



MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE



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We had again a very busy month, especially towards the end of the month.

We attended the EC Thematic Conference on "Mental health in older people" in Madrid. You will find more information further in this Newsletter. During the final Round Table preceding the closing of the conference, non-mental health stakeholders such as the Age Platform Europe, the Standing Committee or European Doctors, the Social Protection Committee and others, were asked to explain how they are going to promote the implementation of the conference recommendations. We look forward to receiving the full report.

We attended the bi-annual meeting of Social Platform members with European Commissioners Andor and Reding, where we took the opportunity to draw the attention on vulnerable groups such as people with mental health problems.

We were present at the "9th Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty", where one of the workshop topics was dedicated to the link between poverty and mental health problems.

That brings us to the MHE conference 2010 on "Challenging Poverty – Creating Hope. Breaking the cycle of poverty and mental health problems" (Brussels, 22-23 October). The preparations are going well and the conference website with the registration form will soon be online. The keynote speech will be delivered by Christopher Prinz. Christopher Prinz is a Senior Policy Analyst in the OECD's Employment Analysis and Policy Division. He currently leads the team working on the new review on *Challenges for labour market inclusion of people with mental health problems*. OECD is the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

MHE will be celebrating its 25th anniversary on Friday 22 October, at the end of the first conference day.

The preparation for the MHE members' Capacity-building Seminar on 21 October, preceding the conference, is also well underway. In the morning we will have a session on "empowerment of mental health professionals and the involvement of mental health service users in this process". In the afternoon we will have a session on lobbying strategies in the mental health sector. The Capacity-building Seminar will be followed by the MHE annual General Assembly.

PENCIL THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY AND MAKE SURE YOU'LL BE THERE TO CELEBRATE WITH US.

Mary Van Dievel, Director

I. MENTAL HEALTH EUROPE

MHE NEWS AND POLICY WORK

MHE's letter to the Heads of State and governments on poverty reduction target and disability

Prior to the European summit of the EU Heads of States and governments on 17 June 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, indicator that has been utilized for many years in the frame of the EU Social Open Method of Coordination and by EUROSTAT.

MHE also sent a letter to the EU leaders supporting the European Disability Forum (EDF) proposal for the inclusion of the European Disability Pact in the EU 2020. Indeed, the EU 2020 Strategy should ensure that people with disabilities are included in the labour market and have access to comprehensive and adapted education. To meet these objectives, the EU 2020 Strategy should make clear references in all policies to people with disability, including people with mental health problems. This will also help national governments to better implement the goals set in the EU 2020 Strategy on inclusive growth into national targets and trajectories.

For further information on MHE's work on the EU 2020 Strategy, please contact Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org, or Roselyne Bourgon, MHE Human Rights Officer at roselyne.bourgon@mhe-sme.org

MHE Position Paper on Mental Health and Well-being of 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 People" (see related article in this Newsletter), highlights the importance of promoting and protecting mental health in the later age and put 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 well-being, 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 calls for actions to improve the quality of life of older people:

a) 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

b) 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

To read the full text of the MHE position paper, please see <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>. For further information contact Mari Fresu, MHE Health Policy Officer, at mari.fresu@mhe-sme.org

MHE National Focal Points Trainings accomplished

Mental Health Europe has accomplished this year's National Focal Point* Trainings. Five trainings took place between February and June 2010 in Ljubljana, Bucharest, Madrid, Stockholm and Tallinn. The trainings were held in regional groupings of 5-7 National Focal Points' representatives. The participants received an update on the 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 field. Moreover, in each training a communication expert was invited to provide know-how on effective lobbying strategies targeted at policy makers. Site visits were organized in the "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 NFP training material will be available on the MHE website at the beginning of July at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/reports-from-mhe-seminars-and-other-mhe-events.html>

For further information on MHE National Focal Points and the trainings, please contact Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

* NFPs are intermediaries between MHE and its member organisations and other stakeholders in their respective country in cases where a) information from the European level needs to be disseminated at the national, regional and local level, as well as in cases where b) MHE needs input from its members working at the local, regional and national level in order to report back to the European level on specific issues of consultation.

MHE survey on seclusion and restraints

In the frame of its Committee on "Mental Health and Human Rights", MHE prepared a survey on the situation of seclusion and restraints in the EU countries. Since March, MHE received several contributions from its members.

MHE would like to thank all the respondents and especially those who encouraged their national and regional public authorities to contribute. Moreover, MHE takes this opportunity to encourage its members to contact the independent authorities, such as the national ombudsmen.

MHE is particularly pleased to have received, among others, a response from a Swiss hospital and from the national ombudsman of Cyprus, which sent a very comprehensive contribution.

For more information on the survey on seclusion and restraints, please contact Roselyne Bourgon, Coordinator of MHE Committee on Mental Health and Human Rights, at Roselyne.bourgon@mhe-sme.org

Meeting with EU Commissioners Andor and Reding

On 22 June MHE participated in the Bi-Annual Meeting of the Social Platform members with the European Commission. Laszlo Andor, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, attended the event. They outlined the current issues at stake in their portfolio's after the recent adoption of the EU 2020 Strategy.

The participants from more than 30 social NGO's had the opportunity to ask questions to the Commissioners. Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director, drew the attention on vulnerable groups, such as people with mental health problems, and on the need of including them into the labour market. Ms Van Dievel also asked for concrete measures to be adopted. Commissioner Andor stated that the EU 2020 Strategy is still being defined and that civil society will be involved in the process of shaping its implementation, which will also include a new European Platform against Poverty.

Ms Reding underlined the importance of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and called on the civil society's collaboration in order to monitor the Commission's observance of the Charter. Concerning the protection of human rights of people with disabilities, Ms Reding expressed commitment to include the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in the EU human rights policies. This was welcomed by the NGOs, which stressed their will to contribute to the shaping of human rights policies in the EU.

NEWS ON MHE PROJECTS

Determine Consortium: the official end

On 31 May the Determine project, led by EuroHealthNet, came to an official end. The outcomes of the project were fed into the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council conclusions on 'Equity and Health in All Policies: Solidarity in Health', through the EU Spanish Council Presidency. The Council met on 7-8 June and endorsed the opinion of the Social Protection Committee on the European Commission's Communication on Health Inequalities.

The project's final publication is still in the process of being translated and set. Currently, the report has been translated into Spanish, Swedish, Hungarian, Polish, and Dutch. Copies of the translated reports will be available on the Determine Portal shortly.

The Portal will continue to be on-line as an important source of information on health inequalities in the EU.

For further information, please visit <http://www.health-inequalities.eu/>

UPDATE ON NEW ITEMS ON MHE WEBSITE

The MHE website has been updated with new information in the following sections:

- Our Projects
Violence against women at the workplace...let's talk about it!: Booklet
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/our-projects/current-projects/daphne-phase-III.html>
- Publications – MHE Position Papers
Position of Mental Health Europe on Mental Health and Well-being of Older People
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>

- News and events
Press release on MHE letters sent ahead of the European Summit
<http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/mhe-press-releases.html>

Please note that the French version of the MHE website will not be updated any longer. Therefore, we invite you to refer to the English version for future information. Thank you for your understanding.

MHE REPRESENTATION AT VARIOUS MEETINGS

On 1 June, Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, participated in the Social Policy Working Group, organised by the Social Platform in Brussels.

On 8 June, Yves Brand, MHE Assistant to the Director, attended the meeting "Local and Regional Responses to Poverty and Social Exclusion", held at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels.

On 9-11 June, Mary Van Dievel, MHE Director, and Astrid Mechel held the National Focal Point Training in Tallinn.

On 11 June, Yves Brand participated in the meeting "Europe 2020 and Inclusive Growth : Beyond 100 Days", held at the European Policy Centre in Brussels.

On 21 June, Astrid Mechel attended the European Year 2010 Stakeholder Expert Group meeting, organised by the European Commission in Brussels.

On 22 June, Mary Van Dievel, Roselyne Bourgon and Astrid Mechel participated in the meeting organized by the Social Platform with the presence of EU Commissioners Laszlo Andor and Viviane Reding.

On 23 June, Astrid Mechel attended the Disability Intergroup Hearing with the Spanish and Belgian EU Presidencies at the European Parliament.

On 25-26 June, Astrid Mechel participated in the 9th Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, organized by the Spanish EU Presidency, European Commission and European Anti-Poverty Network in Brussels.

On 28-29 June, Stijn Jannes, MHE Senior Policy Adviser and Mary Van Dievel participated in the third European Commission's Thematic Conference on "Mental Health and Well-Being in Older People" in Madrid, Spain.

On 29-30 June, Mari Fresu, MHE Health Policy Officer, and Yves Brand participated in the EU Open Health Forum 2010 in Brussels.

NEWS FROM MHE MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

"The lonely society": New report of the Mental Health Foundation – UK

According to a new report released by the Mental Health Foundation, relationships that are vital to health and well-being are under threat by modern life, which can isolate people from one another and lead to loneliness. The charity is raising awareness of loneliness and of the steps people and policy-makers can take to combat isolation. The report highlights that everyone needs to be aware of the potential health problems linked to loneliness.

For further information, please see <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/loneliness-and-mental-health/>

New self-help center at Casa Della Cultura - Italy

On 13 May AISMe and the Tuscany User Network, with the support of the Tuscany Region, inaugurated a new self-help center. The objective of this initiative is to strengthen the role of the psychiatric self-help and to raise awareness on the theme of mental health and solidarity. Being the only similar center in Tuscany, it will offer the opportunity to disseminate useful information on these issues at local, national and international level.

For further information, please send an email to aisme.sh@gmail.com

MIND's Guide on "Police and mental health" - UK

MIND, a leading mental health charity for England and Wales, published a Guide on "Police and mental health - How to get it right locally". The document lists examples of good practices and joint works between the police and third sector's organisations, particularly with MIND members.

To read the Guide, please see the following link http://www.mind.org.uk/assets/0000/8587/Police_Guide.pdf

World Women's March – France

On 12-13 June, the representatives of the Advocacy France' section, "Club des Femmes" (Women's Club), participated in the World Women's March, taking place in Montreuil (France). The participants drew the attention on theme of violence against women and on the consequences of the proposed law on the involuntary hospitalization.

To know more on this initiative, please contact Martine Dutoit at siege@advocacy.fr

II. EU INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER BODIES

EU 2020 Strategy adopted by the European Council

On 17 June the European Council adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy, which is the EU socio-economic strategy for the next ten years. The Strategy encompasses a wide range of policy areas, including the ones for which the EU has legislative competence, such as employment, and the ones for which its role is restricted to inter-governmental coordination and the setting of common targets, such as social inclusion and education. The EU 2020 Strategy replaces the Lisbon Strategy (adopted in 2000), which failed to turn the EU into "the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010".

During the June Council Meeting, the EU Heads of State decided to set the target to "lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion" by 2020. Each Member State can choose out of three indicators to measure the extent of poverty in its country and use the indicators "less than 60 % of the country's median income", "material deprivation" or "jobless households".

Furthermore, the Council decided to raise the employment's rate for women and men aged 20-64 up to 75%, including young people, older workers and low-skilled workers. Leaders also agreed on reducing school drop-out rates to less than 10% (currently being it 15%) and to increase the share of higher education completion of 30-34 years-old to at least 40%.

High-level conference on Mental Health and Well-being in Older People, 28-29 June 2010, Madrid

The high-level conference on "Mental Health and Well-being in Older People" was held on 28 and 29 June in Madrid. The event was organised by the European Commission in collaboration with the Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policies. More than 150 experts gathered together to discuss the issue and to share examples of initiatives that improve the mental health of older people.

Aim of the conference was encouraging key actors and stakeholders to put the improvement of the mental health and well-being of older people at the heart of their agenda. Five key issues were addressed:

1. Healthy ageing and well-being: calling for conditions which support the social participation, meaningful roles and supportive environments for older people
2. Prevention of mental disorders and promotion of autonomy: calling for action to tackle the risk factors associated with poor mental health in older age, such as chronic physical and sensory disorders
3. Older people in vulnerable situations: calling for coordination of health and social welfare services and for tackling elder abuse
4. Health systems for care and treatment: calling for skilled and multidisciplinary teams for treating older people as well as high quality nursing homes and making use of new communicative technologies to improve care
5. Supporting informal carers: by providing this group that carries the highest burden in care with psychosocial as well as practical and social security support.

Mental Health Europe was represented at the conference by Mary Van Dievel, Director, and Stijn Jannes, Senior Policy Adviser, who chaired the session on "Care and Treatment Systems" on 29 June.

Background

Mental health in older people is one of the five priority themes of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being. The Pact was launched in June 2008 and aims to highlight key areas in mental health and well-being through a series of high level conferences. This is the third conference and follows the 2009 conferences on "Mental Health in Youth and Education" and on "Prevention of Depression and Suicide". The next thematic conferences on "Combating Stigma and Social Exclusion" and "Mental Health in Workplace Settings" will take place at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011, respectively.

For further information, please visit the Commission's website at http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20100419_en.htm

EU Open Health Forum, 29-30 June 2010, Brussels

The European Commission, Directorate General for Health and Consumers, organised the EU Open Health Forum on 29-30 June 2010 in Brussels.

Under the overall theme of "Together for Health – a Strategy for the EU 2020" the conference involved many different stakeholders in order to better develop and implement actions and activities for the protection and improvement of the health of European citizens.

The aim of the conference was to contribute and increase the profile of health in all policies through discussion between EU policy makers and stakeholders on pressing public health issues and their impacts on the Community.

The EU Open Health Forum is a mechanism for the European Commission to get feedback from stakeholders on the implementation of the EU Health Policy and to identify the need for new policy initiatives at EU level. It also facilitates networking and exchange of best practice in the implementation of public health policies at EU, national, regional and local level.

Mental Health Europe was represented there by Mari Fresu, Health Policy Officer, and Yves Brand, Assistant to the Director. A MHE information desk was also set up to disseminate information and useful material.

For further information, please see

http://ec.europa.eu/health/interest_groups/eu_health_forum/open_forum/2010/index_en.htm

Spanish Peer Review to tackle work incapacity

On 4-5 February, a Peer Review to discuss best practices on "Modernising and activation measures related to work incapacity" took place in Spain with representatives from France, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Sweden and the UK. In recent years, the steep rise in disability's claimants has led to a tightening of the eligibility criteria. However, experience has shown that, in many cases, when access to disability benefits is reduced, people simply move over to other parts of the social security system. Reforms must, therefore, ensure that people do not simply shift from one benefits scheme to another and this requires an integrated approach that is not only centred on benefits and conditionality, but also on encouraging and enabling labour-market participation.

To download the full report, please see <http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.eu/peer-reviews/2009/modernising-and-activating-measures-relating-to-work-incapacity>

To know more about Peer Reviews, please contact Astrid Mechel, MHE Social Policy Officer, at astrid.mechel@mhe-sme.org

European Pact for Mental Health and Well-Being now available in 22 languages

Mental Health Europe is pleased to inform that the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being is finally available in 22 languages.

The Pact builds on the EU's potential to inform, promote best practice and encourage actions by Member States and stakeholders and help address common challenges and tackle health inequalities. It brings together European institutions, Member States, stakeholders from relevant sectors, including people at risk of exclusion for mental health reasons, and the research community to support and promote mental health and well-being.

Launched in June 2008, the Pact was initially available in three languages only (English, French and German), which was clearly a barrier to its effective implementation on the national and local level.

To download the document, please see the following link

http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/policy/index_en.htm

Forum on local and regional responses to poverty and social exclusion

On 8 June, the Committee of the Regions invited local and regional authorities, NGOs and representatives of the EU institutions to exchange good practices and expertise in the field of poverty and social exclusion. Around 200 experts from regional authorities discussed the political framework and analysed the impact of the presented local initiatives. These projects focused on the accessibility of social services and on the integration of people into the labour market, especially in urban and rural areas.

Mental Health Europe was represented at this Forum by Ives Brand, MHE Assistant to the Director.

More information on the event, including an overview of the projects, can be found at <http://www.cor.europa.eu/pages/EventTemplate.aspx?view=folder&id=727a3dfd-349b-47e6-b4dd-bd5c2c91e036&sm=727a3dfd-349b-47e6-b4dd-bd5c2c91e036>

Informal meeting of European Ministers responsible for disability, 19 May 2010, Zaragoza

On 19 May the informal meeting of European Ministers took place in Spain and focused on the status of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The meeting was mostly devoted to the analysis of the general context, examining the legislative reforms Member States are implementing and the possible obstacles they might encounter.

Commissioner Reding, responsible for EU portfolio on Fundamental Rights, explained that the number of people with disabilities will grow in the future since the European population is getting older. She added that a progress can be achieved even in the context of the current financial crisis.

For more information on this informal meeting, please visit the EU Spanish Presidency webpage at http://www.eu2010.es/en/documentosynoticias/noticias/may19_discapacidad.html

The European Court of Human Rights upholds the right to vote of persons with disabilities, 20 May 2010, Strasbourg

In its judgment "K. A. versus Hungary", the European Court of Human Rights took a decision on the protection of political rights of persons with disabilities. Being under partial guardianship since 2005, Mr. K. A. was prevented to exercise his right to vote in the 2006 elections. The deprivation of his right to vote was an automatic consequence of his placement under guardianship in accord with the Hungarian Constitution.

The European Court of Human Rights' decision states that the Article 3 of Protocol No.1 of the European Convention on Human Rights does not allow an absolute bar on the voting rights of people under partial guardianship. Indeed, the decision for guardianship should consider the person's actual abilities before depriving him/her from the right to vote.

The application was introduced with the help of Mental Disability Advocacy Center (MDAC). MDAC welcomed the Court's decision as it recognizes the consequences of the voting rights' restrictions of vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities.

Source: MDAC

For more information, please see <http://cmiskp.echr.coe.int/tkp197/view.asp?action=html&documentId=868214&portal=hbkm&source=externalbydocnumber&table=F69A27FD8FB86142BF01C1166DEA398649>

III. EY FOR COMBATING POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The Year 2010 is the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The key objectives are to raise public awareness about these issues and renew the political commitment of the EU and its Member States to combat poverty and social exclusion. The EY 2010 aims to challenge stereotypes and collective perceptions of poverty to ensure everyone can play a full and active role in society.

MHE has created a new section in order to increase awareness about the link between mental health and poverty.

Research has shown clear links between mental health and poverty. People experiencing poverty are particularly vulnerable towards getting mental health problems, since due to financial hardship or not having a job frequently their social contacts are suffering and uncertainty about the future dominate their daily lives.

Visit the EY 2010 website at www.2010againstpoverty.eu

Visit the Social NGO Coalition's website for the EY 2010 at www.endpoverty.eu

Read the MHE message for the EY 2010 at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/publications/mhe-position-papers.html>

9th Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty

On 25-26 June the Spanish EU Presidency together with the European Commission and European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) jointly organized the 9th Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty. The meeting takes place on a yearly basis and brings together people experiencing poverty from all over Europe, European policy-makers and representatives from the civil society organizations.

In order to give voice to all the people who experience poverty, the event also encompassed 8 parallel workshops, where participants expressed their views on the policies necessary to combat poverty. The link between poverty and mental health problems was one of the workshop topics. MHE attended this session together with other activists in the field of mental health and people experiencing poverty who have suffered from mental health problems. The main outputs of the workshops were the requests on the provision of adequate housing for everyone, free access to quality education, employment, social services and health care as well as a minimum income for all.

For further information on the event and to read the 10 key demands to the EU institutions from the 9th EU Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty, please see <http://www.2010againstpoverty.eu/calendarofevents/events/event55.html?langid=en>

New Eurobarometer survey on the social impact of the economic crisis

In the context of the economic crisis, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities decided to regularly monitor public opinion about its social impact. The last report was in May 2010. Earlier waves were conducted in July 2009, December 2009 and March 2010.

In the frame of the last the wave, one in six Europeans reported difficulties in paying ordinary bills, buying food and other daily consumer items on at least one occasion in the past year and 20% of them had problems in keeping up with credit commitments at the time of the survey's fieldwork (May 2010). The 3% of the interviewed fell behind with bills and credit commitments and 2% were having real financial problems.

3 out of 10 Europeans reported more difficulties in bearing the costs of healthcare, childcare or long-term care in the past six months: 11% felt it had become "much more difficult" and 18% thought it had become "somewhat more difficult".

As in March 2010, 18% of respondents declared not to feel confident in keeping their current job in the next 12 months and 49% reported that it would be fairly unlikely or not at all likely to being able to find a new position within six months, should they be laid off.

The full survey is available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_289_en.pdf

IV. NEWS FROM OTHER (E)NGOs

Social Platform recommendations for an effective European Platform against Poverty

In view of the upcoming Commission's Communication, the Social Platform sent an open letter to the Commission President and the Commissioners on June 22 with five recommendations to ensure that the European Platform against Poverty delivers concrete results reducing poverty and social exclusion. The Platform, which is planned to be launched in autumn 2010 in the frame of the Europe 2020 Strategy, will have the goal to ensure economic, social and territorial cohesion in the EU. It will provide a platform for cooperation and mutual learning for all EU Member States to design programmes to promote social innovation for the most vulnerable, fight discrimination, undertake an assessment of the adequacy and sustainability of social protection and pension systems and to identify ways of ensuring better access to health care systems.

In its letter, the Social Platform gave the following five recommendations:

1. Demand political agreement of the EU and Member States to deliver concrete outcomes for people experiencing poverty, developed through participative National Action Plans on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, building on the processes developed through the Open Method of Coordination.
2. Guarantee partnership in the decision making process at national and EU level, in the National Reform Programmes and National Action Plans, with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, organizations that represent them and the civil society groups that work on the prevention of poverty.
3. Ensure that financial instruments of the EU (such as the European Social Fund) and Member States are coupled with the implementation plans to reduce poverty.
4. Establish strong monitoring and evaluation process in the Council and the European Parliament to maintain high visibility for the Platform against Poverty.
5. Ensure that the working methods of the Platform against Poverty reflect the multidimensional character of poverty.

To read the letter, please see <http://www.socialplatform.org/News.asp?news=24797>

European Project on dual diagnosis: TRINNODD

The Association for Research and Training on Integration in Europe (ARFIE) is participating in the TRINNODD initiative. TRINNODD is a 2-year European project (2008-2010) funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Programme, which aims at transferring practice knowledge about the problems related to dual diagnosis (DD) to target groups in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Romania. The objective is to organise specific training in order to support workers who face the pervasiveness of psychopathological and behavioural disorders in people with DD.

The project achievements will be published in a newsletter, in a brochure with DVD, and on the project website. Targeted valorisation activities are being planned in partners' countries and within European and international networks. A final dissemination conference will be organised in Romania in September 2010.

For further information please visit www.trinnodd.eu

The European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness launched the "Action Network"

The European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness (EUFAMI) launched its virtual "Action Network". The network, which is titled the 'Friends of the Forgotten Children', has been created by EUFAMI as a follow up to the very successful conference held in Vilnius (Lithuania) in November 2009.

The objective of this network is to create a forum whereby the issues which were raised and debated at the conference can be further discussed and debated. It can also be used to share examples of good practices and actions which are taking place across Europe. The forum can then be accessed by anybody who might be interested in re-creating similar initiatives in other countries.

To know more know this initiative, please see

http://www.eufami.org/index.php?option=com_pressreleasesnewsdesc&Itemid=135&titleid=87

V. PUBLICATIONS

The European Women's Lobby published a new lobbying kit

The European Women's Lobby Centre on Violence against Women (EWL) released a lobbying kit entitled "Towards a strong convention on all forms of male violence against women". This lobbying kit provides targeted information and tools designed to help the EWL, its members, supporters and NGO partners take action and work together towards a comprehensive, strong and effective Convention on all forms of male violence against women.

To download the EWL kit, please see <http://www.ewlcentreonviolence.org/spip.php?article554>

Fundamental Rights Agency: the 2010 Annual Report is now available

The 2010 Annual Report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) identifies challenges in the areas of data protection, extreme exploitation in the workplace, rights of the child, racism, discrimination and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) issues. The report has been presented by the FRA Director, Morten Kjaerum, before the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties and Justice (LIBE) on 10 June 2010.

To read the FRA 2010 Annual Report, please visit the website of the Fundamental Rights Agency at http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/home/home_en.htm

VI. CONFERENCES AND TRAININGS

28 September 1 October 2010

European Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry Conference "Determine our own future", Thessaloniki - Greece

To know more, please send an email to congress@enusp.org

9-10 November 2010

IV IJJO International Conference "Building integrative juvenile justice systems", Rome- Italy

For further information, please see <http://www.ijjo.org/plantilla.php?pag=091210>

16-19 March 2011

IV World Congress on Women's Mental Health, Madrid - Spain

For further information, please see <http://www.iawmh2011.com/en/index.htm>

25-28 May 2011

III International Congress on ADHD, Berlin – Germany

To get more information, please visit <http://www.adhd-congress.org/>

23-25 June 2011

IX European Network for Mental Health Service Evaluation International Conference, Ulm – Germany

For more information, please visit http://enmesh.eu/index_enmesh_conference_2011.html

All the Conferences and Events announced in the previous issues are available on the MHE website at <http://www.mhe-sme.org/en/news-and-events/forthcoming-events.htm>

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

Please send your contributions to info@mhe-sme.org