

**Draft Report from the First Consultation Meeting
EU Platform for Mental Health
Rapporteur: Kasia Jurczak
15/02/2006**

1. General Statements

The Platform has emphasized the importance of appropriate terminology when addressing mental health. First, the reference should be made in a positive way that is promoting good/positive mental health. As the concepts differ between the European languages, it would be helpful to have standardized reference of terminology in the official EU languages.

Mental health should also be seen as reflected on the spectrum, as it is not a bi-polar variable: healthy vs. ill.

2. Other policy areas for which mental health is relevant

Promotion of positive mental health and prevention of disorder can benefit actions of stakeholders from other policy areas.

• **Migration**

Unfavourable living and working conditions, can negatively impact mental wellbeing of the migrant population. On the other hand, increased labour migration can undermine the job security of some members of the host society and have negative impact on their health. Lastly, the migrants from other cultural backgrounds have different understanding of mental health. The medical and care sectors should take account of that.

• **Employment**

Europe has been experiencing changes in form of employment, resulting in increased pressure on individual and volatility of employment. Positive mental health promotion could contribute to diminishing of stress at the workplace.

• **Productivity and Employability**

Investment in positive mental health in children and adolescents, will impact the development of their self-esteem and coping skills. In the labour market of present times persons equipped with those skills are more likely to succeed (or be more employable) and add to the productivity growth.

• **Social Cohesion**

Positive mental health, leading to greater social participation – in the social networks and the labour market would positively contribute to increased social cohesion – one of the Union's strategic objectives.

In order to successfully take action in relation to promotion of mental health in other policy areas at the European level, appropriate legal basis should be referred to; for example, Art.13 for anti-discrimination policies.

3. Delivering in the settings

As mental health is relevant to the work of other sectors, the concept of positive mental health should be addressed in other settings such as education, services for the migrants, family therapists or police. The issues should be presented in the language specific and understood by the given sector/setting.

In that way, the use of term “Vulnerable groups”, which by many was received as a form of negative labelling, could be avoided.

4. Actions at the EC-Level

- Intersectoral task force – different commission services to be involved, especially Social, education and JAI to use their mandate to promote and further mental health agenda
- European Strategy on mental health is strongly encouraged.

5. Further Actions

- **Networks and Stakeholder Platforms**

Inclusion of relevant networks (EU-level, but also WHO-related) working on the issue of mental health to disseminate and mainstream evidence-based practices.

- **Further research**

Future research on the subject of mental health should in a uniform fashion collect data from EU-28, thus including New Member States and Candidate Countries.

This paper was produced for a meeting organized by Health & Consumer Protection DG and represents the views of its author on the subject. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission's or Health & Consumer Protection DG's views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this paper, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.