



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE – SANTE MENTALE EUROPE aisbl
Boulevard Clovis 7, B-1000 Brussels
Tel +32 2 280 04 68 - Fax +32 2 280 16 04
E-Mail: info@mhe-sme.org
www.mhe-sme.org

PRESS RELEASE

On the occasion of the European Spring Council in March 2007

In today's Europe many people have to face challenges in their daily lives. Demographics, educational and skills gaps, technology, worker mobility and work-life balance all play a role in either strengthening people's resilience, if they dispose of adequate resources to begin with, or in placing a burden on their overall health and well-being and in particular on their mental health and well-being.

Mental illness results from complex causal interactions and is influenced by a number of risk and protective factors. The unemployed and socially excluded people have higher prevalence of mental health disorders than people who are employed and socially connected.

Mental health is a combination of social and emotional well-being. ***Mental health provides individuals with the vitality necessary for active living and working, to achieve goals and to interact with one another with dignity and respect.***

Internationally there is a growing awareness of the interrelationship between our social environments; the care and nurturing we receive when young; our interactions with others and sense of inclusion during our life course and our mental health and emotional well-being. ***Issues such as housing, education, employment or transport all have a crucial role to play in determining the mental health and well-being of the population.***

Mental Health Europe (MHE) calls to the EU Heads of State and Government ahead of the European Spring Council on 08-09 March to use the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome to make a clear commitment to ***a social Europe where mental health and well-being is given high priority in the political spectrum and on the European health and social agenda.***

In particular MHE urges leaders to take into account that:

- ➔ Mental health and emotional and social well-being are key public issues which require comprehensive, intersectoral action.
- ➔ Mental health problems can predispose people to unemployment, social exclusion and discrimination. Unemployment, social exclusion and discrimination also contribute to mental health problems.
- ➔ Improving the social environment in schools and workplaces, encouraging inclusion within the community and developing strong and supportive networks across the life course can positively impact on mental health.
- ➔ Strengthening both community and individual resilience builds capacity to positively manage periods of transition throughout life.
- ➔ Given the links between mental health and other aspects of life, partnership approaches between mental health and other health and social services are required in order to improve the mental health and well-being of the population.

For further information please contact the MHE Secretariat: info@mhe-sme.org, +32 2 280 04 68

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