

PEPSAEE

PANHELLENIC UNION FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND WORK INTEGRATION for people with psychosocial problems

PROFILE

The Panhellenic Union for Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Work Integration (PEPSAEE) for people with psychosocial problems was established in 1997 after repeated meetings of Mental Health professionals from all over Greece, who worked in Rehabilitation programs for people with mental health problems.

During those meetings it became obvious that there was a need for a Panhellenic organisation to support, co-ordinate and empower rehabilitation and work integration initiatives in the mental health sector.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Many notable experiences, on both international and national level, have been reported in relation to psychosocial rehabilitation. Many theoretical approaches have been expressed and applied in mental health practice. The course of the individual with psychosocial problems is formed today by multiple parameters. The changeability of the macro-micro environmental factors results in rapid changes in the forming of mental health services. The general principles of psychosocial rehabilitation have to adjust to the above facts.

People with psychosocial problems are more and more being excluded from employment and social life. The globalisation of economy and of civilisation creates greater inequalities for the vulnerable social groups and especially for those suffering from mental illness.

Social Psychiatry is considered today to be the only way out of the asylum reality and its therapeutic deadlocks. At the beginning of the 21st century we can finally speak of the end of psychiatric hospitals.

The Psychiatric Reform requires new alternative mental health services in the community. Those new structures are directly linked to the local authorities and give an answer to the long-standing demand for the sectorisation and decentralisation of mental health services.

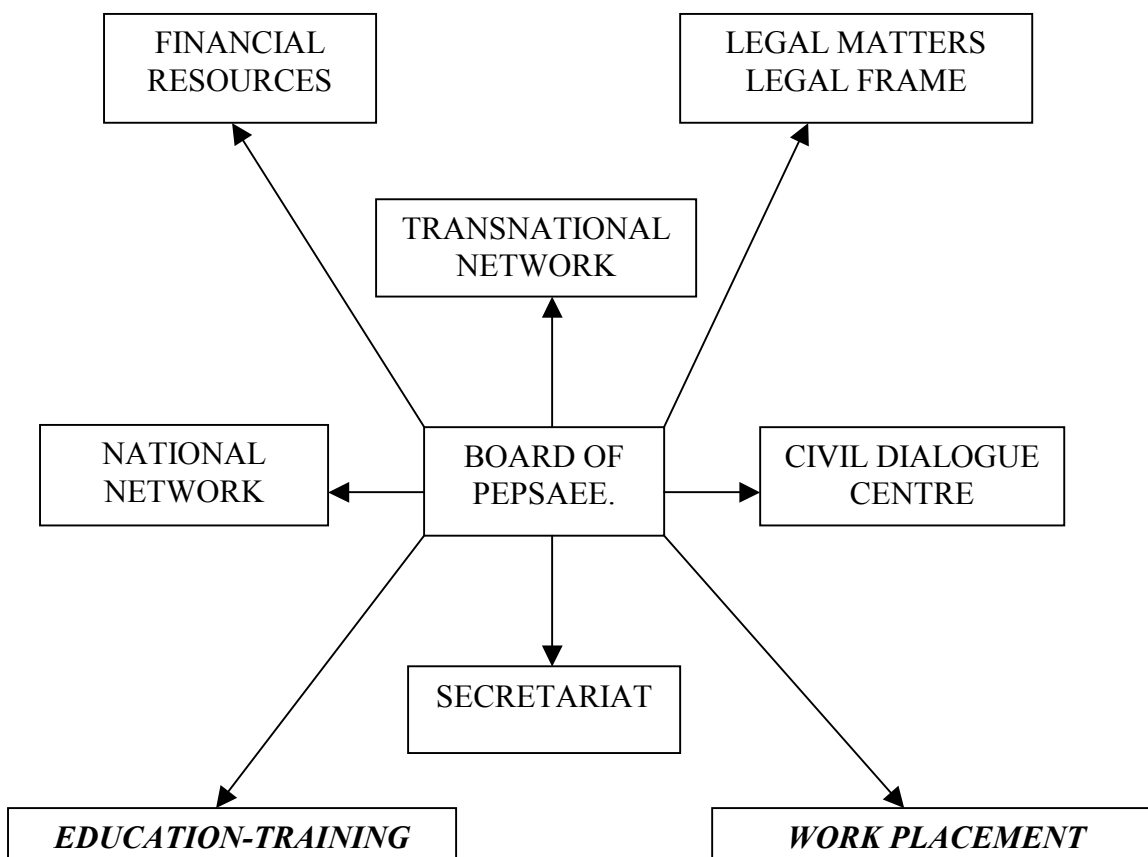
The users of mental health services can and should play a more active role in the forming of mental health policies. In addition the family groups for mental health, which are slowly developing all over Greece, can play the same active role.

Thus the requirements will be created for a society of solidarity and respect of diversity in the new multicultural social environment of the 21st century.

THE OBJECTIVES OF PEPSAEE

1. The co-ordination and support of organisations and individuals who apply Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Work Integration programs.
2. The direct support of people with psychosocial problems by creating Social Co-operatives for Vocational Rehabilitation.
3. The development of co-operation with other organisations of similar purposes on a National, European and International level.
4. The intervention and exercise of pressure to the relevant authorities for the development of legal policies in favour of people with mental health problems.

STRUCTURE OF PEPSAEE



CIVIL DIALOGUE CENTRE “FACE TO FACE”

(Dynamic Approach of Social Inclusion of people with psychosocial difficulties.)

The Civil Dialogue Centre (C.D.C.) is a professional activity of PEPSAEE, which was established within a European Union project. The project took place from March 2000 until March 2001, was funded by the E.U. and was part of an effort to combat social exclusion and discrimination from the labour market.

The C.D.C. constitutes an alternative mental health service, provides opportunities for the creation of new work positions and presents cultural activities of users and mental health workers from all over Greece.

After the end of the project, the C.D.C. continues its operation within the sector of alternative entertainment by organising different activities such as self-help groups, exhibitions, publications, poetry readings, music nights, seminars and several other cultural events.

CO-OPERATIONS

- **C.E.F.E.C.** (Confederation of European social Firms, Employment initiatives and social Co-operatives for the psychically disabled)
- **E.N.U.S.P.** (European Network of (ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry)

- **MUNICIPALITIES OF ATTICA**

The C.D.C. co-operates with several Municipalities of Attica in cultural, social and sports events. The main aim is to eliminate the stigma of mental illness, to create a more understanding local community and to directly involve the Local Authorities in Mental Health Services.

- **MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATIONS**

The C.D.C. organises and offers its space for different activities and events with the cooperation of newly developing community mental health organisations in Athens.

THE C.D.C. “FACE TO FACE”

- Operates in the area of central Athens and employs people with psychosocial difficulties as well as mental health professionals.
- Activates and involves the Local Authorities through activities with the Municipalities.
- Cultivates the enterprising abilities of the users-members.
- Organises and presents cultural events (poetry readings, art exhibitions, music nights, lectures, theatre performances, book presentations etc.)
- Exchanges knowledge (‘know-how’) and experiences on a national and international level.
- Constitutes an innovative mental health structure in Athens and is a reference point for socialisation and creation for people with mental health problems.
- Is an effective tool for combating social exclusion and discrimination.
- Organises and activates the participation of volunteer organisations for mental health.
- Finally, the C.D.C. aims to modify the public perception of mental illness and to alter social attitudes towards people with mental health problems for a society against social exclusions; for a society that respects diversity.

BOARD OF PEPSAEE

Nikos Antonopoulos, *Operational Researcher* – President
Athena Fragouli, *Speech and Language Therapist* – Secretary
Pola Nikolaou, *Social Worker* – Treasurer
Antonis Liodakis, *Psychiatrist* – Member
Yannis Kourmoulakis, *Psychologist* – Member

CONTACT DETAILS

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