



FINNISH PRESIDENCY SCORECARD

(JULY - DECEMBER 2019)

MENTAL HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS

In order to engage with and analyse the performance of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU), [Mental Health Europe](#) has devised a scorecard system through which we evaluate each Presidency's commitment to and promotion of mental health. The performance of each Presidency is rated based on the following criteria:

- **Promotion of mental health and well-being,**
- **Commitment to the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities,**
- **The involvement and empowerment of users of mental health services.**

The Finnish Presidency has notably made a commitment to [promote the well-being in all policies](#) and made the "economy of well-being" one of its key priorities for its mandate. As already done in 1999 and 2006 during its last Presidencies to the Council, Finland was committed to bring mental health back onto the European agenda as an important aspect for the lives of millions of Europeans and a contributing factor to cohesion and growth.

SCALE OF APPRECIATION: HOW WAS THE WEATHER DURING THE FINNISH PRESIDENCY?



GOOD



FAIR



AVERAGE



POOR

PROMOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



GOOD

Following the [Social Platform's Flagship Conference on Building a Social Europe](#) and the [high-level conference on the Economy of Well-being](#) in September 2019, [Council Conclusions on the Economy of Well-being](#) were adopted in October 2019. MHE produced a [response of the content of these Council Conclusions](#) and is glad to see many positive elements in the text signalling an effort and commitment to put well-being and mental health at the heart of EU policies. In particular, MHE would like to commend the Finnish Presidency for inviting the European Commission to propose a Mental Health Strategy which takes into account the cross-sectoral impacts of different policies on mental health.

Finland also facilitated debate on the EU's gender equality policy for the future and strengthened the links between economic policy and gender equality. Promoting equality between women and men, reducing social inequalities and improving employment opportunities for women are all key objectives in terms of well-being and positive mental health. >>>

>>> The Presidency organised a High-Level Conference on gender equality and issued [Council Conclusions on the topic](#). The Council Conclusions focus on including gender equality in all relevant post-2020 policy frameworks in the EU, such as the European Semester, the UN 2030 Agenda and the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU.

Finally, in December 2019, the Council Conclusions on [A New EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work: Enhancing the implementation of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU](#) were adopted. The Conclusions put a strong focus on the challenges posed by psychosocial risk factors and invite the European Commission to better address them through an ad-hoc communication and through the above-mentioned European Mental Health Strategy.

COMMITMENT TO THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITIES



The Finnish Presidency showed support to the implementation of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (UN CRPD) and the work of civil society organisations through participation in and backing of events. The Conference on [“Disability Workforce of Tomorrow”](#) was organised by the European Association for Service Providers of Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) as part of the official programme of the Presidency. It allowed to share best practices on how to manage human resources to facilitate the implementation of service delivery in line with the UN CRPD. Supported by the Finnish Presidency to the EU, the European Disability Forum organised its [Board Meeting](#) in Helsinki where, among others, the drafting of an additional Protocol to the Oviedo Convention was discussed, as well as promising practices to end coercion. Finally, Finland gave the patronage to a [network seminar](#) co-organised by the Citizenship, Recovery, and Inclusive Society Partnership (CRISP) network and [MIELI Mental Health Finland](#), MHE Finnish member. The seminar objective was to discuss the possibilities to influence public policy in the European Union in order to make mental health more prominent in a range of policy sectors.

In December 2019, the Council Conclusions on [Inclusive labour markets: Improving the employment of people in a vulnerable position in the labour market](#) were adopted. The Council Conclusions have a strong focus on the right to work of persons with disabilities, including persons with psychosocial disabilities, and invite the European Commission to pay attention to their inclusion in policies and initiatives for employment, such as the European Semester and the use of EU funding.

INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF USERS OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



The Presidency organised an event on [Supporting refugees mental health](#) in December 2019. The conference aimed to share best practices and promote cooperation at European level. MHE welcomes the fact that the Presidency put this important and often neglected topic on the agenda, and that it addressed access to mental health services that are culturally appropriate. However, the target audience were mainly professionals in the field of mental health and integration rather than users of services themselves.

In general, while appreciating the efforts and commitment to bring mental health at the forefront of discussions in the EU agenda, it has to be noted that users of mental health services were not consistently involved throughout the discussions.

CONCLUSION

Given its premises and outcomes, the Finnish Presidency to the Council was certainly very fruitful and successful. Mental health and well-being were regular topics of discussions throughout the six-month mandate, with the Presidency leaving us with the concrete invitation to issue a European Mental Health Strategy.

MHE would like to take this opportunity to invite the Finnish government to continue its admirable work done to promote positive mental health, prevent mental ill-health and protect the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities. While the Presidency might have not regularly engaged with people with mental health problems, we believe the Finland will have the opportunity to promote users' engagement and empowerment during the negotiations to develop a European Mental Health Strategy, as recommended in [MHE's preliminary position on the topic](#).

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