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To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

- providing analysis and policy advice on employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html

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Mental Health in Europe

Annual Report 2010



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Letter from the President and the Director

“Writing the history of MHE brought us back in time and made us reflect on our core business: further the social inclusion and the human rights of one of the most vulnerable groups in society - people with mental health problems.”



Dear members and friends of Mental Health Europe,

With the publication of this annual report, Mental Health Europe concludes the celebration of its 25th anniversary in 2010. Writing the history of MHE brought us back in time and made us reflect on our core business: further the social inclusion and the human rights of one of the most vulnerable groups in society - people with mental health problems.

The 2010 MHE conference in October addressed the link between poverty and mental health problems and vice versa. It was organised in the frame of 2010 European Year of combating poverty and social exclusion.

We have always believed that the exchange of information, mutual learning and comparison at the European level bring about new ideas and promote innovation in the mental health field. Thanks to the support of the European Commission's Progress Programme, MHE was again able to offer extensive opportunities to its members and other stakeholders - a capacity-building seminar for MHE members on the involvement of mental health service users in the education process of mental health professionals and on communication work on public policy issues, training of MHE National Focal Points, MHE position papers, and especially the MHE Newsletter and website.

MHE actively contributed to the thematic conferences organised in the frame of the EU Pact for Mental Health and Well-being, but also prepared for the European Year of volunteering 2011 with an event at the European Parliament in November.

The EU-funded project addressing violence against women at the workplace and the impact on their mental health was concluded with a conference at the European Parliament in December. Recommendations were produced and widely disseminated.

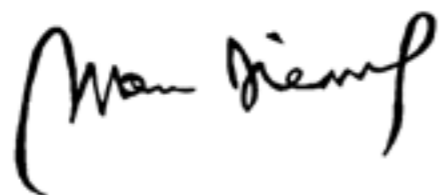
You will find more about all the above and many other activities in this annual report. Enjoy reading it, and don't hesitate to contact us should you wish for more information.

With best wishes,

Nace Kovac, President



Mary Van Dievel, Director



Top achievements for 2010

The National Focal Points trainings, our capacity-building seminar and conferences, along with our involvement in mainstreaming mental health in the Europe 2020 Strategy topped the MHE agenda in 2010

MHE uses training series to engage with National Focal Points

In order to best prepare the National Focal Points (NFPs) for their roles and update them on the relevant political topics, MHE organised five NFP trainings in the first half of 2010. Under a system implemented in 2008, NFPs are intermediaries between MHE, its member organisations and other stakeholders in their respective countries. NFPs disseminate EU information to national, regional and local levels, and help MHE receive input from its members on specific issues of consultation.

The participants in the National Focal Points training received an update on recent developments in the EU institutions and policies, such as the implications of the new Lisbon Treaty, the EU 2020 Strategy and the changes in the European Commission and Parliament. The sessions on the latest policy developments in the field of social inclusion, public health and human rights were organized in the form of workshops where all participants contributed with their own experiences in the respective fields. Moreover, each training included discussions with communication experts, who were invited to provide know-how on effective lobbying strategies targeted at policy makers. Site visits complemented the trainings, acquainting members with the functioning of Titan Dr. Constantin Gorgos Psychiatric Hospital in Bucharest, the Fundación Manantial - Public Network for Social Assistance of People with Serious Mental Illness in Madrid, the Fountain House in Stockholm and the Tallinn Mental Health Center.

The five NFP training sessions took place on:

- February 11-12, 2010 in Ljubljana with NFPs from Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany and Slovenia
- March 11-12, 2010 in Bucharest with NFPs from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Romania
- April 15-16, 2010 in Madrid with NFPs from Belgium (2 Belgian organisations), France, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain
- May 6-7, 2010 in Stockholm with NFPs from Hungary, Norway, Poland and Sweden
- June 10-11, 2010 in Tallinn with NFPs from Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania.

MHE empowers members during annual capacity-building seminar

On October 21, MHE held its annual capacity-building seminar, aimed at training and empowering member organizations. The first part of the day was dedicated to analyzing the involvement of users in the education process of mental health professionals. MHE members presented good practice examples from Austria, Italy and Slovenia, which were followed by a lively discussion. The second part of the seminar was held by Harwood Levitt Consulting. The session dealt with the question "How does communication work on public policy issues."



April 2011



General assembly redefines membership categories

The MHE General Assembly was also held on Thursday October 21, following the MHE capacity-building seminar. On that occasion, the accounts and balance for the year 2009, the budget for 2010, the annual report for 2009 and the work program for 2010 and 2011 were presented and approved. The assembly also welcomed the increase in MHE new membership applications, a results of MHE's involvement in very different and complementary areas of mental health. As many organizations or networks at the local level wished to participate in MHE's activities but could not comply with the membership criteria, the MHE Membership and Accreditation Committee

members raised the need for an extension and redefinition of the membership categories, the Board agreeing to bring this proposal to the General Assembly. The purpose of the change was to better accommodate the variety of organizations active in the mental health field in Europe, to broaden the MHE constituency and to increase the income from membership fees, thus ensuring more financial stability. The introduction of a new category "ordinary members" was presented and approved. Ordinary members could be regional or local associations active in the field of mental health, with a limited scope in mental health, or working in the field of single disorders (for example dementia, depression, eating disorders, bi-polar disorders, depression, ADHD etc) The full, associate and individual members will be redefined, and a membership review will be carried out by the MHE Membership and Accreditation Committee in 2011.

Conference addresses links between poverty and mental health problems

Human rights, employment and intergenerational poverty topped the agenda of MHE's annual conference Challenging Poverty-Creating Hope. Breaking the cycle of poverty and mental health problems, held on October 22-23 in Brussels. The conference was organized in the frame of the European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion, under the patronage of HRH Princess Mathilde of Belgium and in collaboration with the Flemish Association for Mental Health (VVG) and the Walloon Institute for Mental Health (IWSM). The open



April 2011

ing speeches included a video message by John Dalli (European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy) and contributions by Nessa Childers (Member of the European Parliament), Antonia Carparelli (European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities), Kristian Wahlbeck (WHO, Regional Office of Europe), Christiaan Decoster (Belgian Federal Ministry) and Julien van Geertsom (on behalf of the Belgian State Secretary responsible for the fight against poverty). The European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Laszlo Andor also sent a written message to the participants, which was presented by Antonia Carparelli. Over 40 presentations were delivered in parallel sessions during the two days. MHE also showcased the results of a survey on the link between poverty and mental health problem, with an emphasis on disadvantaged groups such as young, old people, women and migrants, and presented recommendations for future developments on poverty and mental health problems.



MHE celebrates anniversary with lively debate and comprehensive booklet

MHE celebrated its 25th anniversary with a roundtable debate, organized in the frame of the conference “Challenging Poverty Creating Hope-Breaking the cycle of poverty and mental health problems”. MHE also published a booklet on its history, written by José Van Remoortel, which looks back to MHE’s “prenatal” developments within the World Federation for Mental Health, and ends as it enters the year 2010. On the occasion, MHE paid homage to Edith Morgan, John Henderson and Knud Jensen, in the presence of John Henderson’s family.



April 2011

MHE consults on sustainable and inclusive growth

Mental Health Europe responded to the consultation for the EU 2020 Strategy for “Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth” which will frame the policy directions leading up to the year 2020 and pointed out that one of Europe’s main goals should be to ensure social cohesion in the European Union and to reduce inequalities. This includes combating the negative effects of the economic and financial crisis and growing unemployment which had a considerable impact on the mental health and wellbeing of the population since more and more people face financial difficulties, fear and uncertainty about the future. MHE emphasized that a stronger significance of the question of health and well-being of the population should be incorporated in the EU 2020 strategy as health determines the wellbeing of the citizens and effects their involvement in society and the labor market.

Furthermore, prior to the informal meeting of the EU heads of states and governments on 11 and 12 February where the EU 2020 Strategy was discussed, MHE sent an open letter and called on the EU leaders to take the views of the social NGOs into account and to put a serious emphasis on the fight against social exclusion of vulnerable groups in society such as people with mental health problems. In June 2010, MHE sent another letter to the heads of state to stress the needs to adopt a binding poverty target in the EU.

MHE promotes volunteering at European Parliament

The year 2011 has been designated as the European Year of Volunteering. Therefore, Mental Health Europe decided to dedicate its annual awareness-raising event at the European Parliament to addressing the topic of “Volunteering as a Tool for Social Inclusion of People with Mental Health Problems”. The event took place on 17 November 2010 and was hosted by Marian Harkin, a Member of the European Parliament from Ireland.

Daniel Stevens from the Institute for Volunteering Research in London gave a presentation on the benefits and barriers to volunteering and highlighted the results of a UK survey on the advantages of volunteering for people with disabilities. Robert Anderson from Eurocarers presented the carers’ perspective, calling for a better recognition of their work and the need for appropriate training measures. Sarah Boycott, Marina Sherlock and Bethany Taylor from the Social Activation Model project (SAM) in Ipswich shared their own experiences on how volunteering can have an impact on persons with mental health problems and on volunteers working with people who suffer from mental health problems. José Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Advisor, gave an overview on the development of volunteering in the mental health field in Europe. In the debate that followed the presentations, participants from the European Parliament, the Commission and the NGOs pointed out how important volunteering can be for people with mental health problems both as actors and beneficiaries. The need of recognition was highlighted and the participants called for adequate support structures for volunteers to be set up. The momentum of the European Year 2011 should be used to reinforce the dimension of volunteering for and by people with mental health problems, and to create targeted support programmes for this specific area.

MHE addresses violence against women at work

On December 7, our final conference under the Daphne project “Violence against women at work...Let’s talk about it!” took place at the European Parliament, hosted by MEP Mr. Milan Zver. The conference showcased examples of good practices, presented by the project partners together with the final evaluation. A personal account of harassment at

April 2011



the workplace was very much appreciated and was followed by a lively debate. MHE and its partners also presented their policy recommendations, addressed to policy makers and major stakeholders. The round table discussion, involving trade union representatives, the European Commission, women and (ex)users’ organisations, offered a large overview on the issue and concluded the event.

MHE involved in EU 2020 consultation

Europe 2020, the multiannual European Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs, was adopted in 2010. MHE played its part in consulting with the EU before the strategy was launched, always reinforcing the needs of people with mental health problems. Regarding the European Commission consultation on the European Union’s Strategy which will frame the policy directions leading up to the year 2020, MHE was astonished that the European Commission seemed to conclude that the best way to carry forward the health and social issues was “business as usual”. Prior to the informal meeting of the EU heads of states and governments on February 11 and 12, where the EU 2020 Strategy was discussed, MHE called on the EU leaders to take the views of the social NGOs into account and to put a serious emphasis on the fight against social exclusion of vulnerable groups in society such as people with mental health problems. Moreover, before the adoption of the European Commission’s Communication on the European Platform against Poverty in December 2010, MHE, together with 20 other European networks, co-signed a letter addressed to Laszlo Andor, European Commissioner for Employ-

ment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. With the adoption of the EU 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth and the policy implementation processes being redefined, the NGO Coalition welcomed the EU 2020's focus on inclusive growth and the adoption of social targets, social guidelines and the commitment to stakeholder engagement in the policy processes.

MHE asks EU leaders for poverty reduction target

In the wake of the European summit on June 17, 2010, Mental Health Europe sent a letter to the EU leaders to call for the adoption of a binding poverty reduction target and for strengthening the dimension of disability policies in the overall strategy. MHE emphasised that poverty and social exclusion signify a violation of human dignity and fundamental rights and should not be tolerated in the European Union. MHE furthermore called on EU leaders to adopt the proposal made by the European Commission to set the poverty indicator at 60 % of the median income, an indicator that has been utilized for many years by EUROSTAT and in the frame of the EU Social Open Method of Coordination.

People”, highlights the importance of promoting and protecting mental health in the later age and puts forwards some key recommendations for professionals and policy makers.

Ageing in good physical and mental health is a right of all Europeans. Facing aging problems and preventing harm is fundamental for the improvement of everybody's quality of life. Efforts need to be increased to enable more people to grow old with good mental health and wellbeing, prevent possible mental health problems and make provisions to guarantee access to high quality treatment and care for those suffering from a mental disorder. Maintaining good mental health and well-being is one way to ensure that we, and those around us, are able to lead long and healthy lives that are enjoyable and fulfilling. In line with the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being, MHE called for actions to improve the quality of life of older people:

On the EU and national policy level:

- Implementing the active inclusion principles as far as possible
- Developing flexible retirement schemes
- Providing measures to promote mental health and well-being
- Undertaking actions to support families and carers
- Fostering research on mental health and wellbeing related issues in older age
- Implementing EU and national campaigns to raise awareness on mental health in the later years

On the community and individual level:

- Training and educating professionals in specific areas of competency
- Providing employment opportunities for older people
- Promoting the active participation of older people in community life, including physical activity and educational opportunities
- Helping older people to achieve a meaningful life and make their own choices
- Endorsing communication skills, also for older people affected by dementia
- Making early diagnosis and treatment of dementia and other age related diseases



MHE publishes paper on mental health in older people

MHE recently published a position paper on “Mental Health and Well-being of Older People”. The document, written in view of the high-level Thematic Conference on “Mental Health and Well-being in Older

MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE!

WHY THEY JOINED

HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?

MHE is a representative organisation of associations, organisations and individuals active in the field of mental health and well-being in Europe, including providers of mental health services, volunteers and professionals of many disciplines. MHE has members in most European countries. All the Member States of the European Union are represented in the membership.

Membership of MHE is open to NGOs, individuals, professionals, volunteers and others active in the mental health field at local, national, regional or European level who share and support MHE's vision.

By becoming part of a large mental health network, MHE's members can learn at first hand about new projects and initiatives pursued by mental health organisations in Europe, and they can contribute to influencing European health and social policy.

MHE's members receive the MHE Newsletter and other timely information and briefings on EU, Council of Europe and WHO related developments.

For more information, please contact:

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NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN EUROPE
NEW CHALLENGES FOR MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

John Bowles
 Member of European Parliament, UK
 "Mental Health is on the European political map and Mental Health Europe is one of the key players who have put it there. Service users are people with the unique expertise that comes from direct experience. They, with their advocacy groups, can ensure that scientific knowledge and medical and social care practice are informed with dignity, human rights and the deficit of stigma in our policy making. It is fundamentally wrong that the voice of Mental Health Europe is now heard loud and clear."

Náðinn Unnsteinsson
 WHO, Copenhagen
 "Mental Health Europe is an important platform in the civil society and one of the founding members of the WHO European network for users and carers empowerment. Mental Health Europe gives users, carers, professionals and systems a common ground to stand on, recognising their contributions before their differences in working towards improved mental health of the European population."

Inge Schöck
 Volunteer, Germany
 "As a multidisciplinary movement, Mental Health Europe provided the network for sharing knowledge of effective practice as well as learning by highlighting other cultural approaches to mental health issues and by providing the opportunity for discussion and debate on personal points of view."

Nace Kovac
 SENT, Slovenian Association for Mental Health
 "I joined Mental Health Europe because our missions are complementary: promoting voluntarily based services and the human rights of patients by involving them in decision-making."

Florence Lenoir
 Advocate, France
 "Mental Health Europe has enabled us to join a network of European partners with whom we exchange practices for promoting mental health in France, and which therefore allows for the voice of providers of mental health services to be considered in the European Union, especially through the different gatherings and forums."

Submitted by the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities - Action Programme to Combat Discrimination
 European Regional Council of the World Federation for Mental Health

Our vision, mission and values

“A Europe where mental health and well-being are given high priority in the political spectrum, where (ex-) users of mental health services live as full citizens with access to appropriate services and support, and where meaningful participation is guaranteed at all levels of decision-making”

Our vision

Mental Health Europe's vision is of a Europe where mental health and well-being are given high priority in the political spectrum and on the European health and social agenda, where (ex-) users of mental health services live as full citizens with access to appropriate services and support when needed, and where meaningful participation is guaranteed at all levels of decision-making and administration. MHE's values are based on dignity and respect, equal opportunities, freedom of choice, antidiscrimination, social inclusion, democracy and participation.

Our mission

Mental Health Europe is a non-governmental umbrella organisation committed to the promotion of mental health and well-being, the prevention of mental health problems, the improvement of care, and the protection of the human rights of (ex)users of mental health services, their families and carers. MHE's mission is to promote the mental health and well-being of all citizens. MHE aims to make membership relevant and valuable for its members and to develop policy positions in consultation with them.

Mental Health Europe:

- Plays an important role in raising awareness, fighting social exclusion and combating the taboos, stigma and prejudice associated with mental illness, and in
- Is entitled to fight against violations of the social rights of people with mental health problems by lodging collective complaints with the Council of Europe's Committee of Social Rights
- Has participatory status with the Council of Europe, a liaison function for mental health promotion with the European Commission, and has legal status, being in official relations with the World Health Organisation - Regional Office for Europe
- Is a member of several European umbrella organisations and contributes to their work from a mental health perspective: European Disability Forum, Social Platform, European Public Health Alliance, European Coalition for Community Living, European Patients Forum and European Women's Lobby.

Our members

Mental Health Europe represents associations and organisations active in the field of mental health at local, national, regional and European level. This includes NGOs, users of mental health services, their families and carers, professionals, research and educational institutions and volunteers.

In 2010, MHE had 67 Member Organisations and 72 Individual Members.

MHE members in 2010

Austria: pro mente austria - Austrian Federation for Mental Health

Belgium: Fédération des Institutions Hospitalières de Wallonie FIH-W

Federatie van diensten voor geestelijke gezondheidszorg (FDGG)

Habitations Protégées Ourthe-Ambleve

Hand in Hand v.z.w

Huis Perrekes

Ligue Bruxelloise de Santé Mentale

Ligue Wallonne pour la Santé Mentale

Vlaamse Vereniging voor Geestelijke Gezondheid (VVGG)

Zorgnet Vlaanderen

Bulgaria: Public Health Centre

Croatia: Shine - The Association for Social Promotion of People with Mental Disabilities

Sto koluri Split - Association for health protection, social care and children rights' promotion

Cyprus: Advocacy Group for the Mentally Ill (A.G.M.I)

Czech Republic: Czech Association for Mental Health (CAPZ)

FOKUS

Denmark: Danish Psychosocial Rehabilitation Information Centre

Projekt UDENFOR

SIND - Danish Association for Mental Health

Estonia: Estonian Mental Health Association

Finland: Finnish Association for Mental Health

Finnish Central Association for Mental Health

National Institute for Health and Welfare

France: Advocacy France

CEMEA - Direction générale

France Dépression

Germany: Bundeszentrale fuer Gesundheitliche Aufklaerung (BZgA)

Dachverband Gemeindepsychiatrie e.V.

Deutsche Gruppenpsychotherapeutische Gesellschaft (DGG)

Verband psychiatrischer Rehabilitationseinrichtungen Deutschlands VpRD

MHE members continued...

Georgia: Georgian Association for Mental Health

Greece: Association for the Psychosocial Health of Children and Adolescents (APHCA)

Mental Health Institute for Children and Adults (M.H.I.C.A.)

Society of Social Psychiatry and Mental Health

Hungary: "Way Out" Psychiatric Self Help Association

Iceland: The Advocacy and Mental Health Association of Iceland GEDHJALP

Ireland: Mental Health Ireland

Israel: Makshivim net

Italy: AISME

Kosovo: Kosovo Health Foundation

Latvia: SKALBES

Lithuania: State Mental Health Centre

Luxembourg: Reseau Psy - Psychesch Hëllef Dobaussen asbl

Malta: Friends of Mount Carmel Hospital Society

Netherlands: C.C.L. Time-out

GGZ Nederland

RINO Noord-Holland

Norway: Voksne for Barn - Adults for Children

Poland: Coalition for Mental Health

Instytut Psychiatrii i Neurologii

Polish Association for Child and Family Mental Health

Portugal: ARIA- Associacao de reabilitacao e Intergracao Ajuda

Portuguese Association for Mental Health

Romania: Estuar

Romanian League for Mental Health

Slovak Republic: Integra

Open the Doors, Open your Hearts (ODOS)

Slovak League for Mental Health

Slovenia: OZARA - Slovenija Naciononaino

SENT - Slovenian Association for Mental Health

Zdruzenje Za Kakovost Zivljenja

Spain: Asociacion Española de Neuropsiquiatria (AEN)

Asociación Nacional de Enfermería de Salud Mental

FEAFES - Confederacion Española de Agrupaciones de Familiares Y Enfermos Mentales

Fundacion Intrus

Fundacion Mundo Bipolar

Sweden: Swedish National Association for Mental Health

Switzerland: Pro Mente Sana

United Kingdom: Glasgow Association for Mental Health

Institutional and Professional Development Centre School of Education

Mind

Penumbra

Psychological Support Group, Gibraltar

Scottish Development Centre for Mental Health

The British Psychological Society

The Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health

The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health

European Level Organizations:

ADHD Europe

European Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Therapy (EABCT)

European Psychiatric Nurses - HORATIO

SMES-Europa aisbl





Advocating for better mental health and wellbeing in the EU

Mental health promotion and prevention of mental health problems

Mental Health Europe advocates for improving mental health and preventing mental health problems in Europe, through the development of policies and practices for the promotion of positive mental health, an early identification of mental health problems and the reduction of the incidence of mental illness and suicide.

MHE contributes to follow-up of EU Pact on Mental Health and Wellbeing

In order to keep mental health high up on the European agenda, MHE continuously worked on the follow up of the EU Pact on Mental Health and Wellbeing, with DG SANCO and DG EMPL. MHE's Senior Policy Advisers, Board and staff provided specific expertise in term of mental health policies and the implementation of the Pact and proposed speakers for the various thematic conferences that were held to promote the Pact. In this context, MHE was involved in the preparation to the Pact Conferences on high-level conference on "Mental Health in Older People" in Madrid in June 2010, which was co-organised by the Spanish EU Presidency, and the "Stigma and Social Exclusion" conference in Lisbon in November 2010. Input was given by the provision of good practice examples collected from the MHE members and the provision of speakers at both conferences. MHE also issued a position paper on the mental health of older people and highlighted the importance of promoting and protecting mental health in the later age and put forwards some key recommendations for professionals and policy makers. Moreover, MHE contributed with a position to the Mental Health Pact conference on Stigma and Social Exclusion in November 2010 in Lisbon.

Determine project tackles health inequalities

In 2010, the Determine project, in which Mental Health Europe was involved as a partner, came to an end with a final conference and publication. The Determine initiative established a consortium that brought together more than 50 health bodies, including public health authorities, health promotion organisations and governments in order to tackle health inequalities by focussing on social determinants and vulnerable groups. The key recommendations of the project included the acknowledgment that health inequities are a population-based issue, as social position is directly correlated with health, this resulting in a 'health gradient' that affects all groups of society. Also, health systems within EU Member States should give greater priority to improving engagement with other policy sectors, promoting 'health equity in all policies' approaches. This

involves developing legislation, reorienting and developing the health workforce and increasing the resource base for health promotion. The Determine project received much appraisal and feedback for its grass-root approach and general contribution to understanding the relation between social determinants and health inequalities.

ProMenPol comprehensive portal launched

The ProMenPol project, in which MHE participated as a partner, developed one of the most visited mental health promotion websites. Its functionality of tools and methods for mental health promotion across the lifecycle were augmented with the launch of a new mental health portal at the end of August 2010. The Portal extended the range of information available on the ProMenPol site to include sites dedicated to e-learning in relation to mental health promotion and to supporting the implementation of mental health promotion in schools, workplace and older people residence settings. In addition, the new mental health promotion portal built on the network of more than 600 mental health promotion professionals to create what is planned to be the largest network dedicated to mental health promotion in Europe and elsewhere.





Advocating for better mental health and wellbeing in the EU

Social inclusion and mental health

People with mental health problems often face stigma and discrimination and are deprived of basic rights and the fulfillment of social needs. They have difficulties participating in the labor market or accessing quality health and social services. Mental Health Europe advocates for the rights and the social inclusion of people with (a history of) mental health problems and raises awareness on their needs and abilities.

MHE emphasizes links between poverty and mental health problems during EY 2010

Bidirectional links between poverty and mental health

During 2010, Mental Health Europe expressed its commitment to the inclusion of people with mental health problems in all aspects of social life through its active involvement in organizing activities and disseminating information related to the 2010 European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (EY 2010). MHE sent out a press release with its message for the EY 2010, drawing the attention of policy-makers and other stakeholders to the links between mental health and poverty and the particularly vulnerable situation of people with mental health problems. In its message, MHE pointed out the clear bidirectional links between mental health problems and poverty. People experiencing poverty are particularly vulnerable towards developing mental health problems. Conversely people with existing mental health problems are more likely to experience poverty. Mental Health Europe's message stressed the importance to implement the European Pact for Mental Health and Wellbeing and to foster measures for the promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental health problems. Mental health should be incorporated in the development of all policy areas such as health, social policies, housing, employment, training, justice, fundamental rights. The fight against poverty and social exclusion should be amplified to achieve that both employed and unemployed people should be able to live a life in dignity.

Letter to MEPs

In November 2010, together with other members of the European social NGOs Coalition of the European Year 2010 for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, Mental Health Europe sent a letter to the Members of European Parliament to claim adequate action for ending homelessness and urged them to sign the written declaration 61/2010 to achieve the minimum number of signatories for its adoption.

Survey on poverty and vulnerable groups

MHE's conference "Challenge Poverty – Creating Hope. Breaking the cycle of poverty and mental health problems", was also dedicated to the 2010 European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. In the frame of the conference, MHE presented the final report of a survey it conducted among its members, which was focused on poverty and mental health of children and young people, women, older people and migrants.

Involvement in policy-making

In terms of policy-making, MHE participated in both the stakeholder expert group meeting for the EY 2010, organized by the European Commission, and in the meetings of the NGO coalition for the EY 2010, organized by the European Anti-Poverty Network, actively bringing in the mental health dimension. MHE was also present at the 9th Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty and participated in one of the workshops where mental health problems were a major topic of discussion.

What's next?

Looking to the future, MHE became a member of the European NGO Alliance for the European Year of Volunteering 2011, led by the European Volunteer Center. While attending the Alliance meetings, MHE representatives pointed out the beneficial effects of both volunteering for and by people with mental health problems.





Advocating for better mental health and wellbeing in the EU

Human Rights, Disability and Mental Health

Across Europe, thousands of people with mental health problems spend many years, or their entire lives, isolated in institutions, often silent victims of human rights violations. The stigma attached to mental health problems is still widespread, leading to discrimination and a lack of equal opportunities. Mental Health Europe believes that people with mental health problems are full citizens. As such, they have equal rights and are entitled to dignity, equal treatment, independent living and full participation in society.

Mental Health Europe entitled to lodge collective complaints until June 2014

The 121st meeting of the Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter, which took place in Strasbourg on May 3-6, brought good news for Mental Health Europe. The Committee decided to reinstate MHE on the list of International Non Governmental Organisations entitled to lodge collective complaints alleging violations of the European Social Charter for a period of four years, from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2014. This decision enables MHE to bring forward complaints before the European Committee for Social Rights. Moreover, MHE will be able to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the European Social Charter, especially in cases where a European country is violating the social rights of people with mental health problems.

MHE meets with UN chairs to discuss implementation of UN CRPD

On July 1, Mental Health Europe was invited to the annual meeting of the human rights treaty body chairs. On this occasion, MHE representatives Mary Van Dievel and Roselyne Bourgon had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Ronald McCallum, Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The discussion with Mr. McCallum focused on mutual concerns on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, especially regarding

people with mental health problems.

The fair implementation of several articles of the Convention, for example article 12 on legal capacity and article 14 on the liberty and security of the person are of core concern for MHE, as too often the sole existence of mental health problems justifies institutionalization for alleged "security reasons."

There are nine core international human rights treaties in the international law system of the United Nations. Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, all UN Member States have ratified at least one core international human rights treaty, and 80 % of them have ratified four or more. The treaties address a wide range of subjects, covering general human rights (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), non discrimination (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) and specific issues (Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

Eight human rights treaty bodies, representing committees of independent experts, monitor the implementation of the core international human rights treaties. The eight chairs of the committees meet once a year in order to coordinate their work and improve the UN system of monitoring.



Council of Europe invites MHE for dialogue on disability action plan

Following a first MHE presentation on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan for people with mental health problems, the Bureau of the European Co-ordination Forum for the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (CAHPAH) decided to invite the organisation for a hearing. The hearing, which took place in Strasbourg on 27 September, was aimed at presenting possible ways of implementing the Council of Europe's Action Plan "Improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015" and its impact on people with mental health problems. MHE was represented at the meeting by Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer. After the presentation, several questions came from the floor, mostly regarding the uniformity of legislations in the fields of disability and mental health. Collecting data regarding human rights violations suffered by people with mental health problems was another topic addressed during the discussion.

MHE publishes paper on UN CRPD

In the frame of the work of the Committee on Mental Health and Human Rights, MHE published a position paper on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with a specific focus on people with mental health problems. The paper addressed the concerns MHE holds regarding the future implementation of the

Convention and its core provisions for EU countries. Moreover, the publication allowed MHE to give key recommendations to guide the different stakeholders in protecting the rights of people with mental health problems, who often face stigma and human rights violations.

MHE upholds rights of children with mental health problems

On the occasion of World Human Rights Day on December 10, MHE published a press release calling on decision makers to pay attention to the particular situation of children with mental health problems, especially in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. MHE underlined the fact that children are one of the biggest groups at risk of human rights violation, therefore an integrated approach including appropriate and concrete steps should be undertaken to better protect children's rights in relation to mental health issues.



Advocating for better mental health and wellbeing in the EU

Gender and Mental Health

Gender is important to many of the determinants of mental health, often linked to inequity in society, including gender inequality. There are clear differences between genders in mental health and mental illness in Europe.

Handbook and policy recommendations mark end of Daphne project

The year 2010 saw the completion of Mental Health Europe's Daphne project "Violence against women at work...Let's talk about it!", an ambitious attempt to promote debate on all forms of violence against women in the workplace. MHE and its partners strived to encourage attitudes of zero tolerance to violence, while contributing to the development of community policies in the field of public health, employment and human rights. The project brought together NGOs active in the field of mental health and women's rights with national trade unions and employers' organizations, job centers and other health and social services. In the frame of the project, the partners developed and carry out awareness-raising campaigns targeted at key stakeholders. The campaign culminated with the development of a website written in eight different languages and dedicated to promoting best practices in the fight against workplace violence. A booklet containing general information about the link between violence and harassment against women at work and mental health problems was also published, as was a poster illustrating the importance of preventing violence and harassment against women at work. The awareness raising tools were disseminated among employees via trade unions, job centers, NGOs, health and social services, European and national employers' organizations. The tools were also disseminated in public spaces in order to reach the general public.

Policy recommendations for the national mental health associations

- To develop relationships with employers and Trades Unions in order to facilitate the recognition of the links between violence at work and mental health problems
- To offer training to Trades Unions encouraging their role in recognizing and responding to this issue
- To promote awareness raising campaigns
- To identify and disseminate examples of good practice, especially in those countries with a high level of recorded incidents
- To find a common definition of what is considered to be violence
- To promote the introduction of safe contact points in each workplace
- To develop guidelines for Employee Assistance Programmes, counselling and mediation services on recognising and working with women who have been victims of violence
- To develop and promote specialist resources and training for occupational health doctors, family doctors, HR professionals and all the relevant professionals
- To train professionals to ensure they have a thorough knowledge of the psychological problems linked to violence against women at work and can then offer the appropriate support

Policy recommendations for mental health professionals

- To support awareness raising campaigns
- To support the development of safe contact points in all workplaces
- To provide support for women who have experienced violence at work
- To ensure that occupational health doctors, human resources professionals and appropriate mental health staff have access to training and information

Policy recommendations for employers and trade unions

- To raise awareness amongst employees
- To adopt a zero tolerance regime within the work place
- To introduce safe contact points in all workplaces

Policy recommendations for the EU and EU member states

- To raise awareness of the links between mental health and employment
- To combat violence against women at the workplace in all European countries and promote attitudes of zero tolerance
- To support the development of retention policies for employers which recognize the rights of the victim and the responsibilities of the perpetrator
- To ensure that all professionals receive specific training, especially occupational health doctors and human resources professionals
- To ensure that the particular vulnerability of women working in high risk occupations is recognized



Communicating Mental Health

Mental Health Europe recognises the importance of providing timely access to key information. It provides valuable and up-to-date information for mental health professionals, service users, social partners, policy makers, the wider public and key stakeholders

The MHE communication strategy

Mental Health Europe recognises the importance of providing timely access to key data. It provides valuable and up-to-date information for mental health professionals, service users, social partners, policy makers, the wider public and key stakeholders at different geographical level.

In 2010, MHE significantly improved its communication strategy. Our newsletter and website provide members and readers with clear and useful information, in a timely manner.

Our website

The MHE website continued to be an important communication tool for channeling key messages on MHE news and activities, as well as on relevant policy issues on the EU level.

During the year 2010, our website received 26,631 visits from 16,101 unique visitors. a total of 72,836 pages were viewed, with an average of 2,74 pages per visit, and an average time of 2 minutes and 17 seconds spent checking the website. Visits on the MHE website increased by more than 12% in 2010, compared to the previous year.

Our newsletter

The MHE Newsletter ensured that readers were updated on the organisation's activities and on the latest policy developments in the field of mental health. Published in English only, but having its summary translated in French, German and Spanish, the newsletter

reached more than 3700 of our readers, briefing them on MHE news and activities as well as projects carried out by members, relevant EU policies, news from other European organizations and information on the European Year for combatting poverty and social exclusion. Readers could also get insights on relevant publications in the field of mental health, as well as conferences and seminars they could participate in.

Press releases and position papers

In addition, policy and position papers, briefings and press releases were published and widely disseminated by the MHE Secretariat. Publications were tailored for different audiences. Short policy briefs were prepared to provide information to MHE members as well as to national and local policy makers and third parties. During 2010, MHE published six position papers on topics ranging from volunteering to the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. MHE also published six press releases on the occasion of World Human Rights Day and World Mental Health Day, as well as addressing subjects such as the EU 2020 Strategy and ways of mainstreaming disability

Conferences and events

Finally, MHE representatives attending conferences, seminars and events, both national and at the EU level, provided opportunities for further expanding knowledge and raising awareness on MHE work and on mental health issues.



April 2011



Financial Report for 2010

April 2011

Financial report for 2010

Mental Health Europe's revenue mostly comes from subsidies granted by the European Union. Membership fees, the income from renting out the spare apartment in the MHE building, as well as co-financing by project partners, donations, financial and exceptional income make up for the rest of the MHE budget.

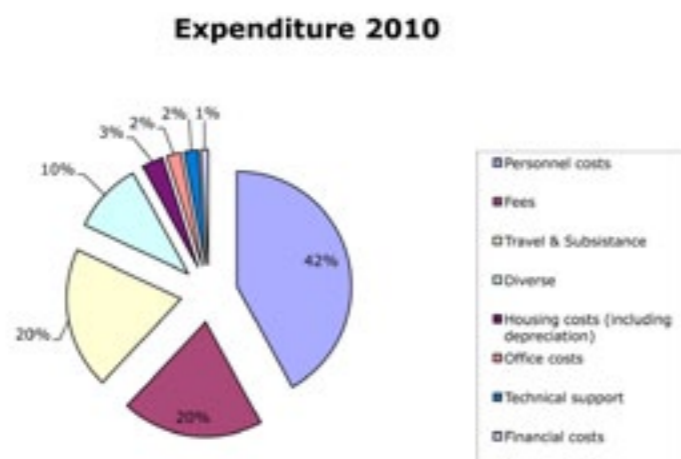
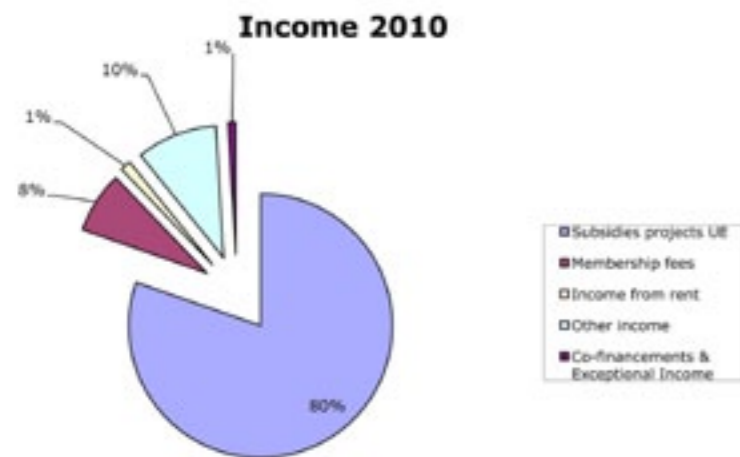
Mental Health Europe has a healthy cash situation, despite the fact that the accounts for the year 2010 were closed with a loss of 7.061,65 EUR.

We are pleased to announce that a good number of new members joined Mental Health Europe in 2010. In order to help our recruitment efforts, it is the responsibility of MHE Board members to provide the MHE secretariat with names and contact details of organisations and individuals in their countries who might be interested in joining our organization. We will

then follow up with a membership recruitment campaign. The MHE National Focal Points promised to help with this too, and we are very grateful for that.

The amount of donations received from individuals has already considerably increased in 2010. We gratefully accept every donation, be it small or bigger – every little bit helps. We very much regret though that not one of the big companies and firms contacted in 2010 responded positively to our request to support MHE and its activities. They seem to think that “corporate social responsibility” does not apply to the mental health field, although recent dramatic events have shown the importance of Mental Health Europe's work on raising awareness about the fact that good mental health of all citizens, including workers, is the basis for a sound economy. Mental Health Europe will continue its efforts in this field.

Colette Versporten, MHE Treasurer
Chair of the MHE Finance Committee



Who is Who in Mental Health Europe

MHE Board 2009 - 2012

Tamas Barnabas, Hungary
Preben Brandt, Denmark
Hristo Dimitrov, Bulgaria
Rita Donabauer, Austria
Martine Dutoit, France
Brian Howard, Ireland
Vicente Ibañez Rojo, Spain
Malgorzata Kmita, United Kingdom
Nace Kovac, Slovenia
Pino Pini, Italy
Marita Ruohonen, Finland
Dimitris Tataridis, Greece
Jan Van Speybroeck, Belgium
Svetlana Varjun, Estonia
Colette Versporten, Belgium

Executive Committee 2009 -2012

President: Nace Kovac
Vice-President: Rita Donabauer
Treasurer: Colette Versporten
Secretary: Pino Pini
Member without portfolio: Brian Howard

Membership and Accreditation Committee

Chair: Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Advisor
Athena Frangouli, Greece
Mariano Hernandez, Spain
Elisabeth Muschik, Austria
Inge Schöck, Germany
Vesna Svab, Slovenia

Finance Committee

Chair: Colette Versporten, MHE Treasurer
Brian Howard, MHE Board Member
Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Advisor

Committee on Mental Health and Human Rights

Chair: Malgorzata Kmita, Former MHE President
Coordinator: Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer
Tomas Barnabas, MHE Board member
Claude Deutsch, MHE member
Martine Dutoit, MHE Board member
Kristijan Grdjan, MHE member,

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John Henderson, MHE Senior Policy Advisor
Vicente Ibanez Rojo, MHE Board member
Peter Kinderman, MHE member
Nace Kovac, MHE President
Mary Nettle, MHE member
Erik Olsen, MHE member
Marita Ruohonen, MHE Board member
Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director
Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Advisor

Senior Policy Advisors

John Henderson (passed away on Jan 4, 2010)
Stijn Jannes
Elisabeth Muschik
Josée Van Remoortel

MHE Secretariat

Director:
Mary Van Dievel

Policy Officers:
Roselyne Bourgon, Human Rights Officer
Yves Brand, Health Policy Officer
Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer
Astrid Mechel, Social Policy Officer

Project Coordinator:
Alessia Faravelli

Administrative Assistant:
Samira Assoufi

Contact Details

Do you have any questions about our work?
Contact us!

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