

2011 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES CILAP EAPN ITALIA

The following report is a synthesis of the activities of the Italian Network for the year 2011.

The activities have been divided in short chapters:

1. National preparation of the European Meeting of People experiencing poverty
2. Enlargement of the network and creation of new alliances
3. Activities of CILAP EAPN Basilicata, Southern branch of CILAP EAPN ITALIA
4. Visibility
5. Evaluation

1. National preparation of the European Meeting of People experiencing poverty

Because of the lack of funding, all the initiatives were held at regional/local level through regional seminars and focus groups.

The aim of these meetings was to prepare the national delegation and to prepare a document that the delegation could use as a basis for their presentations in Brussels, that could be shared by as vast a floor of people as possible and be transmitted to main actors and institutions.

1. **Florence, February 25th, 2011.** Open seminar “Quando basta la salute”(trans., *When all we need is health*). Organized by CILAP EAPN Italia in cooperation with: Municipality of Florence, Regional Council for Voluntary Service – CESVOT, Caritas Florence, Solidarietà Caritas onlus, social cooperative San Pietro¹ a Solliciano, Associazione Nicolò Stenone²). The conference was organized at regional level. The results of this conference are part of the final document presented by the Italian delegation during the European meeting.
2. **Avellino, March 5th, 2011.** Participation of Letizia Cesarini Sforza to the regional conference organized by the Osservatorio del Rischio Sociale (trans., *Observatory on Social Risks*) on “Poverty in the time of crisis – the responsibility of the voluntary sector and those of the Institution”. Intervention of Cesarini Sforza on the European meetings of people experiencing poverty and the new European Flagship Initiative “Platform against Poverty”. The people engaged in CILAP’s working group “participation and people in poverty” and living in the South of Italy participated to the meeting. The part of the document dealing with the economic and financial crisis included some of the discussions held during this conference.
3. **Rome, March 14th, 2011.** Focus Group on “poverty and gender discrimination” with Associazione Libellula³, a self-help association of transexual persons dealing with prostitution, poverty and social exclusion of this particular group. As a result of this meeting, a person from the association was elected by the working group as delegate to the European meeting and the final document presented by the Italian delegation had a chapter on the issue.
4. **Rome, March 18th, 2011.** Focus group on “poverty and young people”. Meeting with a group of Roma and non Roma young people on their inclusion in society, with a particular focus on work inclusion. As a result of this meeting a young Roma woman was elected as

¹ Social and Health services to the disadvantaged

² Health services for migrants and disadvantaged

³ LGTB organization

member of the Italian delegation to the European meeting and the final document presented by the Italian delegation had a chapter on the issue.

5. **Rome, April 16th, 2011.** Meeting of the CILAP's working group on "participation and people in poverty" to: 1) final discussion and approval of document to be presented to the European meeting and to national stakeholders, institutions included; 2) discuss on best ways to present the document in Italy and during the European meeting; 3) final decision on the members of the Italia delegation to Brussels.
6. **Florence, June 14th, 2011.** Seminar "La persona al centro...nella rete dei servizi socio-sanitari della Provincia di Firenze" (trans. *People first ... in the social and health integrated services of the Province of Florence*). This meeting was organized in collaboration with many regional and provincial actors. CILAP facilitated the working groups, namely the one on the need of participation of beneficiaries.
7. After the European meeting some delegates wrote down their own impressions. These, together with all the relevant information on PIP – Italy and PIP – Europe can be found at: www.cilap.eu.
8. **Bologna, December 6th, 2011.** The yearly activities were closed by a meeting of the working group "participation and people in poverty", to which the past and present Italian delegates to PIP-Europe participate, with the association Amici di Piazza Grande of Bologna, one of the main self-organized organizations of homeless people in Italy. The meeting, called "I bisogni emergenti: le riflessioni e le proposte dei cittadini in povertà" (trans. *Emerging needs: reflections and proposals of people in poverty*) was organized for: 1. draw the conclusions of the 2011 experience; 2. start the preliminary work for 2012; 3. reflect on the impact of the financial crisis on people experiencing poverty.

2. Enlargement of the network and creation of new alliances

The two initiatives in Florence (people in poverty) consolidated the already open cooperation with the local/regional authorities in Tuscany, and with a number of local associations working with people in poverty (Cooperativa CAT⁴, Associazione Starnone, Associazione Solidarietà CARITAS, Regional Council for Voluntary Services, Associazione Arcobaleno⁵. The participation to the **initiative in Avellino** opened the collaboration with Associazione Don Tonino Bello⁶ and consolidated the one with Caritas Avellino and Associazione Aprea⁷). The activities in Rome opened the collaboration with Associazione Libellula and consolidated the one with Cooperativa Hermes⁸).

The work related to Europe 2020 and the Flagship initiative took the form of an open discussion among national main actors (main social networks, trade unions, universities) who decided to meet and, using Europe 2020 and the Flagship Initiative as cornerstones of their work. The result of this work was a national convention called "Cresce l'Italia Cresce il Welfare" (trad: "*Italy grows, our welfare grows*") which will be held in Rome on March 1- 2, 2012. The President of EAPN ITALIA is going to give the opening speech on behalf of the coalition.

CILAP EAPN ITALIA worked in coalition with **Movimento Federalista Europeo (European federalist movement)** and other associations for the preparation of a conference called "Federazione europea subito!" (*European federation now!*) which will take place in Rome, on January 14, 2012. Nicoletta Teodosi will be one of the main speakers.

⁴ Working with young disadvantaged people and Roma

⁵ Working with ex prisoners, managing a night shelter

⁶ Working with disadvantaged people and children

⁷ Working with disabled people, mostly young

⁸ Social cooperative (wise), working with Roma

In alliance with other associations and networks (BIN, European Alternative, etc.), CILAP EAPN ITALIA worked for the organization of a seminar on “Income, Common goods and Democracy” to be held on February 11 and 12, 2012. Nicoletta Teodosi will be one of the main speakers.

CILAP EAPN ITALIA is part of the coalition started by the **Università del bene comune**⁹ (Sezano – Verona) for the launching of a Campaign in 2012 called “Dichiariamo illegale la povertà” (*Let's Declare Poverty Illegal*). The Campaign, which will last up to 2018, aims at lobbying the U.N. to declare poverty illegal by 2018, anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

CILAP EAPN ITALIA actively participates to the works of **Osservatorio Europa**, an association engaged with constitutional rights, common goods, European democracy, Eurozone. The association offers the opportunity for an exchange of opinions on European issues mainly linked to the issue of democracy, European treaties and economic governance.

CILAP EAPN ITALIA became an active member of the informal group **For another Europe**. This group, initially started by militants (CILAP included) who participated in the Forum “Genoa 2011” in the seminars on Minimum Income, European Citizenship, and Water as an European Common Good has now become a google group called PERUNALTRAEUROPA.

CILAP EAPN ITALIA has been a partner (stakeholder) of the project “LOCALISE” (Local Worlds of Social Cohesion Policies) promoted by a network of European Networks, among which the Bocconi University of Milan and 1 Napier of Edinburgh. The project is part of the VII Framework Research Programme. CILAP is giving its contribution to the validation of the questionnaire on the “local dimension of integrated policies” to be submitted to the policy makers and other stakeholders in 6 Italian cities.

3. Activities of CILAP EAPN Basilicata, Southern branch of CILAP EAPN ITALIA

The Provincial Observatory on social inclusion, of which CILAP is an active member, continued its activities in partnership with the local trade unions, the Regional Council for Voluntary Service and the local administrations.

Publication of **the Second Report on Poverty** in the Basilicata Region. The Report included interviews to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and of young people forced to emigrate in order to lead a decent life. The report was published with the support of the Province of Potenza and was launched with a conference (June 2011) together with the Report of the Provincial Observatory and the campaign for adequate minimum income.

Elaboration of the data gathered in 2010 – 2011 through a **National questionnaire** for the creation of a National network of the local social Observatories (project managed by CILAP EAPN ITALIA and financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs). The results of this survey will be ready by the beginning of 2012.

Elaboration of a collective complaint against Italy for the non respect of some articles of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. The draft is waiting for an evaluation by CILAP executive committee.

Initiatives to promote young people autonomy, especially in relation to art and social commitment. These initiatives were carried out in the Centro sociale di Malvaccaro in the city of Potenza, with the support of the Municipality.

CILAP EAPN Basilicata is part of the working group promoted by the President of the Regional government aimed at activating initiatives and policies against poverty and social exclusion. The group decided to create a regional Platform against Poverty and CILAP EAPN Basilicata has been appointed to prepare, together with the regional offices, the first document to be utilized during the conference that will launch the Platform.

CILAP EAPN Basilicata is part of the social partnership appointed by the Region as a consultancy body for the use of the Regional Structural Funds.

⁹ University of Common Goods

4. Visibility

CILAP EAPN TALIA actively participated in many conferences, seminars and public debates organized by other associations, public authorities, and other important stakeholders. This engagement produced a significant increase in our visibility.

Great importance has been given to our web-site which was re-designed and made more user-friendly. The central office and our members wrote many articles and analysis which were published regularly.

Articles on our activities were published in the social press, the most important of which is the center-fold of "Confronti", the monthly magazine of the Evangelical Churches in Italy (March 2012).

5. Evaluation

a. Strong points

CILAP EAPN ITALIA has grown significantly in the course of 2011 and is bringing home quite a few results in terms of enlargement of the network, better and more stable alliances, visibility within the main stakeholders.

The web-site is becoming more and more important and is becoming an important tool of information.

The national preparation of the European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty continues to be a powerful tool for enlargement and awareness raising. Two people from the delegation and at least two more from the working group "poverty and participation" are ready to work autonomously and, with next year (2012) we plan to shift the coordination of the Italian delegation to them.

The collaboration with many local/regional authorities continues and we can count on a few local/regional administrations interested to cooperate with us.

The central office in Rome acquired more volunteers and is now easier to carry on the daily work. Some of these new volunteers are highly qualified and will be a major asset in the future work EAPN Europe (task forces).

b. Weaknesses

Although the overall evaluation of this year of work is highly positive, some weaknesses continue to hinder our work.

1. Contacts with the national authorities have been very scant and continue to be so. We may ascribe this weakness to the difficult relationship that the third sector as a whole had with the past government. The situation does not seem to be improving now, with the new "technocratic" government, mostly interested in balancing the accounts, at all costs. The convention "Cresce l'Italia Cresce il Welfare" aimed also at putting back in the political agenda the issue of the social services, that the crisis and the cuts are rapidly destroying. It seems that the space for an open dialogue with the national institutions is very little or non-existent as of now.

2. Never as today the lack of financial resources seriously hinders our work which, by now, is all carried out on voluntary basis. The drying up of European national projects we could apply for and that gave us enough resources to continue our work on a regular basis is by now a very harsh reality, although we are confident that we will continue to grow and perform at our best. Many community workers and operators have been fired, cooperatives are closing and the whole sector is leaving very hard times. People we always count on as volunteers are by now out of work and, of course, it's difficult for them to offer their free time as volunteers.