



MENTAL
HEALTH
PERSPECTIVES

ANNUAL REPORT

2014

MENTAL HEALTH PERSPECTIVES

Mental Health Perspectives is a **non-governmental non-profit organization**, established in 2000 and working in the field of mental health. Organization is a member of Mental Health Europe and Human Rights in Mental Health – Global Initiative on Psychiatry.

TEAM

Director – Karilė Levickaitė

Programme director – Virginija Klimukienė

Project managers – Eglė Šumskienė, Justė Kelpšaitė and Ugnė Grigaitė

Chief accountant – Irena Kuldoš

Administrator – Tadas Žičkus



STRENGTHENING OF THE ORGANIZATION

In September 2014 Mental Health Perspectives, in cooperation with ISM Executive School's Young Managers Programme from De Baak's Institute in the Netherlands, held a four-days workshop during which 12 young managers proposed better project development and funding strategies for the organization.

In the months of October and December, inspired by the ideas put forward by the members of the Young Managers Programme, the staff of Mental Health Perspectives participated in strategic planning workshops during which the mission, vision and activities were reassessed and alternative sources of funding were considered.



RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

- ◇ **Study on access to justice for children with mental disabilities in administrative, civil and criminal domains in Lithuania.** Through analysis of legal acts and relevant documents, numerous discussion groups and meetings with experts as well as relatives of children with disabilities who have encountered the judicial system, the study aimed to assess whether the more vulnerable group is accurately represented and appropriately included in the judicial process. The study concluded that whilst justice is accessible in theory, on the practical level multiple obstacles and even obvious breaches of human rights exist. In order to improve the situation multiple changes, such as systemic reforms, capacity building of those working with the legal system and expansion of the inter-institutional dialogue, need to take place. [Summary in Lithuanian is available online.](#)

- ◇ **Study on training programs available for specialists encountering children with mental health issues or disabilities in Lithuanian legal system.** The analysis showed that specialists do not receive sufficient amount of information during the professional training. The study marks an important step towards preparation of digital information packages which could be available to specialists online.

- ◇ **Study on the changes in society's attitudes and causes of discrimination.** The study assessed changes in society's attitudes towards various vulnerable groups, analysed the underlying causes of discrimination and proposed tools to tackle discrimination and promote equal opportunities. [Report in Lithuanian is available online.](#)

- ◇ **Analysis of the human rights situation in Lithuania's social care system.** The analysis of the history of institutional social care monitoring revealed that only fragmentary and superficial changes took place during the period of Lithuania's independence. Numerous watchdogs directed their critique towards the content of activities in social care institutions, which are oriented at keeping the existing system rather than at the successful integration of children into the society. Evaluation of the internal rules of the social care institutions in Lithuania revealed that they embody the faultiest aspects of institutional care – alienation from society, inflexible and monotonous routine as well as impersonal structure. [Report in Lithuanian is available online.](#)

MONITORING

- ◇ **Independent monitoring of the deinstitutionalization processes.** In the period from October to December 2014 Mental Health Perspectives monitored the implementation of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Article No. 19 in Lithuanian social care system. Analysis based on the collected information about the preparations and the process of transition from institutional to community-based care will be made available to the wider population in 2015.
- ◇ **Monitoring of international organizations' activities.** Periodic monitoring is conducted through constant review of official positions, published studies and public documents of organizations operating in the field of mental health. The most important news and developments are shared on the Mental Health Perspectives website and Facebook.

Psichikos sveikatos perspektyvos
8 May 2014 · 🌐

Europos Tarybos generalinis sekretorius Thorbjørnas Jaglandas užsienio reikalų ministrų suvažiavime kalbėjo apie žmonių su negalia teisių užtikrinimą.

Psichikos sv
3 December 20

Kodėl žmonės kartais būna tarsi praradę sąsają su realybe? Tarptautinės negaliai schizofreniją pažvelgi #psichikosveikata #

Understanding Schizophrenia
Why people sometimes seem strange, or appear out of touch with reality?

Are disability rights on the agenda of Europe's governments? | MDAC
Citing corruption, immunity from prosecution, impunity, human trafficking, hate speech and discrimination ?

Health-Global Initiative on Psychiatry" esame jau 13 metų, tarybai pradėjo pirmininkauti (socialinės psichiatrijos korifėjų prof. Grahama analystė). Naujasis pirmininkas žada, kad projektus, skirtus pagerinti psichikos sveikatos žmogaus teises įvairiose pasaulio šalyse. global.org/publicati.../change-of-chairmanship/

TRAININGS AND SEMINARS

- ◇ Mental Health Perspectives held 3 days-long seminar “For deinstitutionalization and mental health reform”, which was attended by 23 participants, representing a total number of 11 NGOs working in the fields of mental health and human rights.



- ◇ 2 days-long training on legal advocacy and strategic litigation was carried out by experts from the Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (MDAC) – Oliver Lewis and Ann Campbell. The training focused on how to use strategic litigation in order to effectively protect the rights of people with mental health disorders. Representatives from NGOs working in the fields of mental health and human rights, lawyers, users of mental health services and representatives of patient organizations, a total of 19 participants, attended the training.
- ◇ Training for public health professionals working in schools on methodological tool “Comfort box” (lith. “Paguodos skrynelė”) was carried out in cooperation with Vilnius City Public Health Bureau. “Comfort box” is a tool designed to help final and penultimate year primary school students to develop emotional self-help skills. Students decorate and fill in the boxes with thoughts, objects and activities associated with their emotional wellbeing.
- ◇ Mental Health Perspectives in cooperation with partners Center for Equality Advancement and Lithuanian Center for Human Rights organized a series of events on the topic of discrimination prevention for NGOs (3 seminars), trade unions (5 seminars), employers’ associations (6 seminars), community organizations (3 events) as well as school children (4 events).

COALITIONS

Informal NGO Coalition for Child's Rights

In November 2013 a memorandum of an Informal NGO Coalition for Child's Rights with the mission to promote implementation and protection of children's rights in Lithuania was signed. Coalition's key areas of focus are: deinstitutionalization of the care system for children with disabilities and foster children; improvement of families' social support system; prevention of the breach of children's rights within all social groups; protection of children from all forms of violence; expansion and strengthening of cooperation between governmental institutions and NGOs.

Mental Health Perspectives was elected as the chairing organization of the Coalition, which by the year 2014 had a total of **13 member organizations**. In 2014 a total of **6 meetings** took place, **8 advocacy documents** were prepared, members of the Coalition met with representatives from the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas). The Coalition also held **125 virtual discussions** and organised several meetings with the members of the Coalition Mental Health 2030. Two strategic advocacy implementation plans have been prepared and are currently being implemented as well as constantly updated.

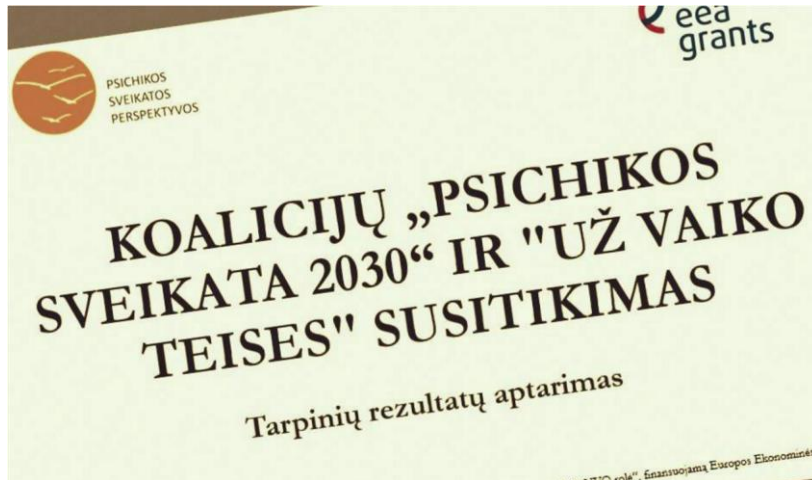
In 2014 the Coalition also became a member of Eurochild and began cooperation with Child Rights International Network.



Coalition Mental Health 2030

In 2014 a new Coalition Mental Health 2030 was formed with the mission to promote openness, transparency and consolidation of human rights in Lithuania's mental health system. Coalition's key areas of focus are: expansion of the range of services giving priority to community-based psychosocial services; rapid elimination of historically developed disparities in the mental health services, which resulted in the dominance of institutional care; expansion of effective community-based services for vulnerable families and children; implementation of empirically tested procedures to lower the incidence of suicide, violence and addiction; and strengthening of an independent monitoring mechanisms planning, providing and assessing mental health services in social care system and other relevant sectors.

Mental Health Perspectives was elected as the chairing organization of the Coalition, which now unites **19 organizations and experts**. Members of the Coalition were active in 2014: a total of **4 meetings** took place, **7 advocacy documents** have been prepared, members of the Coalition met up with representatives from the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, and Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas). The Coalition also held **62 virtual discussions** to resolve important issues. Members of the Coalition are presently working on an action plan on Mental Health Strategy, which will be presented to decision-makers and the wider population in 2015.



In 2014 Mental Health Perspectives also actively participated in the activities of the [Coalition of Human Rights Organizations](#) and [NGO's Coalition I Can Live](#).

CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE



In 2014 Mental Health Perspectives organized and managed the activities of [Crisis Intervention Centre](#) whose mission is to provide easily accessible psychological support for people going through a crisis. In 2014 [24 specialists](#) provided a total number of [194 free of charge first-time consultations](#). 60 of those patients decided to continue consultations with the specialists from the Crisis Intervention Centre.

[Crisis Intervention Centre](#) carried out 2 debriefings at institutions, which experienced a sudden loss of a staff member, held a training on psychological violence and suicide prevention for those working with people with mental health problems, and carried out 2 informative seminars on the topic of prevention of suicide.

On [2nd of December 2014](#) following a rapid year of growth, Crisis Intervention Centre became [a separate public institution](#).

INITIATION OF CHANGE THROUGH INVOLVEMENT IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PROCESSES

In 2014 Mental Health Perspectives held 9 meetings with decision-makers and policy shapers in the field of mental health. During the meetings Mental Health Perspectives presented its official position on the importance of deinstitutionalization, presented numerous suggestions for healthcare reforms, and put forward official UN recommendations. A total of 19 advocacy papers were prepared in cooperation with the Informal Coalition for Child's Rights and Coalition Mental Health 2030.

Reports to the United Nations:

- ◇ An alternative report highlighting the weaknesses of Lithuanian social care and mental health systems was presented together with the Lithuanian Disability Forum, in light of Lithuania's consideration in the UN Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee.
- ◇ Remarks to the report on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with the Disabilities Implementation in the European Union, prepared by the European Disability Forum, were submitted.
- ◇ Recommendations for the Evaluation of UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review submitted together with a Coalition of Human Rights Organizations.



INVOLVEMENT IN THE JUDICIAL PROCESSES

In 2014 Mental Health Perspectives lodged a law suit to the Vilnius Regional Administrative Court for non-pecuniary damages due to the unlawful actions of state institutions resulting in violation of new-born's and his parents' rights.

Mental Health Perspectives presented an expert opinion to the Supreme Court of the Republic of Lithuania which resulted in the court ruling in favour of the person with mental health problems.

MENTAL HEALTH PERSPECTIVES AND THE MEDIA

A total of 11 press releases were distributed to over 100 representatives of the press in 2014. Mental Health Perspectives participated in or initiated at least 33 articles, a TV show and 4 radio broadcasts.

Cooperation with the media was not only of the informative nature – Mental Health Perspectives also monitored whether media accurately depicted persons with mental health problems or members of other vulnerable groups of the society.

OTHER FORMS OF INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

In total 9 “Wings of Change” newsletters were distributed to experts working in the fields of mental health and human rights, governmental institutions responsible for mental health, journalists and other subscribers – a total of 240 recipients every month. 25 news stories were published on Mental Health Perspectives’ website and another 151 posts on organization’s Facebook page.



NGO Mental Health Perspectives

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Annual report summary in English prepared by Mental Health Perspectives volunteer Barbora Kudzmanaite