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I.NEWS FROM MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

MHE Executive Committee and Board meetings, 28-29 September 2007

The MHE Executive Committee and Board met at the end of September and discussed MHE's Work Programme for the following years, its financial situation and perspectives, and the programme of the MHE Aalborg conference 2008. The Board also decided to join the European Patient's Forum on a trial basis for one year, in order to make sure that mental health issues are also taken into account by this umbrella organisation.

For more information: contact the MHE Secretariat, E-mail info@mhe-sme.org, Tel +32 2 280 04 68

MHE Annual Conference 2008, Aalborg (Denmark), 7-9 August 2008 - 2nd Announcement and call for contributions

To launch an intercultural dialogue and underline the issue of reaching all levels involved in creating well-being in the field of mental health we invite you to take the floor.

The MHE Conference 2008 will have its focus on the diversity in mental health and well-being. Debates will be organised around the following themes and topics:

- A philosophical dimension of mental health and well-being;
- The cultural dimensions within the different health systems;
- Cultural differences which exists in practical terms among professionals operating within the health system;
- Provision of care, treatment, rehabilitation and employment.

In the frame of the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue 2008, the conference will look at the intercultural dialogue as a mean to create and achieve mental health and well-being.

Participants from all European countries are invited to contribute with their experiences in intercultural dialogue.

For more information: visit the Conference dedicated website, www.mhe-aalborg.dk, or contact the MHE Secretariat, Tel +32 2 280 04 68, e-mail info@mhe-sme.org

Become involved in the organisation of the MHE Annual Conference 2010!

At the last MHE Board meeting in September 2007, it was decided to link the next MHE Annual Conference, which will be held in 2010, to the Commission proposal to designate 2010 as the European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. Taking into account the results achieved so far by the European strategy to fight poverty and social exclusion, the Year is envisaged to serve as an occasion to take stock and highlight the main challenges and obstacles that still need to be addressed across the EU in the fight against poverty and social exclusion. The MHE Annual Conference 2010 would thus focus on topics around the issue of mental health and poverty.

In follow-up of this decision, MHE would very much welcome expressions of interest by those who would like to organise a conference on this topic.

MHE member organisations willing to organise the next MHE Annual Conference should contact the MHE Secretariat by sending an e-mail to info@mhe-sme.org.

We are looking forward to collaborating with you for making this event as successful and participatory as all the MHE Annual Conferences of previous years!

MHE representation at various meetings

On 2 October, Fanny Muller represented MHE at the autumn session of the INGOS (International Non Governmental Organisations) of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (France).

On 4 October, Mary Van Dievel and Fanny Muller took part in a Study Day on Patient's Rights, which was organised in the European Parliament in Brussels by UilenSpiegel vzw.

On the same day, Elisabeth Muschik, MHE Vice-President, attended a meeting of the Social Platform FRAND working group, while Mari Fresu participated in a meeting of the Social Platform Services of General Interest Working Group.

In addition, Elisabeth Muschik, Claude Deutsch, MHE Board member, and Sogol Noorani represented MHE at the closure event of the EDF (European disability Forum) "1million4disability" campaign.

On 5 October, Josée Van Remoortel and Claude Deutsch attended the EDF General Assembly in Brussels.

On the same day, Mari Fresu represented MHE at the conference "Rights, Quality of Services and involvement of citizens with ASD in the European Union", organised by Autism Europe at the European Parliament, Brussels.

On 9 October, Colette Versporten, MHE Board member, gave a presentation at a meeting day on depression which was organised in Paris (France). (see p.3-4)

On 10 October, Mari Fresu took part in a lunch debate organised at the European Parliament in Brussels on "Empowering minds across the European Union", chaired by Glenys Kinnock MEP.

On the same day, Josée Van Remoortel participated in AISME's (Associazione Italiana per la Salute Mentale) celebration of World Mental Health Day in Florence (Italy). (see p. 6)

On 11-12 October, John Henderson, senior Policy Advisor, represented MHE at the ProMenPol project first annual conference in Berlin (Germany). He gave a presentation on "The importance of promotion of mental health for policy and practice". (see p.4)

On the same dates, Mari Fresu took part in the first meeting of the Cooperation Network for European Citizenship (CONNECT), held in Brussels at the Social Platform offices, and gave a presentation on MHE structure and activities.

On 12 October, Sogol Noorani attended the FNERDM (Federação Nacional de Entidades de Reabilitação de Doentes Mentais) Conference in Caparide (Portugal) and gave a presentation on the Final outcomes of the MHE Transnational Exchange Project: Good Practices for Combating Social Exclusion of People with Mental Health Problems.

On 16-17 October, Sogol Noorani participated in the Sixth Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ponta Delgada - São Miguel, Azores (Portugal).

On 18 October, Fanny Muller took part in a fundamental rights meeting with NGOs which was organised at the European Parliament in Brussels by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) to discuss the Catania report on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union 2004-2007 and the Cashman report on the draft Multi-annual Framework (MAF) of the Fundamental Rights Agency. Following the event, MHE sent a contribution to Mr. Catania on the human rights situation of people with mental health problems in the European Union.

On 18-19 October, Colette Versporten participated in the WHO Annual conference on Prisons and Mental Health and meeting of the WHO European Network for Prison and Health in Trencin (Slovakia). She made a presentation on the AISME (MHE member organisation, Italy) Project on the "Social reintroduction and territorial integration for women in prison having psychological and mental health problems". (see p.12)

II. REPORTS ON VARIOUS CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

4th European Day of Depression organised by France Dépression, Paris (France), 9 October 2007

Addressing a large public of mental health professionals, but in particular users of mental health services, many presentations were offered concerning the current French health policy, the existing health strategies and the implementation of recommendations. One of the main issues highlighted was how to promote the social as well the professional inclusion of people with mental health problems.

On behalf of Mental Health Europe (MHE) Colette Versporten pointed out to the position of the European Union with regard to these issues and the EU's recommendations for all EU Member States.

Several moving testimonies of users of mental health services attested to the burden of mental illness, the stigma that is still attached to it, the difficulties that are being experienced by individuals (in relation to work, social relationships etc.) but also by the social environment of the person suffering from depression.

For more information: visit France Dépression website, <http://francedepression.free.fr/>

Thanks to Colette Versporten, MHE Board member, for this contribution.

1st ProMenPol Conference, Berlin (Germany), 11-12 October 2007

The ProMenPol project has just completed its first annual conference in Berlin.

The aims of the conference were to:

- Introduce participants to the project and its aims;
- Provide an overview of developments in mental health policy in recent years;
- Outline the situation of mental health promotion in the three settings of interest;
- Obtain feedback from participants on the ProMenPol framework, the proposed field trials and the database that are being developed as part of the project;
- To encourage the participation and support of participants for future project activities.

A presentation on the ProMenPol Framework was made by Dr. Donal McAnaney of the WRC (Work Research Centre). He outlined the need to develop a classification framework that can be used to understand the type, objective, range and scope of mental health promotion tools. This framework is being used to structure the developing ProMenPol database of mental health promotion tools. Participants at the conference had the opportunity to comment on the Framework in a conference workshop.

The developing ProMenPol database of tools was presented by Dr. Richard Wynne of the WRC and Ms. Tilia Boussios of eWorx. Structured according to the framework, it currently holds 136 tools and it is intended that this will be extended over the lifetime of the project to some hundreds of tools. The database will be made available on the project website in the near future, so that practitioners can identify the most suitable tools for their work. It is intended that practitioners will also be able to enter their own tools directly on to the database.

Mr. Gert Lang of the Research Centre of the Viennese Red Cross presented the ProMenPol plans for promoting field trials of mental health promotion. This presentation outlined the aims of the field trials (to test the database, to support implementation projects, to document the outcomes of initiatives for purposes of communicating them to policy makers).

The full report on the 1st ProMenPol conference will be made available on the ProMenPol website in the near future.

A ProMenPol policy Workshop is already scheduled for 28 November 2007 in Brussels.

John Henderson, MHE Senior Policy Officer, represented MHE at the Conference.

For more information: the ProMenPol website,

<http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/>

Thanks to Leonie Lynch, from the ProMenPol project, for this contribution.

III. NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Austria - Café Restaurant and Catering Max, why vocational integration makes real sense

Poverty causes mental disorders and mental disorders cause poverty. The only way out of this vicious circle is gainful employment; the majority of people losing their jobs through their illness want to find work (again).

A step in this direction is the Café Restaurant and Catering Max. The task of this catering concern as an enterprise of Pro mente Wien is the reintegration of people with mental disorders into the primary job market. The conditions under which this takes place are determined by the sponsor, the Austrian Employment Service Vienna (AMS). This story demonstrates just how earnestly, enduringly and inspiringly these people are taken care of.

The Café Restaurant Max (Vienna) offers people with mental disorders an opportunity to go back to work and customers an excellent meal and catering service. It also provides the Viennese economy with higher turnover, the minister of finance with more taxes, and it allows society a clear conscience. For those concerned however it means very much more.

Social integration of people with mental illnesses is not simply a long sought aim of socio-psychiatric intervention to restrain or eliminate a significant factor in illnesses. It is rather a

social inclusion that simultaneously satisfies the needs and desires of the individual on one hand and the demands of society on the individual on the other, as in principle society absolutely demands that the individual makes their contribution to the whole, just as the individual wishes in principle to integrate into society, according to talent, aptitude, interests and ability.

With its employment projects, especially through the Café Restaurant Max, Pro mente Wien can demonstrate every day that mental illnesses are no restraint on producing high quality performance. This does however require appropriate support for those concerned and consistent anti-stigma work.

For more information: visit the dedicated website, <http://www.restaurant-max.at/>, or contact Sina Bründler, E-mail sina.bruendler@promente-wien.at

Thanks to Rudolf P. Wagner and Sina Bründler, from Pro mente Wien, for this contribution.

Croatia – Sto Koluri, Association for health protection, social care and children rights promotion

The Sto Koluri association is new MHE member. It was founded in July 2002, in response to the fact that underprivileged children have almost no opportunity to participate in artistic workshops (art, literature, ecology...) or sport activities.

The purpose of this association is to improve the inclusion of children with behavioural disorders or/and developmental difficulties. The association's founders and members believe that if these children are left aside at an early stage, they will develop serious mental health problems during adolescence. It is therefore crucial to promote the social inclusion of children with mental health problems and to prevent mental ill-health when possible.

The work of Sto Koluri is focused on the improvement of the education and social system, which represents a basis for inclusion. "Step by step" they are influencing practices at school and highlighting the fact that the quality of children's life depends on the importance given to their positive mental health.

In April 2007 the Croatian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare gave to Sto Koluri the entitlement to provide social welfare to children with behavioural disorders. During the last three years Sto Koluri also signed a partnership contract with the Croatian Educational Institute for Public Health and the Croatian Centre for Social Welfare.

For more information about the work and activities of the association: visit Sto Koluri website, <http://www.stokoluri.hr/program.htm>, or send an E-mail to sto.koluri.split@st.t-com.hr

Thanks to Maja Sočo, President of Sto Koluri Split, for this contribution.

UK - Partnership for Children launched new website

Partnership for Children's website has been expanded and completely re-designed, with the aim of providing more information more quickly to parents and teachers of young children.

To find out more: visit

<http://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news.html>

Your activities and initiatives are important! They may also inspire others!

IV. WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY – 10 OCTOBER 2007

Italy – Celebration of World Mental Health Day in Florence

On 10 October, AISME (Associazione Italiana per la Salute Mentale), the Italian Association for Mental Health, organised for the 13th time a conference on the occasion of World Mental Health Day.

The theme was "A global project for mental health in a changing world: good practices within a transcultural frame".

This was the occasion to stress the very important role that mental health associations play at all levels of society: local, regional, national and European.

AISME is an organisation of users of mental health services, their relatives and professional of the mental health field, that tries to find answers for complicated mental health problems using experiences combining rehabilitation, support and reintegration in the community.

It is essential to mention that this day received the full support of the city of Florence and the Tuscany region, and it received significant media coverage.

MHE believes that the Florence model of collaboration at all levels will produce great benefits for users of mental health services and their relatives and could serve as a model for the rest of Italy.

Congratulations to all the organisers!

Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Officer, represented MHE at the event.

For more information: contact person, Donatella Miccinesi, E-mail pipini@dada.it

Thanks to Josée Van Remoortel for this contribution.

Slovakia - SLMH nation wide campaign on the occasion of World Mental Health Day

On the occasion of World Mental Health Day (10 October), a national campaign is traditionally organised in Slovakia by the Slovak League for Mental Health (SLMH) to promote this special day. For the second time, the main focus was laid on social inclusion and particularly on the social integration of people with mental health problems.

The campaign consisted in a series of activities implemented in September and October.

It aimed at raising public awareness on the importance of mental health prevention and social inclusion of people with mental health problems, as well as informing the public of the need to support and promote successful good practices in the field. About 10,000 information leaflets describing best practices for combating the social exclusion of people with mental health problems were disseminated.

The so-called "*Forget-me-not Days*" opened with a press conference, where a presentation of the MHE Project "*Good Practices for Combating the Social Exclusion of People with Mental Health Problems*" was given. The press conference was followed by a media campaign (TV spot broadcasted in national TV channels, articles and advertisements published in national print media, internet banners, involvement of SLMH member organisations at the regional level, etc.) and a nation wide public collection of money. During these activities small artificial flowers were sold as a symbol of the fragility of mental health.

For more information: SLMH website, <http://www.dusevnezdravie.sk/ktosme.htm>, or send an E-mail to dusevnez@dusevnez.sk

Thanks to Katarína Čermáková, from the Slovak League for Mental Health, for this contribution.

What have you done for World Mental Health Day? Send us your contributions!

V. NEWS FROM OTHER EUROPEAN NGOS

EDF - European Disability Forum

Official closure of the "1million4disability campaign"

On 4 October, delegations of disabled people travelling from 30 different European countries gathered in Brussels to call on the European Union for comprehensive disability legislation.

The outdoor gathering was held at Rond-Point Schuman in Brussels, where most European institutions buildings are located.

José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission and Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament, participated in the event, as well as Idalia Moniz, on behalf of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union and various Belgian authorities.

It is in the framework of the "*1million4disability campaign*", led by the European Disability Forum, that this multicultural and positive gathering took place. Since last January, EDF and its member organisations have met the challenge of collecting one million signatures across the EU in favour of a comprehensive European disability legislation that will protect disabled people from discrimination in all fields of life. During the event, the signatures were handed over to the EU leaders.

This is the first time since 1997 that the European disability movement representatives gathered at such large scale. 10 years ago, the mobilisations in the streets of Rotterdam and Amsterdam lead to the integration of the first disability reference in the EU Treaties.

The aim of the Brussels event was also to increase the visibility of the 50 million people with disabilities in Europe, who face discrimination and exclusion on daily basis in all the Member States.

For more information: visit the campaign dedicated website, www.1million4disability.eu

Source: EDF Press Release

FEANTSA – European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless

FEANTSA v. France: Council of Europe's Hearing on the right to housing

In November 2006 FEANTSA lodged a collective complaint against France for non compliance with Article 31 of the revised European Social Charter, which is devoted to the right to housing. After declaring the complaint admissible, the European Committee of Social Rights of the Council of Europe decided to organise a hearing in this context.

Access to decent housing is a precondition for the exercise of other fundamental rights and for full participation in society. Housing rights are enshrined in widely ratified international instruments, including the revised European Social Charter, and in several EU Member States national laws. However, their concrete implementation remains unsatisfactory in many countries.

At a moment when access to housing becomes more difficult for an increasing number of households and the debate on the justiciable right to housing arises in several European countries, FEANTSA felt that the time had come to strengthen and complement its advocacy for housing rights by using the collective complaint mechanism.

FEANTSA welcomes the hearing. It will allow the European Committee of Social Rights to review the arguments presented both by FEANTSA and the French Government.

FEANTSA and its French members hope that the conclusions of the Committee, which will be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers and to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in the coming months, will be a driver for change not only in France, but across Europe.

For more information: contact person, Silke Paasche, Tel +32 2 534 05 23,

E-mail Silke.paasche@feantsa.org.

Source: FEANTSA Press Release

MDRI – Mental disability Rights International

MDRI Releases Report on Atrocious Conditions in Argentina's Mental Health System

Argentina is among countries with the most psychiatrists per capita in the world - yet people detained in the country's public psychiatric institutions are subject to serious human rights violations. "Ruined Lives", an investigative report released on 25 September by Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI) and the Argentine human rights organization Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS), finds that 25,000 people are locked away in Argentina's institutions, segregated from society, many for a lifetime and with no possibility of ever getting out.

For more information and to read the report: MDRI website, <http://www.mdri.org/>

Source: MDRI Press Release

Social Platform

Social Platform Annual Conference, "Social NGOs getting ready for the Post Lisbon - Recommendations to address social and demographic change", 26 November 2007, Brussels

Social and demographic change challenge European leaders and policy-makers to think long-term. Yet, the Lisbon agenda runs only until 2010. What should be the post-Lisbon priorities if we really want to achieve a more cohesive and socially inclusive Europe? Which commitments and actions do we need to bring policies closer to reality?

3 key questions are to be addressed during three panel and interactive sessions:

- Taking stock of today's social reality: Is the EU busy with the right priorities?

- Europe's future: Is it all about money?
- Changing Europe: Stop scaring, start sharing!

For more information: contact person, Pearly Raynal, E-mail pearly.raynal@socialplatform.org

VI. EUROPEAN UNION

Adoption of the EU Treaty: European social NGOs urge EU leaders to make people's participation a reality

On 19 October, EU leaders clinched a deal on the new treaty, closing the chapter on a crisis that has gripped the EU since 2005. However, the UK and Polish opt-outs from the Charter of fundamental rights might seriously affect the way basic rights of people, solidarity and respect for human dignity are valued in the EU.

After a rather closed intergovernmental negotiations' process, European social NGOs now invites EU leaders to open-up to people and NGOs to discuss the practical implementation of the new treaty provisions.

Indeed, bringing the EU closer to its citizens is not just a matter of adopting the right institutional procedures. Policymakers have to restore people's faith that the EU can respond to their needs and that they can be associated in the decision-making process.

For more information: the Portuguese Presidency website,

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Reunioes_Eventos/ChefesEstado/IMHSG.htm

Source: Social Platform Press Release

Survey outlines disparities in EU healthcare systems

The 2007 EuroHealth consumer index, published on 1 October, was put together from publicly-available statistics and data from a private Swedish company, Health Consumer Powerhouse (HCP).

It lists Austria's public healthcare system as the most user-friendly, up from 8th in 2006.

It also points to Estonia which moved up the ranking from 20th to 12th place. According to a WHO country report, the Estonian healthcare reform, initiated in the 1990s, established a significant degree of decentralization in the health system. The reform introduced market incentives, outsourcing of services, increased independence for public hospitals, all of which comprised a total change of the system. These reforms were easier to implement in a small nation of 1.5m habitants such as Estonia.

Surveys and statistics outlined three groups of countries:

- a first group of nations performing very well, separated only by tiny differences;
- a middle group of adequate performers, with rapid improvers such as Estonia;
- a third group of poor performers - mainly new member states.

However, overall statistics reveal the continuing weak position of European patients as, for example, three quarters of the national healthcare systems require many to wait over three weeks for cancer treatment. Moreover, medical records are inaccessible to the patient in half of member states.

Following its findings, HCP put together a number of recommendations per country which it hopes decision-makers will take into account in order to improve European healthcare systems.

To read the EuroHealth consumer index: HCP website,

http://www.healthpowerhouse.com/media/Rapport_EHCI_2007.pdf

VII. PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

French EU Presidency

On 19 September French Secretary of State for European Affairs, Jean-Pierre Jouyet, presented a communication relative to the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2008. The government believes that this presidency will present an opportunity to "confirm France's return to Europe and its ability to provide significant impetus to the European project." It will also be part of "Europe's return to France via the enhancement of the European spirit amongst our fellow countrymen." France intends to strengthen Union action with regard to immigration, energy, environment and defence.

To read the communication from the French government (in French): the French government's website,

http://elysee.fr/elysee/elysee.fr/francais/salle_de_presse/communiqu_e_du_conseil_des_ministres/2007/communiqu_e_de_conseil_des_ministres_du_19_09_2007.79442.html#titre_6

VIII. EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Commission puts forward its proposal for the thematic work programme of the Fundamental Rights Agency for the period 2007-2012

According to the EU Regulation which has set up this year the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, a Multi-Annual Work Programme shall determine the thematic working areas of the Agency's activities.

In September, the Commission finally published its proposal for a Multi-Annual Work Programme in the form of a proposed decision. The proposed Framework shall cover a period of 5 years (2007-2012) and shall include, according to the Commission, the following thematic areas: racism, xenophobia and related intolerance; discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation or of persons belonging to minorities; compensation of victims, prevention of crime and related aspects relevant to the security of citizens; protection of children, including rights of the child; immigration and integration of migrants; asylum; visa and border control; participation in the Union's democratic functioning; human rights issues relating to the information society; and access to efficient and independent justice.

The proposed decision of the Commission does not contain in itself any reference to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. However, in its detailed explanatory memorandum attached to the proposed decision, the Commission explains that *"the list is "topical" or "policy-based", which would allow the Agency to look into all fundamental rights problems that might arise within a given thematic area. When these thematic areas are included in the Multi-Annual Framework, all Chapters of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union would be touched to some extent, limiting however the thematic areas to appropriate numbers"*.

The proposed Multi-Annual Framework has to be adopted by the Council, after consultation with the European Parliament. This is supposed to happen before the end of this year. Until the Multi-Annual Framework is adopted, the Agency will continue to carry out its tasks in the thematic areas of the fight against racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

To read the Commission's proposal: the Eur-Lex website,

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0515en01.pdf

Source: Social Platform Weekly Update

DG Employment and Social Affairs – DG EMPL

EMPLOYMENT: Public consultation on the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market (Deadline: 28 February 2008)

The European Commission launched a new consultation on the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market. The concept of active inclusion combines income support at a level sufficient for people to have a dignified life with a link to the labour market through job opportunities or vocational training and through better access to enabling social services.

What the Commission is proposing through this public consultation, is to deepen social policy cooperation at EU level by adopting a set of common principles in the form of a Recommendation. These principles would guide implementation of the three strands of active inclusion and their subsequent monitoring and evaluation, while fully respecting the different situations and needs of the Member States.

Moreover, EU financial instruments such as the European Social Fund - which invests over EUR 10 billion a year in people - are also available to support the active inclusion approach.

MHE will follow the whole process very carefully and will submit its response before 28 February 2008.

MHE members are also encouraged to contribute to this consultation process. MHE would appreciate to receive your contributions by e-mail to sogol.noorani@mhe-sme.org

Please read more on the European Commission website:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=301

Responses to the consultation can be submitted until the **28 of February 2008** to empl-active-inclusion@ec.europa.eu

First Semester Reports 2007 of the EU Network of Social Inclusion experts

The national reports produced by the independent experts on social inclusion on tackling child poverty and promoting the social inclusion of children in the EU are now available on the Peer Review and Assessment in Social Inclusion website. A synthesis of these reports is also available for download.

To directly access the reports:

<http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.net/policy-assessment-activities/reports/first-semester-2007/>

Positive action report now available in 20 languages

"Putting Equality into Practice", the European Commission's annual brochure on non-discrimination, is now available online in 20 languages.

This edition's focus is on positive action and the role such measures can play in employment and other spheres. Articles from experts in the field look at the difficulties in defining the concept and the legal landscape. A number of practical case studies of positive action are also presented. The final section looks to the future and how to make a success of positive action measures.

Printed copies in English, French, German and Italian can be requested at:

empl-antidiscrimination@ec.europa.eu

To download the report: the anti-discrimination website,

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/broch/thembroch07_en.pdf

New and forthcoming reports from antidiscrimination legal experts

The "Network of legal experts in the field of non-discrimination" reports on legislative developments in all 27 EU Member States. The network's fifth edition of its bi-annual law reviews once again covers the legal situation relating to the implementation of equality legislation from both European and national level.

The law review follows earlier publications by the network this year on measuring discrimination, equality bodies and religion and belief discrimination.

Forthcoming publications from the network include:

- Beyond Formal Equality: Positive Action under Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC;
- Segregation of Roma Children in Education - Addressing Structural Discrimination through the Race Equality Directive;
- Equal Rights versus Special Rights? Minority Protection and the Prohibition of Discrimination;
- Developing Anti-Discrimination Law in Europe: The 25 EU Member States compared.

To download the law review: the anti-discrimination website,

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/legnet/07lawrev5_en.pdf

For more information on the network of legal experts: the MPG website,

<http://www.migpolgroup.com/topics/2077.html>

Stop-discrimination truck tour

This year's stop-discrimination truck tour has started on the second leg of its 2007 tour. Starting in September, the truck will visit 10 additional cities in Romania, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Italy and Portugal. Each stop is a focal point for locally-organised events promoting the "For Diversity. Against Discrimination" campaign and the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The tour will celebrate its grand finale at the closing conference of the European Year in Lisbon in November.

For more information: the tour dedicated website,

<http://truck07.stop-discrimination.info/>

DG Health and Consumer Protection – DG SANCO

Economic implications of socio-economic inequalities in health in the European Union

This new publication from DG Sanco is the first exploratory study of this important question. Most analyses of the relationship between health and the economy focus on average health, but health is actually very unevenly distributed across society. In all countries with available data, significant differences in health exist between socioeconomic groups, in the sense that people with lower levels of education, occupation and/or income tend to have systematically higher morbidity and mortality rates. These health inequalities are one of the main challenges for public health, and there is a great potential for improving average population health by eliminating or reducing the health disadvantage of lower socioeconomic groups. This requires an active engagement of many policy sectors, not only of the public health and health care systems, but also of education, social security, working life, city planning, etc.

To read the full report: DG Sanco website,

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/socio_economics/documents/socioeco_inequalities_en.pdf

IX. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Making it easier for EU citizens living abroad to stand or vote in EP election

On 26 September, members of the European parliament (MEPs) adopted a report on a Commission proposal that would make it easier for EU citizens to stand or vote in European Parliament (EP) elections while living in Member States other than their own. The report was drafted by Andrew Duff MEP. The consultation report also inserts two new provisions to improve the portability of electoral rights within the EU: one on multiple candidatures and the other on deprivation of electoral rights.

First, the House proposes abolishing the current prohibition on standing for election in more than one Member State, provided that the country of residence permits multiple candidatures. Second, it seeks to ensure that the country of residence is not automatically obliged to prevent a citizen from voting if he or she has been deprived of his or her electoral rights in another Member State. MEPs feel that in both cases, it should be up to the Member States concerned to decide, case by case, so as to prevent discrimination.

For more information: the European Parliament website,

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/001-10646-267-09-39-901-20070823IPR09789-24-09-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Source: EP Press Release

The European Parliament of equal opportunities

The European Commission and European Parliament jointly organised an "EU Parliament of Equal Opportunities for All" conference on 11-12 October 2007. The event took place in the context of the 2007 European Year of equal opportunities for All, and was held at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The main objective of the conference was to share experiences on the implementation of anti-discrimination laws and to discuss possible new measures to tackle discrimination beyond the labour market. Speakers at the opening session were Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (Vice-President of the European Parliament), Vladimír Špidla (European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) and Fintan Farrell (President of the Social Platform).

Workshops were held on the implementation of existing anti-discrimination laws and on evidence of discrimination in access to goods and services and in education and social protection. The debate also considered new measures to tackle discrimination outside the labour market.

The conference coincided with the conclusion of an online public consultation on combating discrimination in the Member States and at EU level, which the European Commission launched earlier this summer.

For more information on the event: send an E-mail to equalopportunities@media-consulta.com

For more information on the public consultation: visit the website "Your voice in Europe",

X. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Annual conference on Prisons and Mental Health and meeting of the WHO European Network for Prison and Health, Trencin (Slovakia), 18-19 October 2007

Representatives from over 30 European countries took part in this year's gathering with the topic "*Prisons and Mental Health*".

Mental Health Europe (MHE) had contributed in May 2006 to the development of a document, which had served many fruitful exchanges: "*The Status Paper: Prisons, Mental Health and Society*."

The main issues covered during the two-day gathering included:

- The challenge of mental health and prisons;
- Human rights, mental health ethics and prisoners with mental health problems;
- Quality of mental health care in prisons;
- Mental health: meeting the needs of special groups: self harm among prisoners – personality disorders among prisoners and mental health problems and drug use, etc...

On behalf of MHE, Colette Versporten presented the project of the Italian Association for Mental Health (Associazione Italiana per la Salute Mentale - AISME): "*Project for the social reintroduction and territorial integration for women in prison having psychological and mental health problems*."

MHE is very pleased by the topic that was selected for the annual conference 2008: "*Prisons and women's health*", which will be prepared based on a status paper on the same topic.

MHE will contribute to this document and raise awareness of the specific problems of imprisoned women with mental health problems.

For more information: visit WHO website, <http://www.euro.who.int/prisons>

Thanks to Colette Versporten, MHE Board member, for this contribution.

XI. UNITED NATIONS

Fifteen more countries sign the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

India and Gabon have ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, bringing the number of ratifications to seven – 13 short of the number that will bring the Convention into effect.

In addition, 15 countries signed the Convention - the first of the 21st Century and the first that directly addresses the needs of persons with disabilities - during a five-day treaty event at the United Nations, bringing the total of signatures to 117.

Seven countries – Cambodia, Gabon, Madagascar, Mauritius, Montenegro, Slovakia and Swaziland – signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention, bringing the number of signatories to 66. The Protocol, which has been ratified by three countries, will come into force when the Convention does, and after 10 ratifications or accessions.

Thirty-nine States undertook 68 treaty actions at the treaty event, held from 25 September to 2 October. Of that number, nine states participated at the level of head of state or government and 22 participated at the level of minister for foreign affairs. There were a total of 38 signatures, and 30 ratifications, acceptances, accessions or like actions.

The treaty event, held every year since 2000, seeks to encourage UN Member States to participate in international treaties. It coincides with the general debate in the General Assembly, which brings to the United Nations heads of state and government and ministers from around the world.

For more information on signatures and ratifications of the Convention: the Convention dedicated website, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

Source: UN Press Release

New Guidelines To Improve Psychological and Social Assistance in Emergencies

International humanitarian agencies have agreed on a new set of guidelines to address the mental health and psychosocial needs of survivors as part of the response to conflict or disaster.

The "Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings" clearly state that protecting and promoting mental health and psychosocial well-being is the responsibility of all humanitarian agencies and workers. Until now, many people involved in emergency response have viewed mental health and psychosocial well-being as the sole responsibility of psychiatrists and psychologists.

Recent conflicts and natural disasters in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Sudan among many others involve substantial psychological and social suffering in the short term, which if not adequately addressed can lead to long-term mental health and psychosocial problems. These can threaten peace, people's human rights and development.

Yet, when communities and services provide protection and support, most individuals have been shown to be remarkably resilient. While this is increasingly recognised, many actors identified the need for a coherent, systematic approach that can be applied in large emergencies. The guidelines address this gap.

The guidelines have been published by the IASC, a committee that is responsible for world-wide humanitarian policy and consists of heads of relevant UN and other intergovernmental agencies, Red Cross and Red Crescent agencies, and NGO consortia. The guidelines have been developed by staff from 27 agencies through a highly participatory process.

The guidelines lay out the essential first steps in protecting or promoting people's mental health and psychosocial well-being in the midst of emergencies. They identify useful practices and flag potentially harmful ones, and clarify how different approaches complement one another.

The guidelines have a clear focus on social interventions and supports. They emphasize the importance of building on local resources such as teachers, health workers, healers, and women's groups to promote psychosocial well-being. They focus on strengthening social networks and building on existing ways community members deal with distress in their lives.

The guidelines stress that the way in which humanitarian aid is provided can have a substantial impact on people's mental health and psychosocial well-being. Treating survivors with dignity and enabling them to participate in and organize emergency support is essential.

The guidelines are available in different languages and can be obtained from the IASC website:

<http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/products/default.asp>

Source: Joint Press Release of 26 international humanitarian UN and non-UN agencies

XII. VARIOUS

The SUPPORT Project is Mapping EU Funded Mental Health Projects

The SUPPORT Project (a project co-funded under the EU Public Health Programme) is working to raise the profile of EU funded actions on mental health, and needs your assistance.

The EU funds mental health activities in many different programmes in different policy areas. Projects are often to be found in the DG Sanco Public Health Programmes, but there are also many projects funded other areas.

DG Research supports projects under the sixth and new Seventh Frameworks. In addition there are projects funded by DG Education and Culture, and DG Employment, under social exclusion, disability, PROGRESS and through EQUAL. There are also some projects funded by other areas of the EU, such as DG Justice's DAPHNE initiatives.

The SUPPORT project is undertaking a mapping exercise, collecting basic information about EU funded projects both current and recent. It will then map the outcomes of these projects against a number of themes and settings. This will make available basic information about projects from different policy areas and funding programmes available in one place.

The SUPPORT project is also facilitating a summit of mental health projects in Brussels in December, with colleagues from the European Commission. This event is particularly targeted at current projects for whom mental health and/or mental health promotion are key objectives. A date for this seminar has been identified for 13-14 December 2007, in Brussels. This would give time for discussion, reflection, and for informal networking between projects.

If you have a project that you think would be useful for the mapping exercise, or that you would like to be invited to the summit, contact the SUPPORT Project at

supportproject@sdcmh.org.uk, or visit www.supportproject.eu

Thanks to Chris O'Sullivan, from the SUPPORT Project, for this contribution.

DRC advocate for a greater participation of disabled people in volunteering

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) has always insisted that volunteering provides an opportunity for people to acquire the skills, confidence, and access to networks that could help them into paid employment. However, stated the DRC, disabled people constitute only 6% of volunteers, and fill just 5% of public appointments, across Britain. This is due to real and perceived barriers blocking their participation. The DRC has therefore developed guidance to help organisations with volunteering opportunities recruit and retain disabled volunteers.

To download the document: DRC website,

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/DRC/Useful%20Documents/guidance_for_volunteer_opportunity_providers_apr07.pdf

The DRC has also used its Disability Agenda document, "Increasing Democratic Participation and Active Citizenship", published in June 2007, to make recommendations on the subject for voluntary organisations, governments, political parties, local councillors, funding bodies, and all public-sector agencies.

To download the Disability Agenda document: DRC website,

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Disability/General%20advice%20and%20information/Disability%20agenda/Disability%20agenda%20Creating%20an%20alternative%20future.pdf>

For more information: visit the DRC new website,

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Scotland - New Festival puts Mental Health in the Spotlight

The first ever Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival took place at various well-known venues in Glasgow and Lanarkshire on 4-19 October 2007.

A whole host of events were showcased at the Festival including exhibitions, debates, feature films, documentaries, community events, concerts, plays and workshops. All events were low cost or free to the public.

The Festival sought to explore mental health and promote positive attitudes towards mental wellbeing, mental illness, support and recovery. It aimed to strengthen the links between arts, community and public organisations.

The Festival was led by a trio of organisations within the Glasgow Anti-Stigma Partnership: NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, the Mental Health Foundation and the "see me" campaign, and the events were made possible by the support of over 40 arts, public, community and voluntary organisations across Scotland.

For more information: the festival dedicated website, www.mhfestival.com

Source: the Scottish National Programme e-bulletin

XIII. WEBSITES/ONLINE INFORMATION

New WHO MIND Website

The new WHO MIND website provides state-of-the-art information and guidance as well as testimonials and best practices related to Mental health policy and service development, Mental health, human rights and legislation and Mental health and development.

The website also features a section devoted to Countries in Action working to improve mental health.

Additional material will be added to the website between now and the end of the year.

To visit the website: http://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/en/

Committee of the Regions on You Tube

Five videos highlighting the work of the EU Committee of the Regions have been posted on You Tube.

To view the films presenting the Committee of the Regions, visit:

<http://nl.youtube.com/watch?v=ogiEnT3dlqU>

For more information: contact person, Dennis ABBOTT, E-mail dennis.abbott@cor.europa.eu, Tel +32 (0)2 282 20 99

XIV. PUBLICATIONS

Alternatives Beyond Psychiatry

The book from Peter Stastny and Peter Lehmann (a former MHE Board member) highlights alternatives beyond psychiatry, current possibilities of self-help for individuals experiencing madness, and strategies toward implementing humane treatment. 61 authors - (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry, therapists, psychiatrists, lawyers, social scientists and relatives from all continents - report about their alternative work, their objectives and successes, their individual and collective experiences.

To order the book: Peter Lehmann Publishing,
<http://www.peter-lehmann-publishing.com/index.htm>

EPF Spring Conference 2007 Report

The report of the European Patients' Forum (EPF) Spring Conference 2007 (20-21 March 2007) is now available on the EPF website. In this report you will find a summary of the main themes, discussions and outcomes from the meeting and some useful information on the EPF ongoing work throughout 2007-2008 and EPF collaboration with other EU health stakeholders. For more information and to download the report: EPF website, <http://www.eu-patient.eu/>

The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Vocational Training and Employment

This publication contains the proceedings of the Tripartite European Regional Meeting of the International Labour Office (ILO) which was organised in Geneva on 9 March 2007.

It also provides an overview of the present situation regarding vocational training and employment of persons with disabilities, ideas on the components of an effective vocational inclusion of persons with disabilities and a description of the action plan adopted during the meeting.

To download the publication: CTNERHI website,
http://www.ctnerhi.com.fr/images_lettres/iloinclusioneng.pdf

Social security as a human right - The protection afforded by the European Convention on Human Rights

There is no mention in the European Convention on Human Rights of rights in the field of social security. Nevertheless, the Convention does protect certain of these rights which come into its area of application and this study sets out to explain how. It also examines recent developments in the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights which, as well as affording procedural guarantees, has widened and strengthened the material protection of specific rights. In addition, examples are given of measures taken in the member states following judgments of the Court in cases concerning social security. This sort of judgment is becoming more common, giving the Convention an ever-expanding social aspect which has an important impact at national level.

To place an order directly: the Council of Europe Publishing,
http://book.coe.int/sysmodules/RBS_page/admin/redirect.php?id=36&lang=EN&produit_alias_id=2200

Changing Administration - Changing Society. Challenges for Current Social Policy

Welfare is a current global issue challenging the lives of many. Investigations are constantly being made to find answers in search of the most proficient social model. This book presents the usefulness of an enhanced model for welfare regime analysis and shows the localisation of social professional orientations. This includes social quality, social professions, traditions, public services, globalisation, child protection, retirement plans and other social services.

For more information: Nova Publishers' website,
https://www.novapublishers.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=4808

Otro Puente (Another Bridge): Final Project Report

Otro Puente was a demonstration project conducted as part of the Massachusetts C-PASS grant (USA). The purpose was to prepare, support and empower individuals with

developmental disabilities to increase access to and control of Personal Assistance Services and Supports (PASS), and to identify barriers to consumer self-direction. Otro Puente examined the successes and challenges of participants from Latino cultural backgrounds, most were persons with cognitive challenges.

To read the final report of the project: the website of the Oregon Institute on Disability and Development, <http://www.hcbs.org/moreInfo.php/nb/doc/1996>

Thanks to Frank Mulcahy, from Disabled People's International Europe, for this contribution.

XV. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NEW!! 7 November 2007

Final Conference of the ROMAin Project, European Parliament, Brussels (Belgium)

The conference, organised by the Secretary of Citizen Affairs of the Ministry of Governance and Public Administrations of the Catalan Government and the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), will present the work carried out over more than two years by all project partners, placing emphasis on the presentation of the "Good Practice Guide for the Social Inclusion of Roma in Europe". This guide is the result of research carried out on experiences and social interventions that have been carried out with Roma in Europe and their posterior analysis, extracting components that form the basis of a good practice for the social inclusion of Roma.

For more information on the ROMAin project and the conference: the project dedicated website, www.romainclusion.org

9 November 2007

Conference "Double Stigma – Double Challenge": Putting Mental Health and HIV/AIDS on the International Agenda", The Hague (Netherlands)

To register and for more information: contact person, Katja Assoian, E-mail, kassoian@gip-global.org, Tel +31-35 683 8727

15-16 November 2007

International conference on Deinstitutionalisation and community living: comparative perspectives and international implications, Prague (Czech Republic)

For more information: visit the conference dedicated website, http://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/news/eu_decl_conf.html

21-23 November 2007

Eurochild Annual Conference, "Preventing social exclusion of children and young people in Europe: Participation and early intervention", Malta

For more information: Eurochild website, www.eurochild.org/malta2007

22-23 November 2007

EQUAVET Final Conference, "A European Approach to quality of disability-related social services", Verona (Italy)

For more information: contact Nadège Jibassia, E-Mail nadege.jibassia@epr.eu, Tel +32 2 736 54 44, or visit the EPR website, www.epr.eu

29 November – 1st December 2007

2nd European Conference on Child and Adolescent Mental Health in Educational Settings, "Relationships in Schools: Contemporary Problems and Opportunities", Naples (Italy)

For more information: the conference's Secretariat, Tel +44 20 8938 2548, Fax +44 20 7447 3837, E-mail events@tavi-port.org, or visit the conference dedicated website, www.tavi-port.org/conferences

14-16 December 2007

International Workshop on "Social investment and social protection as productive factors", Madrid (Spain)

For more information: contact person, Thea Meinema, Tel +31 30 789 2148, E-mail t.meinema@movisie.nl, or visit ICSW website, www.icsw.org.

17-18 December 2007

International Workshop on "Harm Reduction and Relapse Prevention of Addictive Behaviors", Oslo (Norway)

For more information: visit the Evidence website, <http://evidence.no/en/marlatt>

23-25 January 2008

SMES-EUROPA 10th Conference, "After 15 years...", Rome (Italy)

For more information on the conference: the SMES-EUROPA website, http://www.smes-europa.org/Rome2007_10conf_SMES_UK.htm

6-7 March 2008

8th INIC Annual Integrated Care Conference, Göteborg (Sweden)

For more information: visit INIC website,

http://www.integratedcarenetwork.org/Sweden2008/abstract_Call_Sweden2.pdf

10-12 March 2008

World Health Care Congress Europe 2008, Berlin (Germany)

For more information: visit the congress dedicated website,

<https://www.worldcongress.com/events/HR08015/index.cfm?confCode=HR08015>

10-15 March 2008

International Health Film Festival "ImagéSanté", Liège (Belgium)

For more information: visit the festival dedicated website,

<http://www.imagesante.org/en/e2006.php>

5-9 April 2008

AEP 16th European Congress of Psychiatry, Nice (France)

For more information: send an e-mail to aep@kenes.com, or visit the Congress dedicated website, <http://www.kenes.com/aep/>

NEW!! 14-15 April 2008

Conference "From Innovation to Practice: The Promise and Challenge of Achieving Recovery for All", Cambridge, Massachusetts (USA)

This conference, sponsored by the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation – Boston University in collaboration with the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, will address a number of topical areas through pre-conference institutes, workshops, and panels. Some of the issues addressed will be: "No force first: Promoting rehabilitation and reducing coercion", "Integrating health and wellness in rehabilitation and recovery services" or "Culturally competent services for minorities with psychiatric disabilities".

For more information: visit the conference website, <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/conference/>

19-21 June 2008

World Psychiatric Association Thematic Conference, "Depression and relevant psychiatric conditions in primary care", Granada (Spain)

For more information on the conference: contact person, Dr. Francisco Torres- González, E-mail ftorres@ugr.es, or visit the conference dedicated website,

<http://www.wpa2008granada.org>

7-9 August 2008

MHE Conference 2008, Aalborg (Denmark)

For further information and to sign up for the MHE2008 Newsletter, please visit: www.mhe-aalborg.dk, or contact the MHE Secretariat, Tel +32 2 280 04 68, E-mail info@mhe-sme.org

NEW!! 27-30 August 2008

12th European Symposium on Suicide and suicidal Behaviour, "Working Together to Prevent Suicide: Research, Policy and Practice", Glasgow (Scotland)

Building on the successes of the previous ESSSB symposia, the 12th symposium will bring together leading academics, policy-makers and practitioners from across the globe.

The conference aims at promoting cutting edge research, stimulating new thinking in all aspects of suicidology, sharing insights and expertise and enhancing collaboration between science, policy and practice.

For more information: contact the Conference organizer, E-mail organising@esssb12.org

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

Please send it to info@mhe-sme.org