



NEW VOICES IN ENUSP - A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

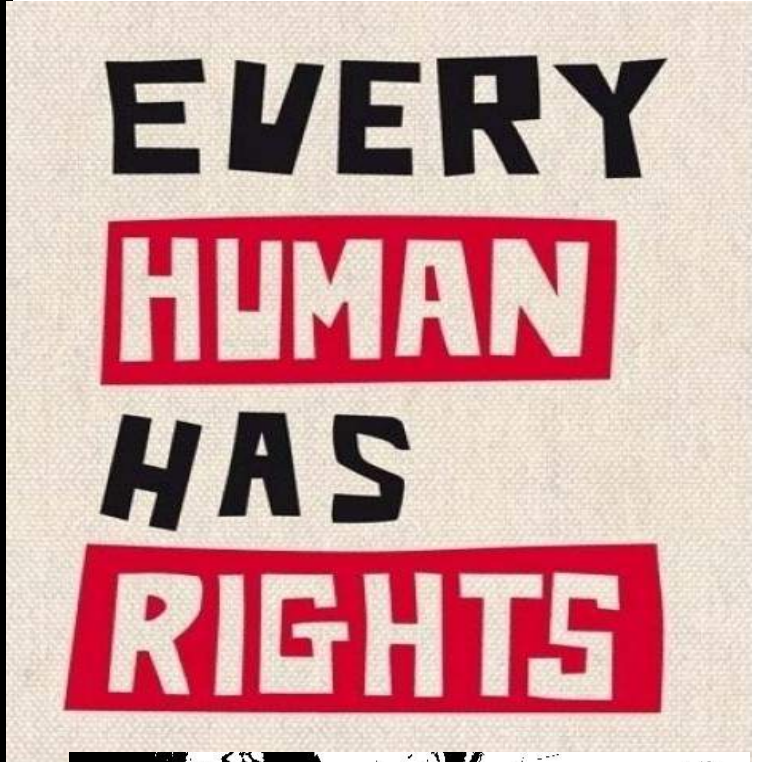




Image: Nadya Romanchuk, Russia

“I used to imagine a future in which an army of former patients marched on the hospital, emptied it of patients and staff, and then burned all the buildings to the ground. In my fantasy, we joined hands and danced around this bonfire of oppression. You see, in my heart I was already a very, very bad patient!” - Judi Chamberlin

Introducing ENUSP's new members

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever does.” Margaret Mead

These are exciting times for our European Network. Slowly but surely, ENUSP is building up ties with more and more users and survivors of psychiatry and their groups across Europe.

We are happy and honoured to welcome new members

Stichting Mind Rights -Netherlands,

Voice of Experience - Scotland and

Seinäjoen alueen mielenterveysyhdistys (SAMY) - Finland

We invited these user/survivor organisations to introduce themselves to the ENUSP community.

We also asked if they had any question they wanted to put to users and survivors in other countries.

We hope you enjoy reading their answers. We end with scenes from the work of another honoured new member **Il Cappellaio Matto** - Italy. Stay tuned for more news about their activities and the work of other user/survivor groups in ENUSP.

In Solidarity across Europe! For our human rights and our dignity!

With warmest wishes,

ENUSP Staff and Board

If your organisation is already an ENUSP member, and you'd like to introduce yourself or send a question to other user/survivor activists across Europe, please don't hesitate to get in touch at enusp.info@gmail.com

Please don't forget to send us your member renewal form as soon as you can.

If you have questions about ENUSP, or would like to apply for ENUSP membership, please contact us at the same address.

Introducing...

Actiegroep Tekeer tegen de isoleer! / Stichting Mind Rights Netherlands

Jolijn Santegoeds, founder of Stichting Mind Rights, leads a street protest



Infostand at Dutch Social Forum 2006. The sign reads " Make mental health care better: care, not cells!/
Mental health care is short on care:
isolation is no solution

Hi. I'm Jolijn Santegoeds from Actiegroep Tekeer tegen de isoleer! / Stichting Mind Rights, one of the fresh members of ENUSP in 2012. I'm very happy to be part of this inspiring European Network of (Ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.

Let me introduce myself. I'm a user/survivor, and 'experience expert' on forced treatments. At age 16 I became very suicidal and I got institutionalized in youth psychiatry against my will, and I went through a lot of horrible restraints. As an adolescent, I was kept about 2 years in an empty isolation cell (solitary confined), I was forcefully drugged, strapped on a bed, and even my intimate body parts were touched and searched by force, to prevent me from harming myself. Every day was a struggle, and I wanted to die. I felt worse and worse, and the struggle only increased. I was one of those "hopeless cases" who were likely to never come out again, I was just kept in restraints endlessly for being 'out of control'. I was given up, like so many of us who are in long term restraints.

But I did come out alive. And I even became strong. Strong enough to even continue the struggle that I started at age 16, when I didn't give in to forced treatments because it is so wrong. I just couldn't agree with force, and I still can't. And I know there are so many other people with mental health problems, who are just like me, abandoned and left without hope or love, chained and restrained, ...

I don't want to abandon my brothers and sisters who are in that same situation. When I was in the middle of the struggle, I didn't see a way out. But now I'm out, and fully recovered as far as possible, and I can talk to people about what happened. I will tell everyone what it means to be treated like that, and I will help changing these practices, by campaigning against forced treatments, and bringing about alternatives.

In 2002 I started Actiegroep Tekeer tegen de isoleer! as a protest group, which in 2006 formed the basis for registering our official organisation Stichting Mind Rights (www.mindrightrights.nl) based in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. I'm a full time volunteer, running the organisation, and I'm also active internationally, as a Board Member and Treasurer for the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (WNUSP, www.wnusp.net).

I write a lot of reflections on my Dutch blog: www.tekeertegendeisoleer.weblog.nl and I keep diaries when I travel for the cause at www.punkertje.waarbenjij.nu, which contains some English reports too, and some pictures of psychiatric institutions in East Africa (Uganda and Tanzania 2007).

I'm very dedicated to free the people from the burden of forced psychiatry. In my opinion, care should be something warm and wonderful, and forced treatments spoil that entire concept. Seclusion is punishment and rejection. Care is about wellbeing and attention, and new chances. Mental healthcare should build bridges instead of walls.

I hope to be able to contribute to ENUSP and to work together on improving the lives of users/survivors all over the globe. One day we will all be free.

With love, Jolijn Santegoeds,



Stichting Mind Rights, the Netherlands

Actiegroep Tekeer tegen de isoleer! /

My choice is my right

A happy and free life is a right for everyone. Every person can decide how he/she wants to live, within the limits of the general law. All people—including psychiatric patients—have the right on self determination, legal capacity, physical and mental integrity, and can define for themselves what they believe in, and what happens in and on their body.

Wellbeing is personal

Mental health care should focus on the wellbeing of the patient. Coercion is traumatizing, and therefore doesn't benefit mental health or wellbeing. Trust and contact are necessary for cooperation between the patient and other stakeholders on the search for solutions that help the patient as a person to improve his/her psychological and social conditions (wellbeing).

It is discrimination to make separate laws, norms and systems for psychiatric patients, and to use that to exclude patients of fundamental rights, such as self determination, integrity and right to choose.

The *Special Rapporteur on Torture* of the UN, Dhr. Manfred Nowak, says that coercive medication runs counter to the new UN Convention (CRPD) and that coercive medication in a lot of cases can be classified as torture. (see OHCHR)

Abolish coercive medication!

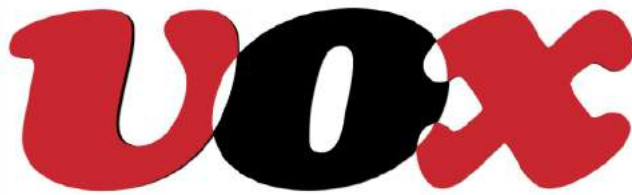
More information at www.mindrightrights.nl
Activist group against isolation cells and coercion
Stichting Mind Rights, Eindhoven, the Netherlands



English translation of Mind Rights leaflet against coercive medication. To be spread in Stockholm @ 6th European conference on Violence in Clinical Psychiatry.

Introducing...

Voices Of Experience - Scotland

The logo for VOX, with 'V' and 'X' in red and 'O' in black, all in a bold, rounded font.

Voices Of eXperience



let us share our
voices of experience
in mental health

Voices Of eXperience

“An organisation of, for and by
people who have or have had
mental health problems”



Voices Of eXperience (VOX)
is a new National
organisation that tackles
isolation and inequalities



John Steel (left), VOX Administrative officer and Mahmud Al-Gailani (right) Diversity Facilitator

VOX is the National Mental Health Service User Led organisation in Scotland. We work in partnership with mental health and related services to ensure that service users get every opportunity to contribute positively to changes in the services that serve them and wider society.

Making sure those with Mental Health Problems are Heard, VOX supports individuals and works with members to ensure that their views are listened to. Mental health service user led groups in Scotland are also able to become members of VOX, this ensures that we represent a range of views and work together with groups who have a great deal of local or specialist knowledge and information.

VOX produces a quarterly newsletter which is free and which allows individual members and group members to have their say, we also produce an electronic diversity network bulletin focusing on mental health issues from a wide range of diverse groups such as, faith, ethnicity, age, intersectional disability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

VOX also arranges consultation events and focus groups to make sure our member's views are heard.

The ownership of VOX belongs with its members and our members views help to shape how our work focus develops in the future in order to influence positive changes to Scottish services and society.

Our website is a good place to start exploring our activities and we provide a range of information and resources in our publications page which are available for all to utilise www.voxscotland.org.uk. We have also produced a social media policy which is available to download http://www.voxscotland.org.uk/webfm_send/88 if people wish to join us on our Facebook page.

Our question to other ENUSP members

What do you feel would be the vision for what we would want to achieve in society in relation to mental health, and what would you feel would have the biggest impact?



Photo from the last VOX winter members' meeting

Moving Minds event led by VOX as part of the annual Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in October



Introducing...

Seinäjoen alueen mielenterveysyhdistys (SAMY) - Finland

We all thank you very much for the honor to have a possibility to be a new Finnish member organization in ENUSP.

The Finnish name of our organization is *Seinäjoen alueen mielenterveysyhdistys (SAMY)* and we have the English translation *Mental Health Association in Seinäjoki Region*.

We are a regional organization with approximately 110 active members being mostly service users (approx. 80-90%). We are used to communicate with each other by telephone, website and email.

The structure of our organization

We are an independent user/survivor group which means that our association is 100% controlled by users. Our organization is also registered and it has a General Assembly every year. We also have elected a Board which makes decisions on a daily basis. The Mental Health Association in Seinäjoki Region has been founded in 1983.

Purpose and activities .

The main purpose of our organization is to promote the members' daily life and we are focusing on getting the members involved in various kinds of mental health issues. We do have as a goal to influence the nursing staff's attitudes towards service users, in general, and especially to support those service users who have undergone a special training for peer counselors and experts by experience. In our association there are some quite active peer support groups, and we do hope we also in the future will have opportunities to empower them. We have collaborated with the South Ostrobothnia Project which is a local development project within the mental health and substance abuse work here in Mid-Finland. The web page is found at www.pohjanmaahanke.fi.

General comments

We have no paid workers and approximately 10 volunteers. We get our funding from three sources: 1) membership fees, 2) a part of funding from the local hospital district and 3) the rest of funding from the Central Association for Mental Health in Finland. And it's noteworthy to mention that we have decided that our organization DOESN'T accept funding or other support from the pharmaceutical and medical industries.

Contact person

Name: Timo Kallioaho

Email address: timo.kallioaho(at)gmail.com

Our question: There are very strict rules in Finland which directly say how much users and survivors can earn, and that's not much! If you live on a disability pension, then the organization which pays your pension almost always says it's not legal to earn your own money by work. If you earn anything, you must live on that not your pension. Is this situation the same for users and survivors in your country?



And stay tuned for updates from Il Cappellaio Matto, Italy

...

Scenes from the work of new ENUSP member *Il Cappellaio Matto* (The Mad Hatter), Italy, which organised the first Italian Mad Pride in Milan last October!



Scenes from last year's Mad Pride.

The sign reads "Better to be mad than an asshole". For more information, please see the report in ENUSP's first Bulletin.

*ENUSP Bulletin February 2012, copyright ENUSP
Debra Shulkes - Editor
Nadia Mahjoub and Gabriela Tanasan - Design and formatting*

*This Special Supplement - New Faces of ENUSP is part of the Rebuilding EUSP project.
It is made possible by a grant from Open Society Foundations*



**ENUSP HAS MEMBERS IN 38 EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES - AND WE NEED MORE**

ENUSP – Registered Office

Vesterbrogade 103, 1.sal
1620 Copenhagen V, Denmark

ENUSP bank-connection for donations:

Danske Bank, Holmens Kanal 2-12, 1092 Copenhagen K, Denmark,

Account holder:

ENUSP - European Network of (Ex-) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry,

International Bank Account Number (IBAN Code): DK7630003719376320,

Bank Identifier Code (BIC / Swift Code): DABADKKK