



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



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**NEWSLETTER N°12 /2009
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Dear members, dear friends,

2009 was another busy year.

During the first six months we organised MHE National Focal Points trainings in 5 different countries; the new formula of working with smaller groups proved to be a success.

We had our capacity-building seminar and General Assembly in June, where the election of the new Board was confirmed. We were very pleased to welcome 7 new Board members.

Also at the General Assembly, the principle of setting up time-limited Task Forces on topics related to mental health was adopted. We welcome your suggestions.

A training session for the new Board was organised at the beginning of October, where we discussed the vision and mission of Mental Health Europe and informed Board members about recent developments in our area of work at the EU level.

MHE was involved in the preparations for the thematic conferences on "Youth and Education", and "Prevention of depression and suicide" and actively contributed to these conference which were organised under the umbrella of the EU Pact on Mental Health and Well-being.

MHE worked together with Feantsa (Federation of initiatives for the homeless) on a joint statement for the new European Parliament, and with the European Youth Forum on the training of their members in the field of mental health issues.

The relations with the DG Employment social inclusion and social protection unit and with other European level umbrella organizations were excellent.

There is much more to say, and you will have the opportunity to read about it in our annual report 2009.

I would like to thank the MHE staff, Senior Policy Advisers and Board for their strong commitment, but also our National Focal Points who helped to disseminate information from the EU level to the grassroots level and vice versa.

Wishing you all a very happy festive season and a very happy 2010,

Nace Kovac, President.



Wishing you all the joys of the holiday season: the warmth of home, the love of family, the laughter of friends, and of course good mental health

I. MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

MHE NEWS AND POLICY WORK

Mental Health Europe conference 2010 in Brussels – Pencil the dates in your diary!

Mental Health Europe will hold its 2010 conference in Brussels on 22-23 October 2010, and not in Leeds as initially planned.

The conference will be preceded by a capacity-building seminar for MHE member on 21 October, and the MHE General Assembly will take place in the late afternoon of the 21st.

The theme of the conference fits in the frame of 2010 European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion: "*Challenging Poverty – Creating Hope. Breaking the cycle of poverty and mental health*".

The Flemish Association for Mental Health and the Walloon Institute for Mental Health will be co-organising the conference, with the support of the Brussels League for Mental Health. More details will follow soon.

Moreover, MHE will celebrate its 25th anniversary at the end of the conference on Saturday 23 October.

An excellent reason for all of you to join us for this important event

MHE recommendations for next EU Trio Presidency

On 1 January 2010, the next EU Trio Presidency (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) will take up its mandate. Prior to the decision on the outline of the Trio Presidency's 18-months programme, Mental Health Europe addressed the Prime Ministers of Spain, Belgium and Hungary in a letter and urged them to dedicate adequate attention to mental health and well-being issues, social inclusion of vulnerable groups and respect of their human rights.

The Trio Presidency is entering into its mandate at a crucial time, when decisive and targeted actions are needed in order to keep the European economy on the recovery track, ensuring it to be sustainable and tackling the various impacts of the recession on the employment and social situation. This is of vital importance as the crisis is already having a negative impact on public health in many Member States. Mental Health Europe called on the Trio EU Presidency to put the following priorities on the EU agenda:

- Work towards the implementation of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being
- Integrate mental health into other EU policies
- Take action in the field of social determinants of (mental) health
- Fight against poverty and social exclusion of all excluded groups in society
- Strengthen the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)
- Make quality health and social services a basic right for all EU citizens
- Promote equal rights for all, including people with mental health problems
- Take initiatives to fight effectively against all forms of discrimination
- Include mental health as a key priority in the forthcoming European strategy on gender equality
- Address the link between gender and mental health in the context of combating poverty
- Recognise gender issues as key to the Lisbon strategy

MHE has up to date received positive feedback from the Spanish government, the Belgian Employment Ministry and the Hungarian Secretary of State.

To read MHE recommendations for the EU Trio Presidency, please visit the MHE website at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>

Letter to MEPs regarding Commissioner hearings

Before the new European Commissioners can take up their position, the European Parliament needs to approve their final appointment. In this context, hearings for the Commissioner designates will take place in the European Parliament (on 11-15 January in Brussels and on 18 and 19 January in Strasbourg), followed by a final vote taking place on 26 January. The hearing will last 3 hours per Commissioner. The Commissioner designates will receive written questions prior to the hearings which are being drafted by the MEPs at the moment.

Mental Health Europe has sent a letter to each individual MEP of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL) to ask them to bring the following questions forward at the hearing of Commissioner designate for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, , as well as a letter to the members of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (ENVI) regarding the hearing for Commissioner designate for Health and Consumer Policy, Mr Laszlo Andor and Mr John Dalli, respectively.

Proposed questions for Lászlo Andor (Commissioner designate for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion):

- How will Mr Andor make sure that social inclusion plays a major role in Europe, to ease the effects the current crisis has on the population, and how does he intend to ensure that more attention is given to social inclusion issues in the EU's 2020 strategy?
- What will be Mr Andor's involvement in the implementation of the EU Active Inclusion Strategy? Will he also support measures to ensure the social inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in society outside the labour market such as for example people with mental health problems who are (temporarily or permanently) not able to work?
- Regarding the access to quality services: Will Mr Andor continue the work initiated by Commissioner Spidla of the Ad-hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community Care to ensure that the expert group's recommendations will be implemented in the EU Member States, a major step towards the better adaptation to the needs and human rights of the patients and towards more efficiency of European care systems?

Proposed question for John Dalli (Commissioner designate for Health and Consumer Policy):

- What will Mr Dalli's involvement be as Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy in the implementation process of the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing, which was concluded by the heads of state and governments in 2008? Which further steps does Mr Dalli envisage?

For further information, please contact Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

International Day for the elimination of violence against women, 25 November

On 25 November, MHE issued a statement to support the worldwide campaign to eliminate gender based violence. Too many women around the world are victims of violence at the hands of men. The roots of violence against women lie in historically unequal power relations between men and women and this is compounded by a lack of opportunity in training, education and employment leading to higher levels of poverty in women.

Women are more likely to find themselves in precarious situations for a variety of reasons, but vulnerable women, such as undocumented migrants, trafficked women and girls, women with mental illness and women with disabilities are particularly susceptible to suffer violence, discrimination and undignified treatment.

MHE calls upon policy makers to take steps to challenge deep rooted patriarchal attitudes, and to ensure gender based violence issues are kept high on the political agenda.

The full position paper is available at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>

MHE Policy Work in the field of Human Rights: Equality Summit in Stockholm

Rita Donabauer, MHE Vice-President, attended the "Cooperation for Equality" Summit which took place in Stockholm on 16-17 November 2009.

During the Equality Summit, Gender Equality played a major role, women being the largest group which is confronted with discrimination. The role of the media has been discussed as well and it was emphasised that media always has to remain independent. Representatives from the business side regarded equality as one means to achieve growth. Through the discrimination of women or people with disabilities or migrants the economy does not make efficient use of the valuable talents of these groups. It was also stated that the current economic crisis aggravates risks of discrimination, since the unemployment figures rise, especially the ones of youth and older workers. Equality is above all a human right, only thereafter comes the economic aspect. According to studies, one out of 6 persons feels discriminated against. Equality should be a common effort of all stakeholders and not only be dealt with by law courts or equality promotion institutions; in fact, NGOs and the media play a crucial role in this process.

Summing up the result of the conference, in the future MHE and its representatives should continue to strongly focus on several issues including awareness raising actions towards people suffering from discrimination as well as the fact that equality remains a cross cutting issue, involving different policy makers at governmental level. The importance of discrimination for people with mental health problems within the group of persons with disabilities should be considered as a core issue for the next Equality Summit which will take place in one year.

European day of people with disabilities, 3-4 December, Brussels

This year the European Day of People with Disabilities was celebrated in Brussels on 3-4 December. The theme of the event was "Creating Conditions for independent living". The right of persons with disabilities to live independently in the community, with choices equal to other people, is enshrined in article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The different speakers approached this right from different angles:

1. economic independence through employment or through support and inclusion in the labour market;
2. independence from mental health care institutions: the strategy for deinstitutionalisation and reform of the residential care was felt as a true necessity;
3. independence through technology: the allocation of financial resources for assistive technology was addressed as a priority.

Unfortunately, there were too much speakers and not sufficient time for debate with the audience. The presentations were quite technical and there were not enough good practices to be shared.

Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Adviser, represented Mental Health Europe in this event.

"Fundamental Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Persons with Mental Health Problems" (2009-2011): Networking meeting with Stakeholders, Vienna, 25 November 2009

The Fundamental Rights Agency is currently leading a project on the Fundamental Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Persons with mental health problems. In the course of the project, data is to be collected through multiple channels. First legal data collection took place in 2009 with the use of FRALEX experts.

During the networking meeting with important stakeholders in Vienna, the first results of the legal study were presented as well as the action plan for the sociological study, which will take place in 2010. Following an open tender procedure, a contract for a social data collection will

be awarded. This will include analysis of secondary data on experiences of persons with mental health problems and intellectual disabilities in all the EU-27. In addition, primary data collection focusing on interviews with users, their families and carers as well as health, social, disability and legal professionals will take place in selected countries. The research findings will be validated through the peer review with the involvement of stakeholders.

MHE was represented at this event by Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Adviser, and by Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer.

For more information about this project, please contact Roselyne Bourgon at roselyne.bourgon@mhe-sme.org

European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness conference "The Forgotten Children" 26-27 November, Vilnius (Lithuania)

MHE Director Mary Van Dievel participated in a conference organised by the European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI), which addressed the theme of children of parents with a mental illness. The conference built on previous work done by EUFAMI and its members, and gave the opportunity to reflect on a coordinated approach to the subject, also in the frame of the implementation of the EU Pact on Mental Health and Well-being.

The Conference Declaration and all the presentations are available on the EUFAMI website at http://www.eufami.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=51&Itemid=75

Fundamental Rights Conference 2009 "Making Rights a Reality for all", Stockholm, 10-11 December 2009

The Fundamental Rights Conference 2009, organised by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in cooperation with the EU Swedish Presidency, took place on 10-11 December 2009. The Conference "Making rights a reality for all" aimed at promoting action to better protect people from violations of their rights. It further aimed at supporting the social inclusion of marginalised groups. The conference discussed the place of rights, such as the right to non-discrimination in times of economic crisis.

More than 200 representatives from EU Member State governments, EU institutions, intergovernmental organizations, local authorities, civil society, social partners, and national human rights bodies participated in the conference.

MHE took the opportunity to remind policy makers that fundamental rights are equal for everybody irrespective of mental health status so people with mental health problems should enjoy the same rights than other citizens.

MHE was represented at this event by Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer.

To read MHE Position Paper, please visit the following link <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>

To know more about this conference and for information related to MHE work in the field of Human Rights, please contact Roselyne Bourgon at roselyne.bourgon@mhe-sme.org

NEWS ON PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES IN WHICH MHE IS INVOLVED

Round up of the Daphne project "Violence and harassment against women at work... Let's talk about it!"

To date, the project is progressing on schedule; MHE received nearly all of the situational reports from the project's partners and the results of focus group. The good practices of the partner countries are now being collating and they will be available in the booklet due to be published next year. Preliminary reports have identified situations that are, albeit sadly, of no surprise to MHE. Evidence gathered from the partner countries has illustrated a dire need for awareness raising campaigns, particularly in the new EU Member States where undignified treatment of women in the workplace by men is not unusual and is often viewed as "the way it is". The awareness raising tools will help to ensure women are protected at work and will provide assistance to women affected by harassment and violence in the workplace. The publication of the good practices should facilitate a better understanding of the need for businesses to adopt an anti harassment policy thus ensuring women can work in dignity. The partner countries have worked extremely hard finding evidence and information, as all too frequently no records are held on this subject. Nevertheless, information has been unearthed and the report due later next year will give some practical inputs to policy makers on this hidden problem.

The awareness raising tools will be printed in the 8 partner languages and disseminated next year. The culmination of this two year project will be presented at a European press conference at the start of 2011.

For further information on the Daphne project please contact Lucy Vallis, MHE Project Coordinator, at lucy.vallis@mhe-sme.org

ProMenPol Factsheet N° 1 is now available!

MHE is pleased to announce that the ProMenPol Factsheet N° 1 has been published.

ProMenPol is a European project focusing on mental health promotion in three key settings: education, workplace and older people's residences. The project is funded by the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme and led by the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA). Project partners are from Germany, Austria, Ireland, Finland, Estonia and Greece. Mental Health Europe's role in the project is to provide strategic advice on EU policies and to assist with the dissemination activities.

You can read the ProMenPol Factsheet on the MHE website at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/ProMenPol%20Factsheet%20n1.pdf>

UPDATE ON NEW ITEMS ON MHE WEBSITE

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

- Publications/ MHE Position papers:
 - MHE Position Paper on "the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their mental health status: human rights for all!"
 - MHE Recommendations on Mental Health and Well Being for the next EU Trio Presidency
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>

- Publications/ Reports from MHE seminars and other MHE events:
 - MHE Event at European Parliament "Poverty and Mental Health in the EU: a Human Rights issue"
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/reports-from-mhe-seminars-and-other-mhe-events.html>
- News and events/ MHE Press releases:
 - Press release on MHE Recommendations for the next EU Trio Presidency
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>

MHE REPRESENTATION AT VARIOUS MEETINGS

On 1 December, Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director, and Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, together with several MHE members participated in the Networking Conference with the upcoming Belgian EU Presidency organised by the Social Platform in Brussels.

On 2 December, Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer, participated in an informal meeting at MEP Richard Howitt's offices in Brussels. The discussion was focused on the situation of human rights of children with disabilities in state institutions in Romania and other EU countries.

On 3 December, Mary Van Dievel and Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Adviser, attended the European Day of Disabled Persons Conference "Creating conditions for independent living" in Brussels.

On 7 December, Astrid Mechel participated in the stakeholder group meeting for the European Year 2010 Against Poverty and Social Exclusion, hosted by the European Anti-Poverty Network in Brussels.

On 10-11 December, Nace Kovac, MHE President, and Stijn Jannes, MHE Senior Policy Adviser attended the Thematic Conference on Prevention of Depression and Suicide held in Stockholm.

On 10-11 December, Colette Versporten, MHE board member, and Alessia Faravelli, MHE Information Officer, attended the "Adolescence and metamorphosis" conference organized in Brussels by the Ligue Bruxelloise Francophone pour la Santé Mentale.

On 10-11 December, Roselyne Bourgon participated in the Fundamental Rights Conference jointly organised by the EU Swedish Presidency and the Fundamental Rights Agency in Stockholm.

On 15-16 December, Roselyne Bourgon attended the meeting "Children with Intellectual Disabilities" organised by the Children High Level Group and WHO Europe in London.

On 17 December, Josée Van Remoortel participating in the Follow up meeting of the "Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care" organized by the Spidla Cabinet in Brussels.

II. EU INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER BODIES

New EU Commissioners

A new College of European Commissioners will soon enter into office. **José Manuel Barroso** (Portugal, European Peoples Party) will stay the **President of the European Commission**. He was reconfirmed by the Heads of States and Governments as well as the European Parliament already in September 2009.

Before the other Commissioner-designates can take up their position, the European Parliament needs to approve their final appointment. In this context, hearings for the Commissioner-designates will take place in the European Parliament (on 11-15 January in Brussels and on 18 and 19 January in Strasbourg), followed by a final vote taking place on 26 January.

The most important changes of Commissioner-designates for the mental health, social inclusion and fundamental rights fields:

Outgoing Commissioners:

Androulla Vassiliou succeeded Markos Kyprianou (both from Cyprus) in February 2008 as European Commissioner for Health and had since then been responsible for launching and implementing the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing. MHE appreciated the good cooperation with Health Commissioner Vassiliou, who is now nominated as the new EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth.

Vladimir Spidla terminates his mandate as European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Mental Health Europe has been cooperating on various occasions with Commissioner Spidla Cabinet and is particularly glad to have been a member of the Ad-hoc Experts Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care, which was created by Commissioner Spidla in 2009.

The full report can be downloaded at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=fr&catId=429&newsId=614&furtherNews=yes>

Incoming Commissioners:

Health and Consumer Affairs: **John Dalli** (Malta, European Peoples Party). He has been Malta's Minister of Economic Affairs, Finance and Foreign Affairs in the past and lastly been Minister for Social Policy, being responsible for social policy, health and employment issues. The responsibilities as Commissioner for Health and Consumer Affairs will also include pharmaceutical policy (which has been moved from the Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry); the following institutions fall under his responsibility: DG Health and Consumers (SANCO), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), European Medicines Agency, Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC).

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion: **Lászlo Andor** (Hungary, Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats). He has a background in economics and since 2005 been member of the Board of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Lászlo Andor will be responsible for: DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL), European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) and the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA). The portfolio for equality of women and men has been moved to the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship.

Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship: **Viviane Reding** (Luxembourg, European People's Party), also assuming the role as one of the Vice Presidents of the European Commission. Viviane Reding is about to take up her third mandate as a Commissioner, after having been the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth, Media, Sports (1999-2004) and Information Society and Media (2004-2009). As Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, she will be responsible for: the directorates related to Fundamental Rights and Citizenship as well as Justice within DG Justice Liberty and Security (JLS), European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), European Judicial Cooperation Unit (EUROJUST), DG Communication (COMM), European Publications Office.

Equal Treatment Directive - Employment and Social Affairs Ministers to continue negotiations under the Spanish Presidency

On 30 November, during the meeting of the Employment and Social Affairs Council, the Swedish Presidency presented a progress report on the proposal for an Equal Treatment Directive and briefed the 27 Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs on the situation of the discussions on the draft Equality Directive.

The Presidency stated that the clarity of the disability provisions, the scope and the respective competences of the EU and the Member States had improved, but further extensive work still needs to be done in order to guarantee legal certainty.

This main concern lay in the area of accessibility of buildings and infrastructures. In this respect, the Presidency has suggested a graduated implementation timetable.

The negotiations in the Council will continue under the incoming Spanish Presidency.

To read the Report, please see the following link

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st15/st15575.en09.pdf>

Source: EDF Weekly Update 20

30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 18 December

On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. It entered into force as an international treaty on 3 September 1981 after the twentieth country had ratified it. By the tenth anniversary of the Convention in 1989, almost one hundred nations have agreed to be bound by its provisions.

For further information click here <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm>
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/Words%20to%20Action%20Issue%20No.%205.pdf>

International Migrants Day, 18 December 2009

On 4 December 2000, the General Assembly, taking into account the large and increasing number of migrants in the world, proclaimed 18 December International Migrants Day. On that day, in 1990, the Assembly adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

The vast majority of domestic migrant workers are women; these women, who are often undocumented, are subjected to horrific treatment including rape. Many are repeatedly sexually violated. There are also reports of large numbers of suicides among female migrant domestic workers, who frequently suffer from depression.

Domestic violence and rape account for 19 per cent of the total disease for women in developed countries. Violence places women at higher risk of poor physical and reproductive health outcomes, and abused women also show poorer mental health and social functioning.

For further information click here <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/events/migrants>

Equality between men and women is more than a matter of social justice: it's a fundamental human right

Progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDV) is positive but there is still so much to be done.

Six out of ten of the world's poorest people are women and the link between mental ill health and poverty are well renowned; women are 3 times more likely to succumb to mental health problems than men.

Women comprise more than 50 percent of the world's population but own only one percent of the world's wealth.

Women are still out numbered four-to-one in legislatures around the world.

To know more, please see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/beijing15>

III. EUROPEAN YEAR FOR COMBATING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The Year 2010 will be the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The key objectives are to raise public awareness about these issues and renew the political commitment of the EU and its Member States to combat poverty and social exclusion. The EY 2010 aims to challenge stereotypes and collective perceptions of poverty to ensure everyone can play a full and active role in society.

MHE has created a new section in order to increase awareness about the link between mental health and poverty.

Research has shown clear links between mental health and poverty. People experiencing poverty are particularly vulnerable towards getting mental health problems, since due to financial hardship or not having a job frequently their social contacts are suffering and uncertainty about the future dominate their daily lives.

Visit the EY 2010 website at www.2010againstopoverty.eu

National Focus weeks

In the frame of the EY, national focus weeks will take place all over Europe. NGOs will have the possibility to link into the activities coordinated by the National Implementing Bodies (NIBs). MHE would like to encourage all NGOs and Organisations to contact their NIB in order to follow how the topic of poverty and social exclusion is addressed and to explore the possibility of giving more visibility to the mental health aspect in the frame of the planned activities.

To obtain the list of NIBs, please contact Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

Calendar of EY 2010 National Focus Weeks

15-21 February: Ireland
22-28 February: Austria
1-7 March: France
8-14 March: Slovenia
15-21 March: Luxembourg
22-28 March: Hungary
5-11 April: Malta
12-18 April: Czech Republic
19-25 April: Slovakia
3-9 May: Iceland
17-23 May: Poland

24-30 May: EU Focus Week

31 May- 6 June: Spain
21-27 June: Germany
28 June – 4 July: Bulgaria
5-11 July: Romania
29 August – 5 September: Norway
6-12 September: Estonia
13-19 September: Lithuania
20-26 September: Belgium
27 Sept – 3 October: UK
4-10 October: Portugal

11-17 October: EU Focus Week

18-24 October: Cyprus
25-31 October: Sweden
1-7 November: Denmark
8-14 November: Greece
15-21 November: Italy
22-28 November: Finland

Still tbc: Netherlands and Latvia

IV. NEWS FROM OTHER (E)NGOs

The European Disability Forum adopts Declaration against forced sterilization of women and girls with disabilities

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November), the European Disability Forum adopted a Declaration against forced sterilization of girls and women with. All forms of sterilization without full and informed consent must be seen as a form of violence. In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, EDF recognises that forced sterilisation is a form of violence that violates the rights to form a family, to gain access to information on family planning and reproduction on an equal basis with others.

To read this declaration, please visit the following link: http://www.edf-feph.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=13855&thebloc=23097

Source: EDF Weekly Update 20

Mr. Gabor Gombos awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary

On 3 December, the Mental Disability Advocacy Center's Senior Advocacy Officer, Mr. Gabor Gombos, awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary in recognition of his work in the field of human rights of persons with disabilities.

A former theoretical physicist and survivor of psychiatry, Mr. Gombos has become a world-renowned advocate for the rights of persons with psycho-social (mental health) disabilities. During the last years, he has been one of the key actors in developing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ensuring its implementation in Hungary.

For more information, please visit www.mdac.info

First 'Services to Public Health Award

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) has awarded its first 'Services to Public Health Award' to Mr John Bowis, former MEP and leading health advocate, to honour his lifetime achievements as a champion for public health. The award was presented by Commissioner Ms Androulla Vassiliou at the EPHA Annual General Assembly 2009.

MHE congratulates Mr Bowis for this prize.

V. PUBLICATIONS

WHO Report on equality between men in women: today's evidence, tomorrow's agenda

Women are more susceptible to depression and anxiety than men. An estimated 73 million adult women worldwide suffer a major depressive episode each year. Mental disorders following childbirth, including postpartum depression, are estimated to affect about 13% of women within one year of delivery.

For further reading, download the full report from
http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241563857_eng.pdf

WHO published the highlights for the year 2009

The WHO published the highlights from its work in the areas of noncommunicable diseases, mental health, nutrition, violence and injury prevention as well as progress in implementing the Global Noncommunicable Disease Action Plan 2008-2013.

Particularly noteworthy was the prominence given to noncommunicable diseases and injury prevention during the recent High-level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in Geneva in early July 2009 and the launch of the new Noncommunicable Disease Network (NCDnet).

To read the full WHO document on "noncommunicable diseases and mental health", please see
http://www.who.int/nmh/newsletter_december_20091211_en.pdf or send an email to Clare Courtney, NMH Communications Officer, at courtneyc@who.int

"New Horizons: a shared vision for mental health"

New Horizons is a cross-government programme of action with the twin aims to improve the mental health and well-being of the population and to improve the quality and accessibility of services for people with poor mental health. It sets out an intention across a wide range of agencies to move towards a society where people understand that their mental well-being is as important as their physical health if they are to live their lives to the full.

To download "New Horizons: a shared vision for mental health", please follow the link
http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh.digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_109708.pdf

VI. CONFERENCES

16-18 June 2010

"European Forum for evidence-based prevention 2010", Baden, Austria

For further information, please see <http://www.eufep.at/home>

7-9 October 2010

"Towards community living: current realities, future challenges", Skopje, Macedonia

For more information, please see

<http://www.easpd.eu/ActivitiesConferences/Program/tabid/3528/Default.aspx>

17-19 November 2010

"Addressing imbalances: promoting equity in mental health", Washington, USA

For more information, please see <http://wmhconf2010.hhd.org/>

VI. ANNEX – WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2009

Instytut Psychiatrii i Neurologii, Poland

On the occasion of the World Mental Health Day 2009, many initiatives took a place in almost all the Polish mental health care units. Many centers working in areas of primary care, social care and education, spontaneously participated in these activities.

Aware of the importance of mental health issues, this year main theme was "Mental health in Primary Care: Enhancing Treatment and Promoting Mental Health".

Provincial consultants and hospital's directors organized meetings the staff and representatives of the local government.

Many initiatives were jointly organized by social care centers, nursing schools and cultural centers. Art exhibitions and auctions of patients' works as well as concerts and theater plays were also arranged.

Local radios and TV stations organised press conferences and interviews with specialists.

The World Mental Health Day Mental Health represented an occasion to break the barriers between people with mental health problems, their families and the local community.

To know more about the initiatives, please visit <http://www.ipin.edu.pl/> or send an e-mail to ipin@ipin.edu.pl

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