

European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

Annual report for 2001

ENUSP tried to influence policy-making institutions on a European level with emphasis on legislation and human rights issues. For example at the "European Conference on Mental Health 2001: Visibly Improved, Improved Visibility" organized by Mental Health Europe, Rotterdam, the chair of ENUSP, Gábor Gombos, lead a podium discussion about the "White Paper on the protection of the human rights and dignity of people suffering from mental disorder, especially those placed as involuntary patients". The podiums' speakers were Jean Claus, Secretary of the working group on Psychiatry of the Council of Europe, who wrote the draft of the White Paper, which was criticised by a lot of different organizations. The second podium speaker, a board-member of ENUSP, summarized all the critics and pleaded for a revision of the paper by participation of (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry ("Nothing about us without us!").

ENUSP co-operated closely with the other European NGOs active in the field of mental health and combating discrimination. Together with Mental Health Europe (MHE) ENUSP ran programs of the European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs: "Action Programme to Combat Discrimination" and "Support for European Level NGO".

ENUSP maintained contacts with other international organisations active in the mental health field and in human rights issues, especially with MHE; the ENUSP-chair is board-member in MHE.

There have been co-operative contacts in any form with the World Health Organisation - European section. At the World Health Day on April 7, 2001, ENUSP board-member Peter Lehmann represented the "Voice of users and survivors of psychiatry" at the main event in Geneva and pleaded particularly for psychiatry self-help via internet.

Further on there have been co-operative contacts with the European Union, the European Network on Constraint and Collaboration, the European Disability Forum (EDF; work in the standing committee for women issues; work in the standing committee for human rights), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Geneva Initiative on Psychiatry (GIP), the Nordic Forum for Social and Mental Health, Hamlet Trust etc.

Between others members of the board of ENUSP participated at the congress "Coping with stress and depression related problems in Europe", organized by the World Health Organization, the European Commission and the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Public Health and the Environment (Belgium) in Brussels. At the "Week of the Psychiatry" in Netherlands (issue: mental illness & disability and spare time) ENUSP representatives participated, as well as they did in a lot of national, regional and local meetings in a lot of European countries.

Developing the website did not end with the year 2001. This also applies for gathering information and experiences with modern atypical psychiatric drugs, discussing actions against discrimination of the multiple discriminated and the people in the long-term units, better representation of ENUSP on all levels of decision making, enhancing the contacts to the member-organisations particularly where the idea of self-help is not much developed yet.