



21st CEFEC Conference
**“Social Firms, Employment and Quality of Life:
Common Strategies for Social Exclusion in Europe”**
Lisbon, 26-27 June 2008

***From Exclusion to Inclusion:
The Way Forward to Promoting Social Inclusion
of People with Mental Health Problems***

Mary Van Dievel
Director Mental Health Europe

ABOUT MHE



- A European NGO, committed to
 - the promotion of positive mental health
 - the prevention of mental distress
 - the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion
 - the protection of human rights for (ex-)users of mental health services, their families and carers
 - MHE was set up in 1985
-

MHE's WORK ON SOCIAL INCLUSION



- ❖ **MHE project: Promoting Social Inclusion of People with Mental Health Problems – A Challenge for the European Union ! (2000-2001)**
(supported by the European Commission)

 - ❖ **MHE transnational exchange project: Good Practices for Combating Social Exclusion of People with Mental Health Problems**
(supported by the European Commission Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002-2006)

 - ❖ **MHE work programme 2007 From Exclusion to Inclusion: Making Social Inclusion a Reality for People with Mental Health Problems in the European Union**
(supported by the European Commission Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002-2006)
 - ↳ **MHE publication From Exclusion to Inclusion – The Way Forward to Promoting Social Inclusion of People with Mental Health Problems** ([http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/From%20Exclusion%20to%20Inclusion-Final%20version\(1\).pdf](http://www.mhe-sme.org/assets/files/From%20Exclusion%20to%20Inclusion-Final%20version(1).pdf))
-



Recommendations from MHE members on promoting social inclusion of people with mental health problems in HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

- ✓ *Strengthen communication and interaction between the health and social sector and ensure more integrated actions*
 - ✓ *Ensure involvement and participation of people with mental health problems and their families in policy and decision making*
 - ✓ *Complement the de-institutionalisation process with increased development of alternative solutions for health and social services in the community*
-



Recommendations on EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- ✓ *Promote early prevention of mental disorders in schools and develop specific education policies targeting pupils with mental health problems*
 - ✓ *Create information and support services in schools and universities supporting students with mental health problems to complete their education*
 - ✓ *Increase financial and structural support for NGOs and other providers of vocational training and rehabilitation for people with mental health problems*
-



Recommendations on EMPLOYMENT

- ✓ *Raise awareness among employers of the employment potentials of people with mental health problems*
 - ✓ *Create decent job opportunities in sheltered/adapted employment or social firms as well as in the open labour market*
 - ✓ *Ensure a decent minimum income for people with mental health problems as well as a fair regulation of the compatibility between work and social benefits*
-



Recommendations on HOUSING

- ✓ *Promote legal regulations promoting housing rights of people with mental health problems and prohibiting discrimination*
 - ✓ *Prevent homelessness of people with mental health problems by supporting the development of affordable and adequate housing*
 - ✓ *Provide financial and structural support to NGOs and other providers of alternative housing solutions like sheltered living opportunities*
-

Recommendations on CIVIL and HUMAN RIGHTS



- ✓ *Ensure that people with mental health problems are informed about their rights*
 - ✓ *Enforce the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation in all areas*
 - ✓ *Support the creation of contact points for legal advice for people with mental health problems*
-

Recommendations on VULNERABLE GROUPS



- ✓ *Pay special attention to the mental health and social needs of migrants and invest in culturally sensitive approaches to mental health and social services*
 - ✓ *Adopt a gender-based approach in mental health and social support services and prevention of negative forces in society such as trafficking, domestic violence*
 - ✓ *Invest in mental health promotion and early prevention of mental disorders and drug abuse in children and young people*
 - ✓ *Create spaces for meeting others and living in the community for older people and fight social isolation*
-

Recommendations on GOOD PRACTICES IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION



- ✓ *Adopt the principles of person-centeredness, independence, empowerment and community orientation*
 - ✓ *Invest in social activities in the community as well as in initiatives promoting labour market integration of people with mental health problems*
 - ✓ *Fight stigma and prejudice in society through realistic messages in the media*
 - ✓ *Support NGOs and other voluntary providers of mental health and social services*
-

ACHIEVING SOCIAL INCLUSION



- **EU Lisbon Strategy**
 - **PROGRESS 2007-2013:** Community programme supporting employment, social protection & inclusion, non-discrimination & diversity, and gender equality
 - Creating a civil society where all stakeholders and actors cooperate in the framework of a democratic and participatory process, where mental health and well-being is the main driver and our hope for a better future. This requires further development of a **Mental Health Platform for Europe.**
 - Mental health and well-being must be based on a **social inclusion and recovery model.** This comes with a commitment to carers and expert service users without whom it is impossible to show the progress made in a participatory approach to mental health and well-being.
-

MHE WORK PROGRAMME

2008-2010



- Briefing meeting with directors of mental health associations (Brussels, April 2008)
 - Capacity-building seminar for MHE members (Aalborg/Denmark, 06 August 2008)
 - Establishment of national focal points in EU countries!
 - MHE conference “Diversity in Mental Health and Well-being” (Aalborg/Denmark 07-09 August 2008)
 - Annual awareness raising events in European Parliament
 - Contributions to relevant European Commission consultations
 - MHE monthly Newsletter
 - MHE website www.mhe-sme.org
-



For further information:

Mental Health Europe – Santé Mentale 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

www.mhe-sme.org
