminar

The empowerment seminar "Nothing about us without us. How to make this a reality?" is the outcome of the joint work of MHE and the European Network of (ex) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP).

Twenty six mental health service users/survivors from twenty countries gathered on 13 and 14 March 2009 at the Hôtel du Congrès in Brussels to exchange their views and discuss the future of their organisation. On the first evening they were welcomed by the Chair of ENUSP Mary Nettle, the Director of MHE Mary van Dievel and Trude Eliassen from the European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. After having the opportunity to get to know each other and shortly present their organisations and expectations from the seminar, the participants continued working next day. The day started with the overview of past, present and future of ENUSP and was followed by the report on the activities of ENUSP in relation to the World Psychiatric Association, to the European Mental Health Pact and to the UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities. There was also a presentation about some principles, current projects and perspectives regarding ENUSP and the European research. After the lively discussion on the presented themes, the afternoon was dedicated to working in three small groups on the task – what should be future priorities of ENUSP. Both the outcomes from the working groups as well as the insight into the plenary discussion will soon be available in the seminar report. The two very intense but also very empowering days were followed by the board meeting of ENUSP. It was felt that this seminar was a success and that our cooperation with MHE should continue.

For more information, please contact the MHE Secretariat at info@mhe-sme.org

"Cognitive Impairment, Mental Health and Transport – Design with Everyone in Mind": A new OECD publication

The Organization for Economic and Development (OECD) issued a new publication "Cognitive Impairment, Mental Health and Transport – Design with Everyone in Mind". This publication is the result of the cooperation between OECD and the European Disability Forum, Inclusion Europe and Mental Health Europe. This publication is the first to deal with international transport policy issues related to cognitive impairment and mental health. It aims to help

those who plan design and run transport systems and infrastructure to understand and find practical solutions to these issues for the benefit of the travelling public as a whole. Many of the solutions, such as transport staff training, are simple and low-cost, and, applied universally, would benefit the wider international community. Other steps need to be made regarding accessibility of transport information, which may include a re-designing of timetable presentation, clearer audible and visual signage, and increased staff presence to help build users' confidence.

To order this report online:

<http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?K=5KZ83RTGRLNP&CID=&LANG=fr>

MHE to participate in Task Force on Deinstitutionalization set up by EU Commissioner Špidla

MHE has been invited to participate in the work of a task force set up by the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Vladimir Špidla, and his cabinet, together with EDF, Inclusion Europe, Age and ECCL. The task force will work on recommendations for the deinstitutionalization process in the Member States of the EU. The aim is to produce a report which can give direction to the future work of the European Commission in this field. The task force brings together stakeholders from the child sector, older people's organizations, mental health and disability. The aim is to present a report to the Commissioner Špidla in October 2009. EDF members will be updated on this work and EDF secretariat will consult its e-mail expert group on community living and social services.

For further information or any additional questions, please contact Josée Van Remoortel, at info@mhe-sme.org

Elections of MHE Board members 2009 – 2012

The Full Member Organizations of Mental Health Europe will elect 12 members of the Board of Mental Health Europe. Three additional places are reserved for representatives of Individual members of Mental Health Europe who will be elected by voting individual members on the General Assembly. All Full Member Organizations are invited to nominate a candidate for the Board elections. Each nomination should be supported by at least three other voting organizations. The 12 candidates receiving the highest number of votes will be elected. These elections are a major step forward in helping Mental Health Europe to become even more active and democratic and to influence mental health development in Europe. The deadline for the application is the 8th April 2009.

REMINDER - 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 provisionally selected for the capacity-building seminar is "Empowerment" (empowerment of politicians, mental health service users and mental health professionals). 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!

REMINDER - 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 member staff

Alessia Faravelli joined the MHE Secretariat to work as MHE Information Officer. Alessia is Italian and she graduated from the Faculty of Psychology in Turin (Italy), where she specialized in Clinical and Community Psychology. She attended a Specialization Course on Development Co-operation at the Belgian-Italian Chamber of Commerce. She will assist MHE Secretariat taking responsibility for the Newsletter, working on the MHE Campaign 2009 and the European elections campaign 2009, also taking care of the communications.

You can contact Alessia by E-mail at alessia.faravelli@mhe-sme.org
We wish her a warm welcome!

MHE'S POLICY WORK

MHE response to the Commission consultation on health inequalities

On 31 March 2009, Mental Health Europe submitted its response to the Commission consultation on the communication "EU Action to reduce health inequalities". This communication on health inequalities has been announced by the European Commission communication as a key initiative of the work programme 2009.

Work on this Communication is being jointly led by the Directorates General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal opportunities (DG EMPL) and for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO), together with several other DGs. Among other organizations, MHE was asked to give input to contribute to the development of the communication. Mental Health Europe has consulted with its members and drafted a joint position. Mental Health Europe (MHE) has welcomed the European Commission consultation on health inequalities and believes that action on the EU level needs to be taken to address health inequalities. MHE believes that mental health should be included as a key priority in a European strategy on health inequalities as mental health and well-being are central to understand wider health and social issues. In its response, MHE stresses that mental health is more than a health issue, it influences and is influenced by a wide range of social and economic factors. Positive mental health or well-being contributes to healthier lifestyles, better physical health, improved recovery from illness, fewer limitations in daily life, higher educational attainment, greater productivity, employment and earnings, better relationships, more social cohesion and improved quality of life. All these factors are interrelated and affect the lives of individuals and communities.

The full response is available online on the MHE website at http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/MHE_RESPONSE_TO_EC_CONSULTATION_ON_HEALTH_INEQUALITIES_31%20March%202009.pdf

For more information on the MHE activities on health inequalities, please contact Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

The Greek Ombudsman for Health and Social Welfare organises a Round Table in Athens

In January this year Ms Tzampazi, Greek MEP, hosted a debate in the European Parliament on the current impasse on the implementation of the EC Reform Programme for Psychiatry and Mental Health Services in Greece. As a result of the evidence presented at this event of the parsimony and failure of the Ministry of Health fulfilling the budget agreements with service

providers, the Greek Ombudsman for Health and Social Welfare has organized a Round Table in Athens on 30th March involving all interested parties from the NGOs, the Professions, Civil Society and Ministry of Health representatives. John Henderson, MHE Senior Policy Adviser, was invited to participate in the Round Table.

For more information, contact the MHE Secretariat at info@mhe-sme.org

NEWS ON PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES IN WHICH MHE IS INVOLVED

3rd Annual ProMenPol project conference, Brussels, 15 and 16 October 2009 – MARK THIS DATE!

The 3rd Annual ProMenPol conference will take place on 15th and 16th October 2009 in Berlin at the offices of the Federal Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (BAuA). The event is organized in the frame of the activities of the European research project "PROMENPOL - Promoting and Protecting Mental Health", funded under the 6th Framework Programme. The project focuses on mental well-being promotion and protection strategies in three life stages and three contexts, namely workplace, school and residences for older people.

Mental Health Europe is involved in ProMenPol together with other partners from the Germany, Austria, Ireland, Finland, Estonia and Greece. At the last annual conference, lessons learned from practice will be the main focus of the agenda. ProMenPol presents results from conducted Mental Health Promotion Field Trials in general and in particular a good-practice example for each of ProMenPol settings (education, workplace, and older people's residences). The presentations will form the basis for discussing advantageous and disadvantageous aspects of evidence-based and good-practice results as well as its perception in the sphere of policy, practice and research. To support policy through practice, the conference addresses especially policy makers as well as practitioners in order to foster information exchange. The project's conference will also present the latest developments concerning its classification system for mental health promotion tools and at the new ProMenPol toolkit that will be launched by that time. If you wish to participate or find out more about the conference, please contact Rena Hohenstein from BAuA (project leader) at hohenstein.rena@baua.bund.de.

For more information about the project, visit the project website at <http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net> or contact Mari Fresu, MHE Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

News from the MHE Daphne Project "Violence against women at work... let's talk about it!"

On 19 March, MHE and the project partners from Slovenia, Lithuania, Greece, Romania, Spain and Austria assembled in Brussels for the first project meeting. The meeting was arranged at this relatively early stage of the project to establish strong partnerships between the partner countries and MHE and to build a cohesive working relationship thus ensuring a successful project outcome.

The meeting was a forum for discussion into the implementation of the project's objectives and to talk about potential problems and finding solutions to them as violence against women at work is very much a hidden issue. At the meeting it was universally agreed that the title of the project needed be changed from 'Empower the Victim, teach the boss' to 'Violence against women at work... let's talk about it!' the original title was very difficult to translate into all the partners languages and the nearest translation had negative connotations. The new title can

easily be translated and the message behind the title remains positive. This, of course, will have to have the approval of the European Commission.

We all agreed that the project would benefit women who have suffered violence at work and would facilitate the implementation of good practices at work and in society to protect women in employment.

For more information please contact Lucy Vallis at Lucy.vallis@mhe-sme.org

Reinforcement of gender inequality and effects on women with disability

On the 13 February, EDF held a training focused on the reinforcement of gender inequality and how this has an effect on the woman with a disability. When discussing gender and disability the training moved from the so called "double disadvantage" experienced by women with disabilities towards looking at each issue as separate but intertwined and not simply focusing on what issue has the most detrimental affect on the woman's life chances.

Lucy Vallis, MHE Project Coordinator, participated in this event.

For more information, please contact her at lucy.vallis@mhe-sme.org

A possible collaboration between MHE and European Women's Lobby

A meeting with the European Women's Lobby (EWL) was held regarding a possible collaboration between MHE and EWL on the Daphne project. One of EWLs actions is on Migrant women workers; therefore a partnership would be mutually beneficial as they are looking at the mental health issues in migrant women. Migrant women are often employed in domestic services and frequently their rights as employees are ignored, they are often subjected to violence and harassment and this can lead to them absconding from the place of employment without their legal papers. Consequently, the woman becomes an illegal immigrant who is then forced to work in even more precarious areas of employment resulting in negative impacts on their mental health.

Lucy Vallis, MHE Project Coordinator represented MHE at this event.

For more information, please contact her at lucy.vallis@mhe-sme.org

MHE receives a request for a project partnership

MHE receives a request for a partnership in a Grundtvig Small Co-operation Project that will look at the use of arts – music in particular – in wellbeing programmes for adult mental health service users.

Additional information can be obtained from Linda Taylor, Projects Development manager of Health and Europe Center, E-mail l.s.taylor.healthandeurope@googlemail.com

UPDATE ON NEW ITEMS ON MHE WEBSITE

The MHE website has been updated with new information in the following sections:

- Homepage / Open letter on human rights in closed institutions:
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en.html>
- About MHE / MHE Members / MHE members in Israel
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/about-mental-health-europe/our-members.html>
- About us / Join our network (English and French):
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/about-mental-health-europe/join-our-network.html>

- About us / Contact us
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/about-mental-health-europe/contact-us.html>
- Our Work: latest policy developments in the MHE working areas (mental health promotion and disorder prevention, disability, social inclusion, human rights):
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/our-work.html>
- Publications:
 - Press Release on French situation:
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>
 - Reports on INGO Conference - Report on winter session:
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/reports-sessions-council-of-europe-ingo.html>
- Our Projects / Current projects: DAPHNE project and Prometheus (French version):
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/our-projects/current-projects.html>

MHE REPRESENTATION AT VARIOUS MEETINGS

On 2 March, Astrid Mechel, Social Policy Officer, attended the preparatory meeting for the 2010 EU Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN), Brussels.

On 3 March, Astrid Mechel attended the first meeting of the EU Stakeholder Group on the Preparations for the 2010 EU Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion at the European Commission.

On 5 March, Roselyne Bourgon, Human Rights Officer, participated in a meeting of the Fundamental Rights and anti discrimination working group (FRAND) at the Social Platform, Brussels.

On 5-6 March, Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, represented MHE at the meeting of the members of the ProMenPol project in Athens.

On 6 March, Malgorzata Kmita, MHE President, and Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director, participated at the 1st preparatory meeting with the MHE member organization MIND in London for the MHE 2010 conference in the North of England.

On 10 March, Mary Van Dievel attended the Information meeting at the European Commission's DG Employment, Social Inclusion Unit, on recent policy developments and activities in the field of social protection and social inclusion.

On 12-13 March, Astrid Mechel, Roselyne Bourgon, Mary Van Dievel and Josée Van Remoortel (Senior Policy Adviser) led the National Focal Points training for Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Italy in Brussels.

On 13-14 March, Mary Van Dievel represented MHE at the User Empowerment Seminar in Brussels. She gave an introductory speech on 13th.

On 14 March, the MHE Executive Committee meeting was held in Brussels.

On 18 March, Mari Fresu participated in the Information Day on the Community Health Programme 2009 held by the European Commission in Luxembourg.

On 19 March, Lucy Vallis, Mary Van Dievel, Josée Van Remoortel and Colette Versporten led the 1st partners meeting for the Daphne project in Brussels.

On 19 March, Astrid Mechel and Mary Van Dievel attended a meeting on the monitoring and evaluation framework for PROGRESS programme-supported key EU networks.

On 23-25 March, John Henderson, Senior Policy Adviser, attended the 3rd HELPS project meeting in Barcelona.

On 25 March, Mari Fresu participated in the meeting of the Advisory Committee on "Mental health in youth and education" with the European Commission in Brussels.

On 25-27 March, Astrid Mechel and Mary Van Dievel led the National Focal Points training for Denmark, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway and Poland. The training took place in Copenhagen.

On 27 March, Roselyne Bourgon represented MHE at the Social Platform preparatory meeting on the networking visit in Sweden (foreseen for May 2009).

On 30 March, Mari Fresu gave a presentation on successful European projects implemented by MHE at the Information Day on the Community Health Programme 2009, held by the Flemish Agency for Care and Health in Brussels.

NEWS FROM MHE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

The Flemish Federation for Community Mental Health Services prepares a Memorandum for the European Elections

The Flemish Federation for Community Mental Health Services has prepared a Memorandum for the coming European Elections. They ask for more support for early detection, more "buddy support" and prevention in the mental health field.

For more information in Dutch visit www.fdgg.be or send an E-mail to info@fdgg.be

35th Week of Psychiatry

From 30th March until 5th April 2009 the 35th Week of Psychiatry is held in the Netherlands. The theme of this year is "One more experience?!". The Week is an experience of the users organizations and is directed to everybody (with or without mental health problems) who worked towards improving the life and the working conditions of people with mental illness. During the "Brainday" users and experts will discuss the plus-value of the research.

For more information in Dutch, please visit the following websites: www.rcodehoofdzaak.org and www.weekvandeopsychiatrie.nl

MIND Anti Stigma Campaign

MIND, MHE member organisation in the United Kingdom, launched England's most ambitious campaign to tackle stigma and discrimination: "Time To Change". The campaign is funded by the big Lottery Fund and Comic Relief, and led by Mind and Rethink. Built on the twin foundations of users experience and a robust international evidence base, they hope the journey will lead to the end of discrimination on the grounds of mental health problems. The

campaign is the largest concerted action to talk directly to the public and inform and educate about mental health issues.

For more information, please visit www.time-to-change.org.uk

A new advocacy qualification launched by IMHA

A national mental advocacy qualification with trained independent mental health advocates (IMHAs) will support detained patients, who, under mental health law, are entitled to impartial support and advice on their rights. Patients under a community treatment order will also be entitled to an IMHA.

Source: MIND, Openmind 156, <http://www.mind.org.uk/>

II. EU INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER BODIES

European Commission's funding opportunities in Health: Call 2009

On 27 February 2009, the European Commission adopted the Work Plan for 2009 for the implementation of the second programme of Community action in the field of health. The Work Plan was followed by the publication of the calls for proposals that present new funding opportunities for European organizations active in the area of public health. The EAHC published calls for proposals for projects, operating grants, conferences and joint actions. The total budget available for the execution of the 2009 Work Plan is about 48.2 million euro. All proposals should address important problems in the European public health, including mental health related issues, and be in line with the Commission's priorities expressed in the Work Plan. The deadline for the submission of proposals is 20 May 2009.

For more information, visit the website of the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/index.html>

New WHO report "Mental health, resilience and inequalities"

A new WHO report "Mental health, resilience and inequalities" shows how the gap between rich and poor affects the mental health of individuals by causing psychological and physiological changes. Mental health is more than a health issue. It influences and is influenced by a wide range of social and economic factors. Positive mental health or well-being contributes to healthier lifestyles, better physical health, improved recovery from illness, fewer limitations in daily life, higher educational attainment, greater productivity, employment and earnings, better relationships, more social cohesion and improved quality of life. The WHO/Europe report looks at how these factors are interrelated, and their effects – both good and bad – on individuals and communities, as well as the action that needs to be taken.

For more information and to download the full report, please visit the WHO/Europe website: http://www.euro.who.int/mentalhealth/topics/20090309_1

To read the MHE response to the Commission consultation "Solidarity in Health: EU Action to reduce health inequalities", please visit the following webpage: http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/MHE_RESPONSE_TO_EC_CONSULTATION_ON_HEALTH_INEQUALITIES_31%20March%202009.pdf

or contact Mari Fresu, Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

The non-discrimination governmental expert group - sustaining a legacy

In order to uphold and advance the legacy of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities, the European Commission has set up in July 2008 a governmental expert group in the field of non-discrimination and the promotion of equality.

The group examines the impact of national and EU-level non-discrimination measures, validates good practice through peer learning and evaluates the effectiveness of non-discrimination policies. The group is composed of one representative of national authorities in charge of policies against discrimination. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights acts as a permanent observer to the group. External experts or observers with specific competences on a subject as well as civil society, social partners and equality bodies' representatives contribute on an ad hoc basis. The objective of the group is to foster the further development of policies at EU and national level aimed at combating discrimination and promoting equality. In 2009, the group will particularly focus on multiple-discrimination and non-discrimination mainstreaming, as set out in the European Commission Communication of July 2008 and confirmed in the conclusions of the Equality Summit held in September 2008 in Paris.

For more information, see:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=458>

Adoption by LIBE Committee of the Buitenweg Report

On 16 March, the European Parliament Civil Liberties Committees voted on the draft report on the proposal for an anti-discrimination directive. The report regarding the Directive was presented by MEP Kathalijne Buitenweg and adopted by the Committee (34 votes in favour, 7 against, 4 abstentions).

Although this figure represents a vast majority in favour, this masks the fact that the vote was very tense, long and difficult. The report has raised tension between the different political parties - even though the Parliament has been calling for this directive since 2000. Negotiations between the political parties resulted in more than 300 amendments being submitted to the vote. The report will be voted during Plenary Session of the European Parliament on 1 April 2009.

MHE has been informed that amendment 81, tabled by the EPP-ED political group, called for the rejection of the report in the plenary. MHE is very concerned about this position and has therefore called on the MEPs members of this political group not to vote against the proposed text.

For more information about the adoption of LIBE Committee, please visit this website:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+AP-2009-0149+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

For more information on the MHE activities around this issue, please contact Roselyne Bourgon, Human Rights Officer, at roselyne.bourgon@mhe-sme.org

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities-Ratifications

Update on EU Member States' ratifications:

On 24 February 2009, Germany ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol joining Slovenia, Austria, Hungary, Spain and Sweden who already ratified the Convention.

Source: European Disability Forum (EDF), <http://www.edf-feph.org/>

UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, first meeting held in February 2009

The first meeting of the twelve independent experts in charge of monitoring the convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) took place in Geneva between February 23rd and 27th. The Committee decided to open the discussion and training meetings to the public including NGOs which set an important precedent. Several meeting sessions took place including one specific between the Committee with NGOs as well as with national human rights institutions. Not only NGOs of persons with disabilities were present but also some mainstream human rights NGOs.

To read more about the UN Committee, see ECCL website: www.community-living.info

Source: ECCL

Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009

On 5 March, the Commission issued the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2009. This report examines the Member States' integrated national strategies on social inclusion, pensions, healthcare and long-term care. It reviews the main trends across the EU and at national level and is the outcome of a process involving the European Commission and the Council. Most of the work involves the Social Protection Committee (a group of high-level officials established in 2000 to serve as a vehicle for cooperative exchange between the Commission and the Member States). The 2009 report gives a clear signal on the need to implement comprehensive active inclusion strategies, to ensure long-term adequacy and sustainability of pensions, to reduce health inequalities and to improve cost-efficiency in the healthcare sector. Moreover, the report highlights the challenges that each EU country faces to promote social inclusion, adequate and sustainable pensions, and universally accessible healthcare and long-term care. These challenges are presented in the country assessments that accompany the report.

For further information about the full the Report, please visit the following webpage: <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/09/96&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Source: AGE Platform, <http://www.age-platform.org>

Social Europe campaign

'Do you know what social Europe can do for you?' The European Commission has launched a campaign to explain how Europe's employment, social and equal opportunities policies benefit citizens. This series of short animated clips focuses on six areas where the EU is taking action to help people.

For further information about the 'social Europe' campaign, please visit the website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=679&langId=en>

Source: AGE Platform, <http://www.age-platform.org>

III. NEWS FROM OTHER (E)NGOs

European Disability Forum (EDF)'s Board Meeting

The meeting of the board members of the European Disability Forum (EDF) took place in Prague at the end of February. Policy Czech Authorities active in the field of employment, social affairs and disability, welcomed the participants on the first day of the meeting. The meeting provided the members with updates on the strategy for a comprehensive legislation on non-discrimination, the European Parliament elections campaign and the UN Convention. The European Parliament foresees to ratify the UN Convention on 08 April. The issue of under-representation of some groups of disabled persons in the National Disability Councils was also discussed. Since this is the case for people with mental health problems, MHE will undertake some actions in this field.

Another topic of discussion was the involvement of the ENGOS in the EDF work. On this point, MHE and other NGOs asked for more equal opportunities to access the National Councils in all EDF's organs, committees, and structures. This could lead to the necessity of changing the Internal Rules and/or the Statutes of EDF. MHE will put forward a formal proposal for the next General Assembly.

For more information, contact Josée Van Remoortel at info@mhe-sme.org

Russian Constitutional Court forges the way out of discrimination for people with mental disabilities

On 27 February 2009, the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation decided its first case concerning regulations and procedures for assessing legal capacity, one of the key issues affecting people with mental disabilities and their participation on an equal basis with others in exercising basic human rights. In ruling on the case brought by the Mental Disability Advocacy Center (MDAC) and filed by Russian attorney Dmitri Bartenev, the Court reiterated that discrimination of persons with mental disabilities is impermissible under the Russian Constitution.

Source: Mental Disability Advocacy Center (MDAC), www.mdac.info

A template for a National Psychotherapy Law

The European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP) proposed a Template for a National Psychotherapy Law, modeled on the guidelines of the EAP and the Strasbourg Declaration of 1990, as well as on the Austrian Psychotherapy Act of 1990. The implementation of such a template in many countries could establish an internationally uniform set of psychotherapy regulations. This could, also, facilitate the creation of a joint platform in psychotherapy legislature, enabling psychotherapy practitioners to benefit from the Right to Freedom of Movement of Persons, granted under the European Community Treaty.

European Coalition for Community Living changes its addresses

New mailing address (as of 16 March 2009)
European Coalition for Community Living
c/o National Centre for Independent Living,
Unit 3.40
Canterbury Court, 1-3 Brixton Road,
London SW9 6DE
Phone: (+44) 20 7587 3982
Fax: (+44) 20 7582 2469
Mobile (Coordinator): (+44) 7964 424 331
www.community-living.info

Official address:
European Coalition for Community Living
c/o ENIL Secretariat
Gran Vía Marqués del Turia 49, 7, 12^a
46005 Valencia, Spain

IV. PUBLICATIONS

Eradicating Child Poverty: the role of the EU

On the 12th of February, Eurochild launched their new report on children in the National Strategies for Social Inclusion and Social Protection in a hearing in the Parliament, hosted by the MEP Gabriele Zimmer (GUE).

The report of the hearing will be soon available on Eurochild's website: www.eurochild.org

Second Study on Quality of Life in Europe

The European Foundation for the Improvement of living and Working Conditions (Eurofund) published the initial findings of its "Second study on quality of life in Europe" in November 2008. The main results of the study will be published in spring 2009.

Find more statistics in the summary of the study available on:

http://www.eurofund.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0852_en.htm

Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities through Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe

The European Commission has just published a new study by Eurydice network on "Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities through Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe". It puts the national policies of 30 European countries under the microscope, looking at the benefits of the different early childhood education and care systems and how to provide an effective education for the youngest children.

Download the study: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/eurydice/documents/098EN.pdf>

V. CONFERENCES

New International Master in Mental Health Policy and Services

A new International Master in Mental Health Policy and Services is promoted by the New University of Lisbon, in collaboration with the World Health Organization. The Masters is a two-year course. It will start on the 7 September 2009, with a two-week residential session, at the Faculdade de Ciências Médicas campus in Lisbon. A second two-week residential session will take place in Lisbon, from 29 March to April 2010.

For more information:

http://www.fcm.unl.pt/gepg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=400&Itemid=420

21-23 September 2009

2nd European Conference on Schizophrenia Research, Berlin, Germany

For more information write in E-mail to schizophrenia@cpo-hanser.de

28-30 May 2009

19th Conference of Alzheimer Europe (AE) « Stars for Help »

For more information visit the website: www.alzheimer2009.eu.

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