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## Conference Report Year 1 D5.2

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## 1. Executive Summary

The ProMenPol project completed its first annual conference in Berlin on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. There were 56 participants, from a number of countries who came from a variety of professional backgrounds.

The aims of the conference were to:

- Introduce participants to the project and its aims;
- Provide an overview of developments in mental health policy in recent years;
- Outline the situation of mental health promotion in the three settings of interest;
- Obtain feedback from participants on the ProMenPol framework, the proposed field trials and the database that are being developed as part of the project; and
- To encourage the participation and support of participants for future project activities

31 participants returned the conference evaluation sheets. An extremely high satisfaction rate of 80% (average) with the proceedings was indicated by participants. The project Advisory Committee also provided very positive and informative feedback.

Conclusions and recommendations included:

1. More information to be sent out in advance of the conference, particularly in regard to workshop questions;
2. Shorter first day;
3. More time for workshops;
4. Ensure difficult issues are given more preparation time to limit confusion e.g. pilot testing;
5. Materials for policy workshop to be sent to policy makers in advance; and
6. Explore avenues for funding for translation of tools/listing of non English tools in additional languages.

## 2. Introduction

The ProMenPol project has just completed its first annual conference in Berlin at the offices of the BAUA in Berlin, on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. This report contains an evaluation of those proceedings.

There were 56 participants, from a number of countries including: Ireland, U.K, Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Slovenia, Estonia, Poland, Austria, Switzerland, and Finland. Participants came from diverse backgrounds such as, teaching, mental health promotion, civil service, policy consultancy, psychology, workplace health promotion, healthy ageing, research, sociology, MH voluntary organisations, professors, social psychiatry and programme coordinators,

The aims of the conference were to:

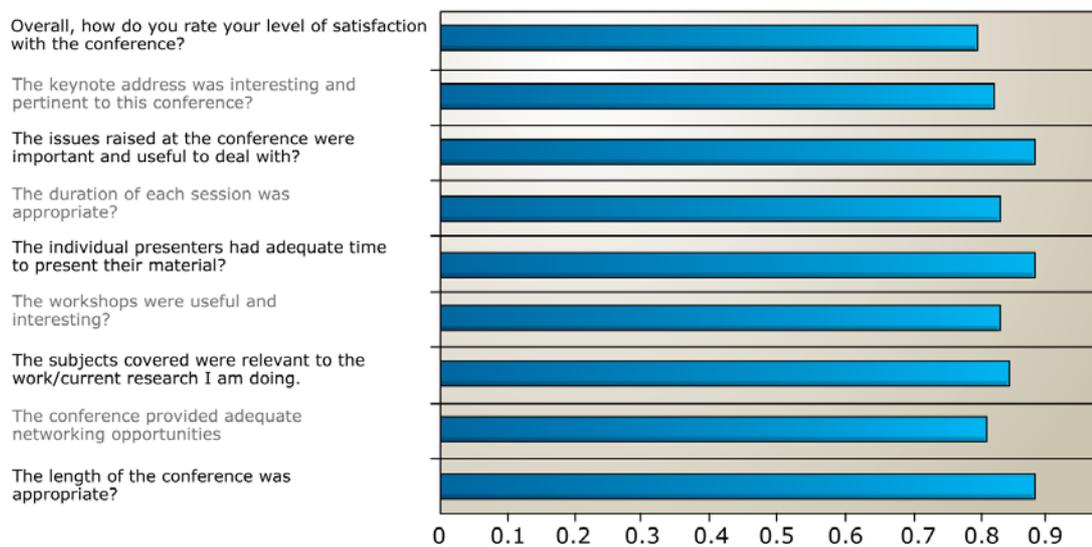
- Introduce participants to the project and its aims;
- Provide an overview of developments in mental health policy in recent years;
- Outline the situation of mental health promotion in the three settings of interest;
- Obtain feedback from participants on the ProMenPol framework, the proposed field trials and the database that are being developed as part of the project; and
- To encourage the participation and support of participants for future project activities

### 3. Conference Participant Evaluation Results

31 participants returned the conference evaluation sheets. The feedback was then analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The respondents gave every question at least an 80% score indicating an extremely high satisfaction rate with the proceedings.

The average results for each question are reflected in the following graph:

ProMenPol Participants Evaluation of the Year 1 Conference



The top six strongest points of the conference were listed as follows:

1. The database/ framework is needed/excellent;
2. Conference was well organised/ well structured;
3. Workshops were useful/interesting/chance to provide input;
4. Wide range of participants;
5. Excellent networking opportunities; and
6. The conference had a clear aim/was focused.

Other strong points mentioned were: good explanation of technical issues, new ideas, international mutual learning, interesting and important themes, good facilities, relevant to my work, experienced speakers, outreach to policy makers which may lead to change.

(27 respondents)

The top three weakest points of the conference were as follows:

1. Pilot test issue was confusing;
2. First day was too long; and
3. Conference aim was not obvious.

Other weak points mentioned were: linguistic difficulties, lack of print outs, too many researchers/scientists, lack of time for workshops, repetitive- not strategic enough, lack of information before conference.

(15 respondents)

All 31 participants agreed that the conference had contributed to moving the Mental Health Promotion and Protection agenda forward. The top reasons given for this included:

- The usefulness of the toolkit database;
- The framework;
- Collecting ideas and thoughts/ inspiring;
- Raising awareness of Mental Health issues; and
- The link to policy makers.

Overall comments included:

- Very enjoyable;
- Everyone got an opportunity to make a worthwhile contribution;
- Funding for translations needed/need non-English MH tools to be listed; and
- More time for workshops/ brain storming in small groups

## 4. Project Advisory Committee Feedback

Feedback from the Project Advisory Committee was that the conference was very well organized and the venue was suitable. It was suggested that additional project information could have been received before the conference.

It was felt that during the conference, the project was well presented and explained, that the three different settings which are the focus of the project were introduced effectively and the need for a toolkit was supported by sufficient arguments.

It was suggested that the time for the workshops was not sufficient, especially the one concerning the conceptual framework and classifications as these were very broad. A recommendation for the future was to ensure that questions like this are addressed well in advance, the material sent in time to participants who could then think over and prepare the questions/answers/thoughts for the workshops. The same suggestion was made in relation to the preparation of the workshop with politicians in Brussels.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The 2007 ProMenPol Conference was well received overall, people felt that it was well organised, they enjoyed it and felt that it was worthwhile. It is clear that participants saw the value of the aims of the project and particularly saw the need for and the usefulness of the framework and toolkit database. Participants saw the workshops as useful and interesting and felt that they could make contributions. They also enjoyed the networking opportunities amongst the wide range of participants and saw the link to policy makers within the project as a real chance to make change.

Taking on board some criticisms, recommendations for the future are:

1. More information to be sent out in advance of the conference, particularly in regard to workshop questions;
2. Shorter first day;
3. More time for workshops;
4. Ensure difficult issues are given more preparation time to limit confusion e.g. pilot testing;
5. Materials for policy workshop to be sent to policy makers in advance; and
6. Explore avenues for funding for translation of tools/listing of non English tools in additional languages.