



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE
 Boulevard Clovis 7, B-1000 Brussels
 Tel + 32.2.280.04.68
 Fax + 32.2.280.16.04
 E-mail: info@mhe-sme.org
 Web site: http://www.mhe-sme.org

NEWSLETTER N°1/2008 JANUARY 2008

This Newsletter is published with the support of the European Community, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities – Unit E2 Inclusion, Social Policy aspects of Migration, Streamlining of social Policies. The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission. The Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this Newsletter. Mental Health Europe is the EU Liaison Office for Mental Health Promotion.

TABLE OF CONTENT

I. NEWS FROM MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE	2	DG Employment and Social Affairs – DG EMPL.....	12
Message from the Director.....	2	EDDP Conference in Brussels underpinned the EU failure to	
Mental Health Europe's response to the European Social Reality		deliver an inclusive internal market for all its citizens.....	12
Stocktaking Exercise	3	Job mobility action plan to help more people find better jobs... 12	
REMINDER: MHE conference "Diversity in Mental Health and		New website of the EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion	
Wellbeing. An Opportunity for Intercultural Dialogue"	4	Process.....	13
News from the DETERMINE Project	4	The new Anti-Discrimination Glossary.....	13
MHE welcomes a new stagiaire.....	4	DG Health and Consumer Protection – DG SANCO.....	13
MHE representation at various meetings.....	4	Public Health Call for Proposal 2007: 63 projects approved	13
II. MENTAL HEALTH AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY.....	5	Together for Health: Health Programme (2008-2013)	13
Mental Health Europe's annual theme 2008.....	5	High Level Conference on Mental Health	14
The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue kicks off	5	X. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	14
Eurobarometer on Intercultural Dialogue	6	European Parliament urges Commission "not to sacrifice the	
Comprehensive diversity policies are necessary to integrate		social dimension of the Lisbon strategy".....	14
ethnic minorities on the labour market	6	MEPs include poverty and social exclusion in the Work	
III. REPORTS ON VARIOUS CONFERENCES AND EVENTS	6	programme of the Fundamental Rights Agency	14
Conference on multiple discrimination, 6-7 December 2007,		XI. COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS	14
Elsinore (Denmark)	6	Health and Safety at Work: the Committee of the Regions wants	
FRA consultative meeting with civil society on the setting-up of		robust measures	15
the Fundamental Rights Platform, Brussels, 10-11 December		XII. COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES.....	15
2007.....	7	Court of Justice's decision on gender pay gap	15
IV. NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS	7	XIII. COUNCIL OF EUROPE.....	15
CZECH REPUBLIC - CAMZ has new Director and President	7	Council of Europe Conference on violence against women	15
FRANCE – Advocacy Perpignan new website	7	XIV. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION.....	15
V. NEWS FROM OTHER EUROPEAN NGOS.....	7	WHO Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and	
AGE - The European Older People's Platform	7	Disability (VIP) defines new strategic priorities.....	15
AGE launches Healthy Ageing brochure - good practice examples,		MENTOR-VIP kicks off	16
recommendations and policy actions	7	Report of the Expert meeting on the prevention of intimate	
CEFEC - Confederation of European Social Firms	8	partner violence and sexual violence, April 2007	16
CEFEC calls for more social films in Europe.....	8	XV. UNITED NATIONS	16
EAPN – European Anti Poverty Network.....	8	UN Convention - Spain ratifies the UN Convention and Optional	
EAPN kicks off EU wide campaign for Adequate Minimum Income		protocol	16
schemes	8	United Nations renames international day	16
EDF – European Disability Forum	8	UN Torture Committee concerned about inspections of places of	
EDF's "1million4disability" campaign: a successful, ongoing		detention and conditions within psychiatric institutions in Estonia	
campaign.....	8	17
Inclusion Europe.....	9	XVI. VARIOUS.....	17
Study on the specific risks of discrimination against persons in		2008 World Mental Health Day	17
situation of major dependence or with complex needs	9	First edition of the Psychiatry Awards	17
Inclusion Europe Annual Conference, "Europe in Action".....	9	"Te gek?" project	17
MDRI – Mental Disability Rights International.....	9	FIMITIC new address	17
Global Treaty Ratification Campaign.....	9	The Human Rights Agenda Association.....	18
Social Platform	10	XVII. WEBSITES/ONLINE INFORMATION	18
Social Platform's annual conference report now available!	10	ISECN website	18
VI. EUROPEAN UNION.....	10	HuriSearch – the human rights search engine.....	18
European Leaders sign the Treaty to revitalise EU decision-		XVIII. PUBLICATIONS.....	18
making.....	10	ILO calls for new efforts to support people with disabilities in the	
VII. PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION	10	world of work	18
Inaugural Session of the Slovenian Presidency of the European		Everything you wanted to know about the Lisbon Treaty in 10	
Union	10	Fact Sheets	19
VIII. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS	11	Mental Health at Work: Developing the business case	19
Council Resolution on the Follow-up of the European Year of		XIX. FORTHCOMING EVENTS	19
Equal Opportunities for all (2007).....	11		
IX. EUROPEAN COMMISSION	11		
2010 to be the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social			
Exclusion	11		
Commission adopts strategic report on the renewed Lisbon			
strategy	11		

I.NEWS FROM MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

Message from the Director

Dear readers,

We hope the New Year started well for all of you.

The Mental Health Europe team sends you its best wishes for a happy and mentally healthy 2008!

The Mental Health Europe (MHE) Annual Work Plan for the year 2008 in the area of social inclusion will have as its overall goal to develop and strengthen MHE's capacities and that of its member organisations, including people with mental health problems, who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, to inform and influence employment and social policy and processes at the local, national, regional and European level with a view to better reflecting the needs of people with (a history of) mental health problems.

Under this overall goal, the main thematic emphasis will be given to the upcoming review of the renewed Lisbon Strategy and especially the preparation of the new National Strategies 2008-2011. As part of this process, MHE will closely monitor and follow-up the Commission Communications on active inclusion and on social services of general interest, as a means to promote the active and social inclusion of people with (a history of) mental health problems who are amongst those furthest from the labour market. MHE will make use its gathered knowledge in the above fields to contribute to the preparation of a renewed Social Agenda, as well as to other general reflections on the EU and its future missions.

In order to reach these thematic targets, MHE is going to invest in 2008 in three overarching objectives: improving the organisational capacity and management of MHE; reinforcing the European social dimension of the renewed Lisbon strategy for Growth and Jobs to better respond to the challenges and needs of people with (a history of) mental health problems; and continuous exchange and dialogue with EU Institutions and other stakeholders on designing future policies in employment and social fields to better reflect the needs of people with (a history of) mental health problems.

An important part of MHE's work programme will be carried forward by MHE's thematic Committees:

- Human Rights and Mental Health;
- Women and Mental Health;
- Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health.

Do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to contribute to the work of one of these Committees.

The MHE Newsletter and Website will remain important – and according to readers' evaluations useful and welcomed – tools, which will be re-designed in 2008 to ensure the effective dissemination of the above mentioned information, but also information about MHE's activities, the activities of MHE's member organisations, the EU Institutions and other relevant EU-level organisations and networks widely.

In the field of disability MHE will persist to fight for the recognition of people with mental health problems in the frame of the National Disability Councils. People with mental health problems should have the same rights and access to benefit systems as people with any physical disability.

In continuation to the work and the efforts of the latest years, MHE will continue advocating for the achievement of a comprehensive strategy on promoting positive mental health and well-being for all. MHE encourages better cooperation between Member States in order to address inequalities within and between countries.

To this aim, MHE will be actively engaged in the preparation of the June 2008 high level Conference on Mental Health, which will lead to the launch of the new Mental Health Pact as announced by the Commission at the end of last year.

MHE will put its efforts to ensure that the foreseen Mental Health Pact adopts a wide-ranging approach to promoting good mental health and well-being, and addresses the whole of the European population across all settings. An effective Mental Health Pact shall also support the implementation of appropriate measures and actions that go beyond the mere execution of a series of thematic conferences.

Last but not least, MHE's conference in 2008 will take place in Aalborg, Denmark, from 7-9 August. The theme of this year's conference is "Diversity in mental health and wellbeing – An opportunity for intercultural dialogue".

The conference theme is inspired by the declaration of the European Commission that 2008 will be the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Cultural diversity is not limited to the ethnic dimension alone. It has a philosophical dimension (mental health and well-being) and is also related to other areas, e.g. the cultural dimension of the various health systems, the cultural differences that exist in the practice of health professionals and in the provision of care and treatment.

Lectures, a round table and workshops will give opportunity for sharing information, ideas and deepening knowledge and opportunity for exchange of best practices. Participants from all European countries will contribute with experience on diversities within different dimensions of cultures.

For more information, please visit the conference website: www.mhe-aalborg.dk

Nature is just splendid in the North-Denmark region; you may take this opportunity to visit this part of Europe and spend some holidays there. We hope to meet many of you in Aalborg this year!

Mary Van Dievel
Director

Mental Health Europe's response to the European Social Reality Stocktaking Exercise

In the response to the European Commission public consultation on the "social reality" of Europe today, which has been launched in 2006 and is **open until 15 February 2008**, MHE has made a strong point of the valuable resource that the mental health and well-being of the European population represents. Good mental health and well-being enables citizens to realise their intellectual and emotional potential and to find and fulfill their roles in social, school and working life. For the European Union, mental health and well-being will contribute to the attainment of some of the EU's strategic policy objectives, such as the EU's Lisbon Strategy. Mental ill-health, on the other hand imposes various costs, losses and burdens on citizens and societal systems.

However, at the present point in time, evidence shows that there are many changes and situations at work in Europe, which in many cases negatively affect the mental health and well-being of people: Stress at the work place has risen over the last years due to various insecurities concerning the below minimum-wage and below decent-life salaries, the increase in working hours, the demands and the competition at work etc. For people who already suffer from mental health problems the main problem is to retain their work place or to have access to work. In many cases, people with mental health problems are discriminated against and denied jobs as a result of the stigma and the fear that they could be "dangerous".

MHE believes that education – especially for children and young people – is a key tool towards social integration and inclusion of people with mental health problems. However, many people with mental health problems experience difficulties in equal access to education. This is especially the case in rural areas and areas that are most affected by poverty.

The social implications of the changing roles of women and men have various consequences for their mental health and well-being. Many positive developments have taken place in this regard in Europe, but on the other hand, social changes have led to a situation, for women and men alike, where insecurity, controversy and indecision is prevalent. This is often exacerbated by the above mentioned, i.e. a highly competitive job market, not enough possibilities for further education and training, an increasing gap between the rich and the poor and welfare states that are not capable to meet the needs of the citizens. MHE believes that due to the stigma and taboo associated with mental ill-health, people with mental health problems are affected by social changes to an even greater extent.

Connected to this is the matter of declining birth rates as well as child poverty. Without adequate attention and assistance child poverty will continue to rise in Europe. Mental illness is an under-recognised but significant contributory factor to child poverty.

The increasing number of elderly people who live alone leads to a rise in higher rates of depression and other mental health problems. The institutionalisation of these people perpetuates their social exclusion and is, in itself, a violation of human rights.

Segregating people, barring them from access to education and employment, denying them the right to choose where and how they live and with whom they associate, solely on the basis of a mental illness label, is unacceptable. And this does not only concern a small minority or only the most vulnerable groups, but it concerns society as a whole, the injustices that exist within and the social disintegration and conflict that results from it.

MHE makes a strong plea to restore social equality and life chances, i.e. opportunities that enable individuals to improve their quality of life. Measures of economic reform, within Europe and all over the world, should be targeted not towards the profit of a few but towards the prosperity of all. Unity, diversity and social cohesion can only exist under the condition that everyday life is satisfactory for all, that there are life chances for all and equality for all.

MHE is convinced that at the current state of play, Europe possesses a great deal of knowledge about the different factors that contribute to the shaping and improving of Europe's Social Reality. What is needed now is to translate this knowledge into practice. There is a lot of room for improvement, but this change can only happen if it is based on the principles of social equality, access to opportunities and integration, inclusion and participation of all European citizens.

MHE's full response can be found on the MHE website:

<http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/publications/MHE-response-to-europe's-social-reality-stocktaking-exerci..pdf>

For further information please contact the MHE secretariat:

Email info@mhe-sme.org, Tel +32 2 280 04 68

REMINDER: MHE conference "Diversity in Mental Health and Wellbeing. An Opportunity for Intercultural Dialogue"

The 2nd announcement with Call for contributions will be available very soon and widely disseminated.

MHE members and other interested organisations and people are kindly invited to already now send in their proposals for the conference workshops!

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

News from the DETERMINE Project

The DETERMINE website is now online and will be continuously updated with the ongoing work of the Consortium, of which MHE is a collaborating partner.

To visit the website: www.health-inequalities.eu

The Management Team are going to meet in Prague (Czech Republic) on 28 February 2008 to discuss ongoing work and to make cross – WP (Work Packages) links so that all activities are carried out in a maximal coordinated and cost-efficient manner.

For more information: contact person, Caroline Costongs, Tel +32 2 23 50 320,

Email c.costongs@eurohealthnet.eu

MHE welcomes a new stagiaire

MHE wishes a warm welcome to Clara Gomez, who joined the MHE Secretariat at the beginning of January. Clara is Spanish, she studied political sciences in Madrid and has specialised in Conflict Studies and Gender issues.

She will work on the DAPHNEE III calls for proposals and will stay until May 2007.

To contact Clara: clara.gomez@mhe-sme.org

MHE representation at various meetings

On 9 January, Mari Fresu attended the first meeting of the European Parliament Special Interest Group on Carers, which took place at the European Parliament in Brussels.

On 15 January, Mari Fresu and Fanny Muller participated in a Social Platform Capacity-building, "How to devise communications strategies to better engage member organizations and influence policy markers", in Brussels.

On the same day, Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Officer, attended a meeting of the Social Platform MAC (Management) Committee in Brussels.

On 17 January, Mary Van Dievel and Sogol Noorani met with the Commission's Social Inclusion Unit to discuss the development of performance measures under MHE's triennial PROGRESS work programme.

On 22-23 January, Fanny Muller represented MHE at the Winter Session of the Council of Europe INGOs Conference in Strasbourg (France).

On 23-25 January, Mary Van Dievel and Sogol Noorani attended the SMES-EUROPA 10th Conference, "*After 15 years...looking backward in order to go forward*" which took place in Rome (Italy).

On 24 January, Josée Van Remoortel participated in the Policy meeting of the Complex Needs Study in Brussels. (see p.9)

On the same day, Clara Gomez represented MHE at the EU Civil Society Contact Group conference, "*Building a value based EU budget for the future - What role for NGOs?*", held in Brussels.

NEW MHE NEWSLETTER SECTION!!!

II. MENTAL HEALTH AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Mental Health Europe's annual theme 2008

In 2008, MHE's work programme will have a specific focus on the issue of mental health and ethnic diversity. During this year MHE wants to promote increased awareness about the difficulties of millions of foreign-born people in Europe who continue to face difficulties in becoming a full part of the economic, cultural, social and political lives of their adopted countries. It must be ensured that access to quality health care facilities, goods and mental health and other services are accessible to all, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of the population.

One of the highlights of the year will be MHE's conference on "*Diversity in mental health and well-being – An opportunity for intercultural dialogue*" to be held on 07-09 August 2008 in Aalborg, Denmark. The conference will provide a platform for dialogue on the ways in which the various sources of diversity in Europe can be used as an opportunity for achieving better mental health and well-being for the whole population.

Moreover, under its annual theme 2008, MHE has created this new section as part of the Newsletter. Each month, articles, information about publications, events etc. around the theme of mental health and ethnic diversity will be presented to our readers, which illustrate the challenges, needs and opportunities concerning mental health and well-being of minority ethnic communities in Europe.

MHE's annual theme 2008 is in line with the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 with the slogan "*Together in Diversity*". The European year will support an information campaign, surveys and studies on intercultural dialogue. The year will also co-finance seven flagship pan-European projects and 27 national projects on intercultural dialogue across the EU. The projects will focus on urban culture, people's art, youth participation, immigration, media, local initiative exchanges, video and immigrant community activities.

For more information on the Year, you can visit the website at: www.dialogue2008.eu.

For more information on the MHE Conference 2008 please contact: info@mhe-sme.org.

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue kicks off

On 8 January, the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 was officially launched in Ljubljana (Slovenia), highlighting the start of the first Slovenian EU Presidency. The official launch of the Year was preceded by a conference entitled "*Intercultural Dialogue as the Fundamental Value of the EU*" on 7 and 8 January, where representatives of civil society from across Europe in the fields of culture and art, science and education, media and sustainable development discussed the challenges presented by a multicultural Europe.

For more information: visit the Year dedicated website, www.dialogue2008.eu.

Eurobarometer on Intercultural Dialogue

Eurobarometer has published a study focusing on intercultural dialogue, the theme of 2008. According to the study around 3/4 of the population believe that cultural diversity is a source of wealth for their country. A large majority of Europeans work daily with people of different cultures, religions and ethnic groups. 83% of those interviewed think that this situation is "beneficial" but many (55%) say it is also important not to lose one's personal cultural traditions. In addition to this 2/3 of those interviewed believe the idea of a year of intercultural dialogue "interesting"; only 20% show any real interest in the events that will be organised on this occasion.

To read the Eurobarometer study:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_217_sum_en.pdf

Comprehensive diversity policies are necessary to integrate ethnic minorities on the labour market

The High level Advisory Group of experts on ethnic minorities presented eight policy recommendations to the European Commission.

The group was set up in 2006 in order to identify barriers which prevent members from ethnic minorities from fully participating in the labour market and society, identify good practices in public policies and businesses.

In its report the High Level group made several recommendations. 14 barriers to labour market integration of ethnic minorities and examples of concrete best practice were also identified.

To read the report: the European Commission website,

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/hlg/etmin_en.pdf

III. REPORTS ON VARIOUS CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Conference on multiple discrimination, 6-7 December 2007, Elsinore (Denmark)

The Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) organised a conference on "*Equal opportunities for All - Multiple Discrimination Matters*", with a view to deepening understanding on how to more effectively tackle multiple discrimination. The Danish Institute for Human Rights presented the study entitled "*Tackling Multiple Discrimination: practices, policies and laws*", which they had carried out for the Commission.

A workshop dedicated to NGOs was held to look at tackling multiple discrimination from a civil society perspective. Participants stressed the importance of recognising the compound nature of multiple discrimination and making the connection to it in addressing inequalities. There was widespread support for training on multiple discrimination, in particular for the judiciary and those dealing with the media.

The conference concluded that there is a need to enhance legislation and equal treatment. Political will is essential as leadership at the political level is needed to move this area forward. Capacity building is also necessary and there is a clear role for civil society in this.

In 2008 the Commission will deliver a policy paper presenting their conceptual thinking on multiple discrimination. This paper will also address positive action and data collection, including on the role of business. The Equality Summit, to be held under the French Presidency, will provide a further opportunity to exchange experience on moving ahead.

Peter Kinderman, Chair of the MHE Committee on Mental Health and Human Rights, represented MHE at the conference.

The report "*Tackling Multiple Discrimination: practices, policies and laws*" can be downloaded from the DG Employment website:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/stud/multdis_en.pdf

The conference presentations and speeches are available online on the website of the European Commission's antidiscrimination unit (English, German and French):

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/events/dkconf07_en.htm

FRA consultative meeting with civil society on the setting-up of the Fundamental Rights Platform, Brussels, 10-11 December 2007

The European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) organised a consultative meeting for civil society on the setting-up of the Fundamental Rights Platform, foreseen by its founding Regulation 168/2007 (art. 10). The event ended a consultation process which started at the beginning of 2007. It gathered about 140 participants.

The meeting was an open discussion forum for civil society stakeholders to give suggestions on the establishment of the Platform, organised around thematic panel discussions and workshops. The participants were asked to give their view concerning participation mechanisms and working methods, the Platform's role as a knowledge pool between FRA and civil society, and cooperation for the purpose of awareness-raising.

The outcomes of the meeting will be included in the final consultation report compiling the results of the civil society consultation conducted by FRA since April 2007. The report is to be published by mid-2008.

Peter Kinderman, Chair of the MHE Committee on Mental Health and Human Rights, and Fanny Muller, Information and Human Rights Officer, participated in the meeting.

For more information: FRA website,

http://fra.europa.eu/fra/index.php?fuseaction=content.dsp_cat_content&catid=46710fa5a58c&contentid=46711074a34bf#3

IV. NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

CZECH REPUBLIC - CAMZ has new Director and President

At the Czech Association for Mental Health (CAMH) there were important personnel changes at the end of the year 2007.

Martin Jarolímek was elected as the new President of the Association. He was president of CAMH in 1999 – December 2006. He is a chief physician of the Day Psychotherapeutic Sanatorium Ondřejov. He founded as well some civic associations focused at mental health in the Czech Republic – Fokus, CAMH, Green Doors, etc.

CAMH has as well a new Director since November 2007. Rostislav Kotrč was nominated for this position. He studied theology, marketing, pedagogy. He has 7 years of experience in the management of NGO organisations. He lectures social-work and ethics of social-work for educational institutions and NGOs. At the moment he is a teacher at the University of Jan Amos Komenský, where he lectures social-work.

To contact Martin Jarolímek: martin.jarolimek@volny.cz

To contact Rostislav Kotrč: rostislav.kotrc@capz.cz

FRANCE – Advocacy Perpignan new website

Advocacy Perpignan Pyrénées Orientales is one of the regional delegations of Advocacy France. It was created by and for users of the mental health services.

The organisation's website has been recently updated and visitors can now get some information about the organisation, its mission and activities, recent news and events, etc.

To visit the website (in French): <http://www.advocacy66.org/>

V. NEWS FROM OTHER EUROPEAN NGOS

AGE - The European Older People's Platform

AGE launches Healthy Ageing brochure - good practice examples, recommendations and policy actions

The essence of AGE's Healthy Ageing brochure is about the potential for the development of health promotion and preventative measures for older people maximising their functional capacity and independence, seen as essential elements to enhance their quality of life. The brochure gives the reader an overview about the importance of promoting a positive and integrated approach to health by addressing a range of social, economic, housing, transport, new technology, education and other relevant policies that have an impact on health. It

provides useful examples of good practice, policy facts, projects, strategies and recommendations for priority actions for Healthy Ageing.

To download the brochure: AGE website,

http://www.age-platform.org/EN/IMG/Brochure_Health_EN.pdf

CEFEC- Confederation of European Social Firms

CEFEC calls for more social firms in Europe

CEFEC, the Confederation of European Social Firms, Employment Initiatives and Social Co-operatives, launched an EU-wide appeal for the better integration into the labour market of disabled and disadvantaged people in Europe, notably through the development of Social Firms. The plea, formulated on the occasion of the 20th CEFEC Conference in Linz (Austria) which took place on 11-13 October 2007, aims to raise awareness about the changing nature of work and how this could impact on people with disabilities around Europe.

A Social Firm is a business created for the employment of people with a disability or other disadvantage in the labour market. Within a Social Firm, work opportunities are equal between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged employees.

The conference drew attention to the fact that – provided an adequate financial support is granted – Social Firms can be successful. They are encouraged to invest in niches on the market which do not pay off for big firms. Another successful way is to offer services to cover new needs which arise during the ongoing process of economical changes.

For more information: CEFEC website,

http://cefec2007.promenteooe.at/pages/index_folge.htm

EAPN – European Anti Poverty Network

EAPN kicks off EU wide campaign for Adequate Minimum Income schemes

The European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) launched on 19 December 2007 an EU wide campaign for Adequate Minimum Income schemes. 24 out of 27 Member States have minimum income schemes in place at this present time, but there are serious flaws with their accessibility and their adequacy. It is time to state clearly that adequate Minimum Income schemes are a fundamental prerequisite for an EU based on social justice and equal opportunities for all.

17 October 2007 saw the launch of a second Commission consultation about concrete proposals on how to move the "active inclusion" strategy forward, including a new EU Recommendation, and a new tool to support its implementation. It will only be implemented if it is widely supported in the EU, and notably if Member States respond favorably to this proposal by the end of the consultation period (February 2008).

For more information: EAPN website,

http://www.eapn.org/code/en/news_detail.asp?pk_id_content=3130

Source: EAPN Press Release

EDF – European Disability Forum

EDF's "1million4disability" campaign: a successful, ongoing campaign

The first phase of the 1million4disability campaign has been accomplished. Thanks to the joint efforts of all EDF members and the EDF Secretariat, in only 9 months, the European disability movement has been successful in mobilizing 1,294,997 citizens in favour of stronger disability legislation. This figure was officially confirmed by a Belgian bailiff last November, and more signatures have been received at the EDF Secretariat since then.

The 4th of October event was also a significant success, both in terms of participation (around 2,000 people from all over Europe) and of media coverage. Nevertheless, the unjustified absence of Mr. Barroso, President of the European Commission, is to be regretted, as it shows his lack of political commitment and interest towards the voices of disabled citizens.

On 22 November, the boxes containing the signatures were delivered to the European Commission services, addressed to Mr. Barroso's attention. In addition, an explanatory letter was sent to the President of the European Commission, as well as to the five Commission Vice-Presidents. So far, only Margot Wällstrom's cabinet and Jacques Barrot have replied to this letter.

The work is far from being over. The campaign must now continue at the political level and pressure needs to be maintained both on national and European decision-makers. To obtain a comprehensive and specific piece of anti-discrimination legislation that will guarantee equal opportunities and equal participation in all aspects of life for all persons with disabilities, we need to keep the momentum and develop a coherent strategy.

Challenges ahead:

MHE members are invited to support the EDF campaign by:

- approaching their country's Ministry of Social Affairs and asking for their support in view of the next European Social Affairs Council meeting;
- approaching the media and inform them about the EDF campaign and the need for a disability specific Directive;
- approaching their allies in the EU institutions to promote this initiative;
- informing the MHE secretariat about their actions and outcomes.

For more information on the campaign: the EDF Secretariat, Tel + 32 2 282 46 00, Email secretariat@edf-feph.org

Inclusion Europe

Study on the specific risks of discrimination against persons in situation of major dependence or with complex needs

The Policy Committee of the Complex Needs Study, led by Inclusion Europe, met in Brussels on 24-25 January 2008. The Committee is composed of eight experts - Josée Van Remoortel, MHE Senior Policy Officer, was one of them.

An overview of the completed research work was given. Twelve country reports dealing with the situation of people with complex dependence needs were analysed, together with the stakeholders' reports and examples of good practice collected in twelve countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

It was extremely difficult to draw conclusions from this huge quantity of information. Dr Johannes Schädler, from the University of Siegen (Germany), drafted some policy recommendations which were debated by the experts.

A final conference will be organised in May 2008.

For more information: visit the Inclusion Europe website,

<http://www.inclusion-europe.org/main.php?lang=EN&level=1&s=83&mode=nav1&n1=159>

Thanks to Josée Van Remoortel for this contribution.

Inclusion Europe Annual Conference, "Europe in Action"

The Inclusion Europe and Lebenshilfe Austria annual congress "*Europe in Action*" will take place in Vienna (Austria), from 10 to 12 April 2008. Under the title "*Education for all!*" the event will bring together self advocates, parents, policy makers, teachers and other professionals working with people with intellectual disabilities.

The congress participants will examine what is required to ensure that young people with intellectual disabilities enjoy mainstream school together with their peers.

For more information: contact the Inclusion Europe Secretariat, Email Secretariat@inclusion-europe.org, Tel +32-2-502 28 15

MDRI – Mental Disability Rights International

Global Treaty Ratification Campaign

On 3 December 2007 - International Disabled Persons Day - disability rights advocates launched "*RatifyNow*," a global campaign based in the U.S. to maximise the number of nations that ratify the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. RatifyNow is a unique blend of grassroots activists, disability civil rights organisations, and human rights groups who work in tandem to make sure the Convention's safeguards benefit people with disabilities worldwide.

The twenty-first century's first human rights treaty was adopted by the United Nations a year ago and opened for ratification on 30 March 2007. To date, 118 nations have indicated support of the treaty and interest in ratification. Seven nations have ratified (Croatia, Cuba, Gabon,

Hungary, India, Jamaica, and Panama). The treaty becomes legally binding 30 days after the 20th nation ratifies it.

To sign in the campaign: <http://www.ratifynow.org/>

Source: MDRI Press Release

Social Platform

Social Platform's annual conference report now available!

The Social Platform recently issued the report of its 2007 annual conference "Social NGOs getting ready for the post-Lisbon: From growth and jobs to sustainable and social" which took place on 26 November 2007.

To read the report:

http://cms.horus.be/files/99907/MediaArchive/Events/Annual_conferences/2007-11-26%20Final%20report_annual%20conference.pdf

VI. EUROPEAN UNION

European Leaders sign the Treaty to revitalise EU decision-making

On 13 December 2007, leaders of the 27-nation European Union signed a landmark treaty to revitalise EU decision-making, but the show of unity was marred by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's absence from the ceremony.

Like the rejected constitution, the treaty proposes a new president's post -- a figurehead to replace the current cumbersome six-month rotating presidency system -- and a European foreign policy supremo. It cuts the size of the European Parliament and the number of EU decisions which require unanimous support, hence reducing national vetoes. It also includes a European charter of fundamental human and legal rights, which Britain and Poland have refused to make binding.

However it drops all references to an EU flag or anthem, which eurosceptics feared it was a step towards a federal Europe.

Many governments, including France and the Netherlands, have said they will not hold referendums to ratify the treaty although eurosceptics deem the text to be largely the same as the constitution and want national votes. Only Ireland is constitutionally bound to hold the kind of referendum which did the damage in 2005 and sparked the EU's worst ever crisis.

For more information: read the special edition of *Europolitics*,

http://cde.usal.es/arc/europolitics_tratado_lisboa.pdf

Source: Social Platform Weekly Mailing

VII. PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Inaugural Session of the Slovenian Presidency of the European Union

On 8 January 2008 the inaugural meeting of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union along with the European Commission was held. Slovenia took up the EU Presidency from Portugal, and became the first new EU member State to hold the EU Presidency.

Slovenian Prime Minister, Janez Jansa presented the themes of the presidency for the forthcoming six months: the ratification procedure of the Lisbon Treaty, the implementation of the "Energy and Environment" package, the start of the 3rd stage of the Lisbon Strategy and relations with the Western Balkans in order to find long term solutions to the problems of stability in the region.

Regarding health, the Slovenian Presidency will work on issues such as: promotion of health by encouraging a healthy lifestyle; prevention and control of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS; innovation in healthcare; and accessibility of healthcare services

For more information: visit the website of the Slovenian Presidency,

http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/January/0108OTH_Jansa.html?

The Social Platform has issued seven tests which condense what the Slovenian Presidency can do to help the EU move along the road to a more social Europe respectful of fundamental rights. The Social Platform will evaluate the Presidency's record at the end of its term.

For more information: the Social Platform website,
<http://www.socialplatform.org/News.asp?news=16162>

VIII. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Council Resolution on the Follow-up of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all (2007)

The Council of the European Union on Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs has adopted on 5-6 December a resolution on the follow-up of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all (2007). This resolution has many specific statements regarding the importance of non-discrimination policies to ensure full participation of people with disabilities. The Council invites Member States and the European Commission, in accordance with their respective competencies, to sustain and reinforce the mainstreaming of disability issues into all relevant policies; to continue the process of signature, conclusion and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; to develop cooperation on common challenges and solutions in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, also with regard to disability statistics and indicators of participation; and finally, to continue mobilising all available instruments under, inter alia, the Structural Funds to support measures which facilitate the full integration of people who suffer from discrimination into the labour market and into society.

To read the full text of the Resolution: the Council website,
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/07/st15/st15383.en07.pdf>

Source: EDF Weekly Mailing

IX. EUROPEAN COMMISSION

2010 to be the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

The European Commission has recently confirmed that 2010 will be the "European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion". This 2010 European Year is very symbolic, as 2010 will also be the last year of the 10 year Lisbon strategy. The actions undertaken during this European Year will therefore reaffirm the commitment made in 2000 by EU heads of state to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion by 2010. This year will be the right time to evaluate the impact of the renewed Lisbon strategy on social cohesion. The 2010 European Year will have four objectives: recognition of the right of people in poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to play a full part in society; an increase in the public ownership of social inclusion policies, emphasising everyone's responsibility in tackling poverty and marginalisation; a more cohesive society, where no one doubts that society as a whole benefits from the eradication of poverty; commitment of all actors, because real progress requires a long-term effort that involves all levels of governance.

MHE's work programme for the coming years includes preparatory activities to prepare the EY 2010 and ensure that people with (a history of) mental health problems are actively involved in the EY2010 activities. Also, MHE's conference in 2010 is planned to have its focus on the issue of "Mental health and poverty".

For more information about the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion:

<http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/1905&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiL>

Commission adopts strategic report on the renewed Lisbon strategy

In December the Commission published a strategic report on economic reform across Europe entitled "Strategic report on the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs: launching the new cycle (2008-2010) Keeping up the pace of change." In this report the Commission concludes that "three years after it was relaunched in 2005, the Lisbon Growth and Jobs Strategy is working". The Commission also underlines that "some Member States have responded more robustly than others and some signs of "reform fatigue" have become

apparent over the last twelve months". The Report sets out a series of new actions. The Commission will ask EU leaders to agree these at the March 2008 Spring Council. The Commission further underlines that no amendment will be made to the Integrated Guidelines of 2005. The Commission is proposing those Guidelines should be unchanged for the next cycle.

To read the Commission's strategic report: the Commission website,
http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/european-dimension-200712-annual-progress-report/200712-annual-report_en.pdf

DG Employment and Social Affairs – DG EMPL

EDDP Conference in Brussels underpinned the EU failure to deliver an inclusive internal market for all its citizens

During two days, on 5 and 6 December, experts from all over Europe analysed the gaps and proposed solutions to allow disabled people's participation in EU Internal Market.

The European internal market rules aim to facilitate the mobility of workers, goods and services within the European boundaries. If these rules have as main objective to develop the competitiveness of Europe's economy, they are also part of EU main principles and rights to be applied to all citizens.

Disabled people face numerous barriers when accessing goods and services, and most of the times, they cannot benefit from free movement, as non-disabled citizens. Overcoming the existing obstacles was at the core of the discussions undertaken by the 300 disability representatives and internal market experts from all over Europe, meeting in Brussels on 5-6 December 2007. The results of this traditional European Commission conference, organised each year in cooperation with the European Disability Forum, will feed the current revision on EU Internal Market rules. They will also nourish the ongoing discussions regarding further EU legislation to fight discrimination in the European Union, beyond the field of employment.

For the EDF, as highlighted throughout the conference, the problems faced by disabled people are specific, and it is only through a comprehensive disability Directive and effective harmonisation that the barriers can be effectively overcome.

All documents related to this conference can be downloaded from the European Commission website:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/events/event_en.cfm?id=1005

To download the European Commission Communication: "Situation of Disabled People in the EU: the European Action Plan 2008-2009" (November 2007):

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/events/2007/eddp/com_2007_0738_en.pdf

To read the EC Communication "A single market for 21st century Europe":

http://ec.europa.eu/citizens_agenda/docs/com_2007_0724_en.pdf

Source: EDF Weekly Mailing

Job mobility action plan to help more people find better jobs

On 10 December 2007, the European Commission presented a new action plan to promote job mobility across Europe by tackling the remaining obstacles faced by people seeking to work in another EU country. It puts forward a new integrated approach and lists 15 concrete actions for the period 2007-2010 involving national, regional and local – as well as European – authorities.

The Commission's recent initiative to offer 50 young Europeans a first job abroad has in the meantime attracted more than 8,000 applications. The winners will be announced early 2008 and a celebration will be organised for them in Paris in October.

For more information:

- EC Communication "Mobility, an instrument for more and better jobs: The European Job Mobility Action Plan 2007-2010":
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2007/dec/com_2007_0773_en.pdf
- Free movement of workers website:
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/free_movement/index_en.htm
- Eurobarometer survey (autumn 2005):
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/workersmobility_2006/uploaded_files/documents/FIRST%20RESULTS_Web%20version_06.02.06.pdf

- *EURES – The European Job Mobility Portal:*
<http://eures.europa.eu>

Source: EC Press Release

New website of the EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process

This new platform – intended to all actors involved in the field of social affairs as well as the media and the public at large – replaces the three previous websites on Social Situation and Demography, Social Protection and Social Inclusion.

You will find here information on the role played by the European Union in coordinating Member States' action to combat poverty and social exclusion, reform social protection systems and in assessing new demographic and social developments, as well as concrete examples of this endeavour.

To visit the website: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/index_en.htm

The new Anti-Discrimination Glossary

The new Anti-Discrimination Glossary is available as part of the Stop-Discrimination Guide on the dedicated website.

The glossary lists relevant terms used in the anti-discrimination and equality field. Translations in other official EU languages will follow.

For more information: the Antidiscrimination website,
<http://www.stop-discrimination.info/index.php?id=6423>

DG Health and Consumer Protection – DG SANCO

Public Health Call for Proposal 2007: 63 projects approved

On 8 November 2007 the European Commission approved Community co-financing for 63 projects in the field of public health, according to the amended annual work plan for 2007.

In the field of mental health, these projects were approved:

- Promoting Good Practice for Mental Health at the Workplace, BKK Federal Association of Health Insurance Funds (Germany);
- Anti Stigma Programme: European Network, King's College London (UK);
- Sharing good practice in supporting kinship carers to prevent substance related harm to young people, Mentor Foundation (UK);
- European standards in evidence for drug prevention, Liverpool John Moores University (UK).

The list of projects that were awarded with grants can be seen at

http://ec.europa.eu/phea/documents/Accepted_proposals.pdf

For more information: the European Commission website,
http://ec.europa.eu/phea/calls/call_for_proposals_en.html

Together for Health: Health Programme (2008-2013)

The European Union's (EU) second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health 2008-13 began on 1 January 2008. The strategy is for a value-driven approach, with the realisation that health is a driver of economic growth, that health needs to be integrated into all policies, and that the EU needs a stronger voice in global health. The Programme emphasises the importance of increasing healthy life-years for Europe's citizens.

The population is ageing in Europe as elsewhere, and there are wide gaps in health indicators between EU member states. The new strategy aims to reduce such inequalities. It also plans to engage with threats to health, by developing surveillance for communicable disease and improving patients' safety. The Programme's emphasis on global health will include tackling the worldwide shortage of health professionals and improving access to medicines.

As the Programme acknowledges, in terms of transparency, coherence, and monitoring, good governance will be an essential element to judge success. Unfortunately, the European Commission's initial request for funds was scaled back considerably, so that the Second Programme will have less money than the First - EUR 321 million versus EUR 353 million - even though the EU has expanded from 15 to 27 countries. If the EU wants to remain as a superpower in the field of health-care provision and health policymaking, its Member States might just need to be prepared to dig deeper into their communal pockets.

For more information: the Community Action Programme in the Field of Health dedicated webpage,

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/pgm2008_2013_en.htm

Source: *The Lancet*

High Level Conference on Mental Health

Following-up to the consultation on the Commission's Green Paper on Mental Health of 2005 a high level event will take place on 13 June 2008 in Brussels, with the presence of both Health Commissioner Kyprianou and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. It is expected to establish a cross-sectoral European Pact for Mental Health. Preparations are already ongoing.

For more information: DG Sanco website,

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/ev_20080613_en.htm

X. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

European Parliament urges Commission "not to sacrifice the social dimension of the Lisbon strategy"

The European Parliament (EP) has adopted a resolution on 12 December 2007 on the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2008.

The European Parliament, among others:

- asks the Commission to be more ambitious in its initiatives aimed at securing fundamental rights, freedom, justice and social inclusion;
- emphasises the interdependence of economic, social and environmental progress (...) and urges the Commission (...) to engage in a balanced and output-oriented Lisbon Community Programme 2008-2010;
- calls for measures to promote a better balance between work and family life, as well as the health and safety of all workers;
- considers that the Commission should continue to focus the attention of citizens on the importance of cultural diversity and of dialogue between cultures in an enlarged Union and considers that intercultural dialogue should also be promoted beyond Europe's borders and become a bridge for mutual comprehension which might help to prevent or resolve social and human conflicts.

To read the resolution: the EP website,

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2007-0613+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

Source: *Social Platform Weekly Mailing*

MEPs include poverty and social exclusion in the Work programme of the Fundamental Rights Agency

On 17 January MEPs (members of the European Parliament) adopted a non-binding report on the Multi-Annual Framework of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). While the initial Commission proposal had highly overlooked the issue of economic and social rights, the Parliament report proposed to include "poverty and social exclusion" in the scope of the work programme, partly as a result of a campaign run by ATD Fourth World and other social NGOs.

One other important amendment stipulates that the Agency shall deal with issues relating to discrimination based on sex, in particular instances of "multiple discrimination". Yet the report remains non-binding and now has to be adopted by the Council.

For more information: the European Parliament website,

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0014+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

Source: *EAPN News Flash*

XI. COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

Health and Safety at Work: the Committee of the Regions wants robust measures

Cutting occupational accidents in the European Union by 25% by 2012 is the stated ambition of the European Commission, and one supported by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) opinion drafted by Uno Silberg (Estonia). To avoid this objective sounding like an empty slogan, the CoR called for a structured plan based on robust, harmonised standards that are backed up by experience on the ground.

As the opinion adopted in November by the Committee of the Regions states, improving health and safety at work is of the utmost importance in the European Union: occupational accidents and their knock-on effects, such as absenteeism and the need for medical treatment, are all factors that damage competitiveness. Moreover, dangerous working environments have become more complex, hence the need for better risk management before and after the event.

Against this backdrop, Mental Health Europe and John Bowis MEP (EPP-ED Group) hosted on 5 December a lunch debate on "*Equal Chance, Equal Respect: Promoting Mental Health and Well-being in Employment*".

The debate emphasized how the provision of training and social support at work, and the development of empowerment can lead to improvements in competence, coping strategies, job satisfaction, work capacity and reduced stress.

For more information: CoR website,

http://www.cor.europa.eu/en/press/press_07_11145.html

XII. COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Court of Justice's decision on gender pay gap

In a decision dated 6 December 2007 the European Communities Court of Justice (ECCJ) believed that the remuneration of overtime at a lower rate than normal hours could be a source of discrimination when based on gender. Indeed if part-time workers are less well paid than full-time workers for the same number of hours this is a violation of the principle of equal pay and affects women more since they are more likely to work part-time.

For more information: ECCJ Press Release,

<http://curia.europa.eu/en/actu/communiqués/cp07/aff/cp070087en.pdf>

XIII. COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Council of Europe Conference on violence against women

On 6-7 December a conference was held under the patronage of the Council of Europe on services to help women victims of violence. In Europe between one fifth and one quarter of women are victims of physical violence at least once in their life and over one tenth of women are submitted to sexual violence. The Council of Europe has asked the European Union to establish common minimal standards in services to help women victims of violence. Although NGO activities in this area are high governments must also commit themselves along the same path.

For more information: the Council of Europe website,

http://www.coe.int/t/dc/press/news/20071206_disc_sg_EN.asp?

XIV. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

WHO Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability (VIP) defines new strategic priorities

On 6-7 December 2007, senior VIP staff and external advisers met to define new strategic directions for WHO's violence and injury prevention work. It was concluded that WHO's violence and injury prevention programmes should continue to support the development of new knowledge as necessary, and to disseminate and implement more widely its existing normative tools. Additionally, it was suggested that WHO strengthen its focus on capacity development; partnerships; advocacy and communications; strengthening country programmes, and integrating VIP issues into selected major international agendas. Follow-up

meetings will be scheduled to develop more detailed strategies for capacity development and advocacy and communications.

For further information: contact person, Dr Etienne Krug, Email kruge@who.int

MENTOR-VIP kicks off

In September 2007, implementation of the MENTOR-VIP programme began. MENTOR-VIP is WHO's global mentoring programme for injury and violence prevention, and is designed to develop key skills by fostering collaboration between committed injury and violence prevention practitioners and appropriately matched mentors. The initial group consists of 13 pairs of mentors and practitioners from a wide range of countries, and covering areas of work that include integrated approaches to the surveillance of violence and unintentional injuries, the prevention of specific types of violence, and unintentional injury prevention. The next round of MENTOR-VIP mentorships will formally begin in September 2008. Those interested in applying to be mentored for the 2008-2009 cycle must complete an online application form. Applications will be accepted from 15 February to 16 May 2008.

For application and further information: WHO website,

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/capacitybuilding/mentor_vip/en/index.html

Report of the Expert meeting on the prevention of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, April 2007

As part of the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, WHO is giving increased attention to the primary prevention of intimate partner violence and sexual violence. As a first step, and to assist WHO determine how it can best promote evidence-based policy options in this field, an expert consultation was held in April 2007. This consultation convened international experts and WHO staff from several departments to take stock of existing global evidence related to the primary prevention of intimate partner violence and sexual violence; to identify the next steps for WHO in this area, and to inform the outline and content of a technical guide on the prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence. The meeting report has now been published and is available online.

To download a copy of the report: visit WHO website,

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/activities/who_ipv_sv_prevention_meeting_report.pdf

XV. UNITED NATIONS

UN Convention - Spain ratifies the UN Convention and Optional protocol

On 3 December 2007, International Day of Disabled People, Spain has ratified formally at the United Nations the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Spain is the second EU country after Hungary to ratify the Convention and Optional Protocol. Up to now 11 countries have ratified the Convention. As soon as nine more will ratify, the Convention will enter into force.

For more information: the United Nations website, <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

United Nations renames international day

On 18 December, the United Nations General Assembly renamed the International Day of Disabled Persons, observed every year on 3 December, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The 192 Member States of the General Assembly took that decision unanimously when adopting a resolution on "*Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons: realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities*". The Assembly also called on United Nations agencies and bodies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and protection of the environment to ensure that the disability perspective is incorporated in their work.

For more information: contact person, Edoardo Bellando, Email bellando@un.org

UN Torture Committee concerned about inspections of places of detention and conditions within psychiatric institutions in Estonia

People with disabilities detained within institutions are particularly vulnerable to neglect and abuse. Recognition of this vulnerability has resulted in calls from the international community for the establishment of effective inspectorates in all States. The Committee against Torture, a body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, has recently reviewed the current and proposed inspection mechanisms of Estonia and has found them deficient.

Although what are termed "national protective mechanisms" (inspection mechanisms) under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture have been designated by Estonia, the Committee believes these to be inadequate. More particularly it believes that such mechanisms are insufficiently independent of the Estonian government to be effective and also will be unable to investigate all complaints of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by detainees. Insufficient resources provided for these inspection mechanisms will further undermine their effectiveness.

As a direct consequence of these concerns the Committee has urged Estonia to take prompt measures to ensure that its future inspection mechanisms are brought fully in line with international requirements of independence and effectiveness, and importantly, are adequately resourced.

For more information: visit MDAC website, <http://www.mdac.info/>

Source: MDAC (Mental Disability Advocacy Center) Press Release

XVI. VARIOUS

2008 World Mental Health Day

The theme of the 2008 World Mental Health Day will be "*Advocacy for Global Mental Health: Scaling Up Services through Citizen Advocacy and Action*".

It has been selected, in part, to mobilise the hundreds of grassroots mental health organisations that participate in World Mental Health Day to plan and carry out awareness and advocacy events in their own communities and countries.

For more information: the World Federation for Mental Health website, <http://www.wfmh.org/>

First edition of the Psychiatry Awards

The Psychiatry Award is a EUR 15.000 award granted by the Astra Zeneca Foundation. It aims at rewarding Belgian initiatives which are working to help patients to get back and included in society.

The first edition took place at the end of 2007. "Réflexions", an organisation based in Liège, convinced the jury with its specific programme of day care for patients suffering from schizophrenia.

For more information: website of the asbl Réflexions,

<http://www.asblreflexions.be/FoundationAstraZenecaPsychiatryAward.pdf>

Source: Confluenciel - Institut Wallon pour la Santé Mentale

"Te gek?" project

The "*Te Gek*" ("*Too Mad?*") Project is an initiative from the psychiatric hospital Sint-Annendael from Diest (Belgium) aiming at promoting positive mental health. It gathers famous Flemish artists (Jan De Wilde, Guy Swinnen, Tom Helsen, Wannes Cappelle and Essense) who are dedicated to changing the image of mental health in Belgium.

From 12 January 2008 to 5 April 2008 a series of concerts will take place all over Flanders in order to raise the public awareness about positive mental health and prejudices around mental illness.

The group has already edited two CDs with original songs.

For more information: visit the website of the Sint-Annendael Hospital,

http://www.sad.be/SAD_TE_GEK/index.php

FIMITIC new address

FIMITIC, the International Federation of Persons with physical Disability, has moved office.

You can now find them at: Rákóczi út 36, 2600 Vác, Hungary

To contact them:

Tel +36 27 502 661

Fax +36 27 502 661

Email FIMITIC@invitel.hu

Web <http://www.fimitic.org>

The Human Rights Agenda Association

The Human Rights Agenda Association (HRAA) was established in 2003 in İzmir (Turkey) with the participation of human rights defenders from different regions of Turkey in order to have activities in the human rights field at national and international level.

As part of their joint project with the Initiative for Human Rights in Mental Health (IHRMH), they are providing rights education to the families of mentally disabled and mentally ill persons. They have held training sessions in Manisa and Elazig and will be carrying out more in the coming months in Adana, Ankara, Samsun, and Istanbul. The association is also working with the Republic of Turkey's Ministry of Health to inspect psychiatric clinics in the same cities.

Together with the Initiative for Human Rights in Mental Health they are now preparing two books in Turkish on the rights of mentally disabled and mentally ill persons, one designed for families and the other for lawyers.

Their "*Handbook on the Right to Non-Discrimination in International Human Rights Instruments*," which includes translations into Turkish of United Nations declarations related to the rights of mentally disabled and mentally ill persons, is already available.

For more information: visit the HRAA website, www.rightsagenda.org

Many thanks to Amy Grupp, HRAA Outreach Coordinator, for this contribution.

XVII. WEBSITES/ONLINE INFORMATION

ISECN website

The IUHPE Student and Early Career Community (ISECN) website is now up and running.

ISECN is a network within the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), a leading Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) working to promote health and equity of health within and between nations.

ISECN aims at connecting and enabling the students and early career membership category of the IUHPE. It is represented in all world regions.

On this website you will find some more information on the ISECN, its mission, its regional contacts, health promotion and more!

To visit the website: <http://www.isecn.org/index.html>

HuriSearch – the human rights search engine

Developed by HURIDOCS (Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems), a global network of human rights organisations, HuriSearch is the first and only comprehensive search engine specialised in human rights. It provides direct full text search of over 4000 human rights websites.

To visit the website: <http://www.hurisearch.org>

XVIII. PUBLICATIONS

ILO calls for new efforts to support people with disabilities in the world of work

Despite significant progress in recent years in improving their livelihoods, new efforts are needed to break down barriers that still prevent millions of people with disabilities from working and contributing to the economic growth of their societies, according to a new ILO (International Labour Organization) report released for the International Day of Disabled Persons on 3 December.

What's more, the new report, entitled "*The right to decent work of persons with disabilities*", says such significant and sustained efforts are vital, not only to promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment, rural development and poverty reduction programmes,

but also in moving toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals for halving poverty by the year 2015.

For more information: visit the ILO website,

http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/WCMS_087695/index.htm

Source: ILO Press Release

Everything you wanted to know about the Lisbon Treaty in 10 Fact Sheets

The European Council, which met in Lisbon on 18-19 October 2007, approved the new reform treaty so called "Lisbon Treaty", which replaces the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. On 13-14 December 2007 the 27 Heads of State and Government met in Lisbon to sign the new treaty. The Lisbon Treaty has to be ratified by the 27 Member States before 1st January 2009 if it is to enter into force.

The Robert Schuman Foundation provides its readers with 10 summary, informative sheets explaining how the European Union will work after this new treaty.

To download the fact sheets: the Robert Schuman Foundation website,

<http://www.robert-schuman.eu/doc/divers/lisbonne/en/10fiches.pdf>

Mental Health at Work: Developing the business case

This new publication from the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health demonstrates that taking action to promote mental wellbeing among staff, to give better help to those experiencing distress and to support those who need time off to come back to work makes business sense. The cost of neglecting mental distress at work is simply too high to be ignored any longer.

To order a copy: contact person, Sandra Ison, Email sandra.ison@scmh.org.uk, or visit the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health website, <http://www.scmh.org.uk>

XIX. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

20-22 February 2008

IAPO Global Patients Congress, Budapest (Hungary)

For more information: IAPO website, www.patientsorganizations.org/congress2008

27-29 February 2008

3rd Advocacy France Forum on a citizen's mental health policy, "Choisir sa vie: l'égalité des chances pour une vie indépendante" ("Choosing how to live your life: Equal opportunity for Independent Living"), Paris (France)

For more information: contact the Forum's Secretariat, Email forum@advocacyfrance.com, Tel +33 1 45 32 22 35

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>

NEW!! 13 March 2008

EuroHealthNet Seminar, "Implementing the new EU Health Strategy", Brussels (Belgium)

The aim of this event is to provide a critically constructive look at the concrete actions needed to turn a strategic paper into real progress for EU citizens, particularly those most in need.

The event will be held in association with the International Union for Health Promotion and Education.

For more information and to register: contact person, Karin Lotz,
Email, k.lotz@eurohealthnet.eu, or visit the EuroHealthNet website, www.eurohealthnet.eu
Places are limited.

NEW!! 25-27 March 2008

2nd International Conference on "Understanding Youth Suicide: A Meeting of Differing Perspectives", Judean Hills (Israel)

Together with foremost researchers from the US and Europe, the conference will bring together the best of Israeli academia and practitioners and formulate the frontiers of knowledge so as to give a direction for the future.

For more information: the conference dedicated website, <http://www.isas.co.il/suicide2008/>

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/>

14-15 April 2008

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

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

10-14 May 2008

Grundtvig training course 2008, "Committed Parents - Training course to work with migrant parents in family education", Wuppertal (Germany)

For more information: contact person, Nina Stücker, nina.stuecke@paritaet-nrw.org, Tel +49 202 28 22 338, or consult the Paritätische Akademie website, www.paritaetische-akademie.de

14-16 May 2008

16th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals, "Hospitals and health services in the health society: Quo vadis, HPH?", Berlin (Germany)

For more information: the conference dedicated website, www.univie.ac.at/hph/berlin2008

23-25 May 2008

ENMESH (European Network for Mental Health Service Evaluation) Conference 2008, "Good Practice, Good Outcome?", Krakow (Poland)

Further information about this conference, including registration forms, are available on the conference dedicated website: www.enmesh2008.pl

4-6 June 2008

2nd International Conference on Community Psychology, "Building Participative, Empowering and Diverse Communities - Visioning Community Psychology in a worldwide perspective", Lisbon (Portugal)

For more information: the conference dedicated website, <http://www.2iccp.com/>

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>

NEW!! 9-11 July 2008

ICCHP 2008 – 11th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs, "eQuality: A Global Challenge - Equal Access to the Information Society as a Global Challenge", Linz (Austria)

ICCHP will focus on all aspects of Technology and Assistive Devices for people with disabilities and the aging population.

For more information: the Conference website, www.icchp.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

27-30 August 2008

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

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

NEW!! 10-12 September 2008

"From Margins to Mainstream", 5th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioural Disorders, Melbourne (Australia)

The framework of the 2008 conference will build around four determinants – social participation, violence, discrimination and poverty – and five methodologies – research and evaluation; advocacy; coalition building; program design and implementation; and building the capacity of workforces, communities and organisations.

Additionally, the structure of the conference will be built around producing a Charter for Mental Health Promotion and Prevention of Disorders which will reflect core principles recommended by plenary speakers and those who submit abstracts.

For more information: the conference office, Email info@argins2mainstream.com, Tel +61 3 9370 1265

NEW!! 26-28 September 2008

2nd Congress of Transcultural Psychiatry in the German speaking Countries, "Refugees – Women and Children – Everybody is a stranger all over the world", Vienna (Austria)

The congress, organised by the Association for Transcultural Psychiatry, will focus on "Refugees" and especially on trauma, women and children. Other topics include the transcultural aspects of posttraumatic disorders; transcultural aspects of the gender dimension; transcultural aspects of child and adolescent psychiatry; refugee care in psychiatry and psychotherapy; legal questions in asylum seeking; transcultural aspects of expert opinions.

Conference language: German

For more information: visit the website www.transkulturellepsychiatrie.de, or contact alexander.friedmann@meduniwien.ac.at and solmaz.golsabahi@marienhospital-hamm.de

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

Please send it to info@mhe-sme.org