



# *Evaluation of EAPN*

## Final Report



European Anti Poverty Network - Réseau européen des associations de lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale  
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# Report Structure

- **Section A:** Introduction:..... page 3
- **Section B:** National Networks..... page 4
- **Section C:** European Organisations.....page 18
- **Section D:** External stakeholders..... page 20
- **Section E:** Conclusions and Recommendations.....page 33

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## Note:

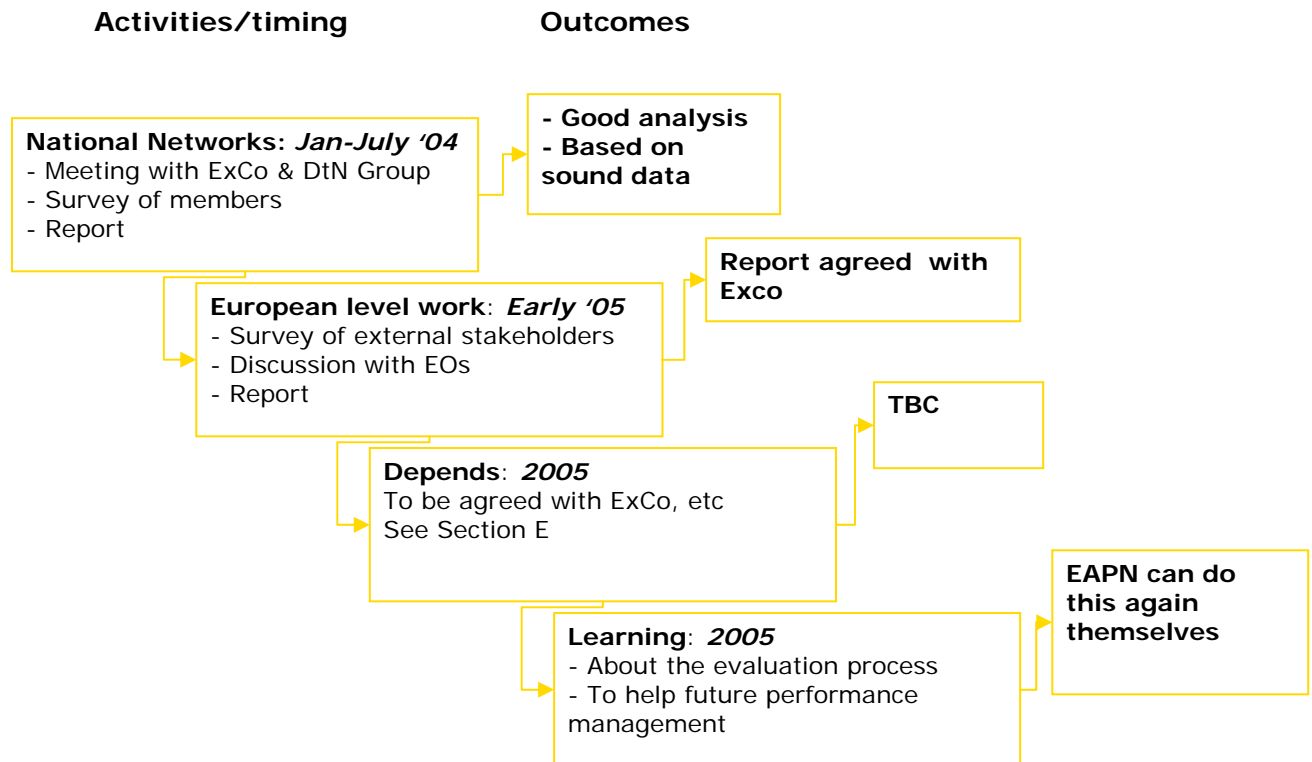
This evaluation was carried out during 2004 and 2005. This report was originally prepared in a power point format to facilitate discussion of the findings of the evaluation within the membership of EAPN. This present version has been developed in order to make the report publicly available in a format that reduces the size of the document for printing.

## Section A: Introduction

The overall aim of the consultancy is...

- "...An assessment of the extent to which EAPN is a strong and growing network equipped to deliver its mission and work towards its vision."
- Consultancy proposal (October 2003)

Method & timing



# Section B: National Networks

## Contents

- Survey process
- Survey findings:
  - National Networks
  - National members
- Consultant's conclusions

## 1. Survey process

Two Surveys

Agreed process:

- Written questionnaires for National Networks and their Members?:
  - Emailed out in May 2004
  - Each Network to manage survey process with its members
  - Several reminders sent
- Analysis and presentation of draft report to ExCo & staff
- Two sections:
  - National Networks
  - National members

Survey Returns – very good

Country	NNs	Members	TOTAL
Austria	1	1	2
Belgium	1	1	2
Denmark	1	3	4
Finland	1	2	3
France	1	0	1
Germany	1	3	4
Greece	1	1	2
Ro Ireland	1	0	1
Hungary	1	0	1
Italy	1	3	4
Luxembourg	0	1	1
Netherlands	1	1	2
Portugal	1	7	8
Spain	2	13	15
Sweden	1	0	1
UK	1	3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>55</b>

## 2. Survey findings: National network

Findings of National Network survey

- A You & Your National Network
- B Your National Network and EAPN (Europe)
- C Enlargement of EAPN

### 2. Survey findings A: you & your National Network

Your role in relation to your organisation?  
The process to complete this questionnaire?

- Most respondents were members of their national executive committees
- In terms of the process:
  - 8 used meetings or group discussions
  - 2 replied as individuals
  - 4 replied as individuals but consulted
  - 2 gave no response

Main purpose & functions

Main purpose

- Raising public attention to poverty and social exclusion
- Exchanging views
- Liaising with govt
- Fostering other regional networks
- Creating a grassroots – national link
- About causes as well as effects of poverty

Functions

- Coordinate the joint fight against poverty
- Work with NAPs
- Develop a national inclusion plan
- Each member has specific sectoral targets
- Observe, collate data, comment and represent
- Implement social rights

Some are formally constituted bodies; some are looser networks

Developing your network

Our National Network:	Completed	Agreed & planned to be completed	Not done & not planned
A) Has carried out a survey of members....that includes questions to understand:	2		6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how representative our Network is of the anti-poverty organisations in our country</li> </ul>	2		7

• the level at which member organisations work	2		7
• the type of activities member organisations undertake	2		7
• their own membership	1		8
B) Has a board and clear operational structures	9		
C) Employs its own staff members	5	2	2
D) Has a strategic or work plan in line with the EAPN (Europe) strategic plan.	4	3	2

NNs are in the early stage of organisational development: while most have a board & several employ staff, few are planning to survey members

NN meetings

	None	Less than 5 meetings	5-10 meetings	More than 10 meetings
Less than 10 people present	3	2	2	2
10 to 30 people present	2	4	3	2
30 to 70 people present	6	2	2	0
More than 70 people present	4	5	0	0

NNs tend to have frequent small meetings; few have many large meetings

Media Coverage

Never	Less than 5 times	5-20 times	More than 20 times
2	5	2	4

Few NNs have frequent mentions in the media

## 2. Survey findings B: your network & EAPN

Frequency of your Network's contact with EAPN Brussels?

What benefits does membership of EAPN (Europe) bring to your Network?

Weekly	11
Monthly	4
Quarterly	0
Less than quarterly	0

Most NNs have very frequent contact with EAPN

What benefits does membership of EAPN (Europe)

Being part of EAPN gives us:

- Access to EC information from an NGO perspective
- Information in advance of new EU initiatives, enabling us to influence our governments in a timely manner...(\*)
- ...who then realise we are well informed & treat us more seriously (\*)
- Clarity on the important themes/issues
- An exchange of ideas, methods, good practice, between NGOs in the same field
- Solidarity – feeling part of a European movement that can campaign jointly
- Inspiration to do better by broadening our perspective

(\*) most mentioned

How well do you feel EAPN (Europe) benefits from your Network being one of its members?

Very well	3
Quite well	10
Not so well	3
Badly	0
Don't know	0

We've still to get properly involved at the Euro level

Reasons:

- We bring a grass-roots dimension
- We are able to support the office
- Work on NAPs/structural funds
- We stay close to the principles of EAPN
- We offer the perspectives of our region's approach to welfare
- We contribute to specific issues as they come up

How representative is your National Network & EAPN (Europe) of the range of NGOs working in the field of anti-poverty?

At National level

Very representative	3
Quite representative	10
Not very representative	3
Not at all representative	0
Don't know	0

At EU level

Very representative	6
Quite representative	9
Not very representative	0
Not at all representative	0

Don't know	1
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Suggestions for improvement:

- Stronger at EU level than at national – strengthen national
- Voice of those experiencing poverty needs to be stronger
- It's open to all, but not all can participate – financial issues
- Deepen representation through greater inclusion, participation, integration
- Stay activist; don't become too academic
- Different NNs are in different places – enjoy difference and support their development
- Big challenge is the new countries

How well does EAPN (Europe) reflect the needs and interests of the current membership in its work priorities?

Very well	3
Quite well	10
Not so well	1
Badly	0
Don't know	1

Improvements

- Improved in recent years
- Understand each of the national issues more deeply
- Not more information, but information that is more focussed/digested
- Need to understand the needs and the offer of each NN better
- NN capacity building:
  - Support national campaigns more
  - Help NNs get funding
  - Extend good practice
  - Training
- Encourage EC to support national governments to work more with NGOs
- Don't bureaucratise things – stay close to grass roots

How well does EAPN (Secretariat) communicate with your Network & the other member organisations from your country?

Very well	7
Quite well	7
Not so well	1
Badly	0
Don't know	0

Improvements?

- It's improved in recent times
- NNs need to respond better
- Communications are good; need to understand each NN better
- More face to face contact
- Understand who does what in the office better



- Monitor decisions made & communicate results better

How well do the governing statutes & structures of EAPN (Europe) work (General Assembly, ExCo, Bureau, Working Groups etc)?

Very well	4
Quite well	11
Not so well	1
Badly	0
Don't know	0

EXCO needs:

- More exchange between other groups
- To be more animated/better facilitated
- Papers to arrive earlier
- Members to be better prepared
- Training for all new members

Improvements?

- Review the size of groups after enlargement
- Need to improve effectiveness while keeping it close (& accountable) to members
- GA needs to have clearer procedures; it could be less frequent & be used less for 'business' & more for seminars
- Bureau elections should be more transparent
- Expert Groups should be chosen more for skill and less on the basis of quotas
- Task forces have improved, but need to strengthen their links with other parts of EAPN

Do you have any suggestions for the development of the ethos or way of working of EAPN (Europe) over the next three years?

- Develop Charter of Principles for working against poverty in EU of 25
- Embrace the challenge of enlargement
- Get closer to national issues
- Promote greater exchange between NNs
- Higher levels of participation in meetings
- Work more on the challenges of multi-lingualism
- More progressive & creative in style
- Work more with other EU institutions
- Communicate history of EAPN

How useful for your work were the documents on NAPS Inclusion supplied by EAPN (Europe)?

Very well	10
Quite well	6
Not so well	0
Badly	0
Don't know	0

#### Comments?

- Congratulations – great work and a good background on what’s happening in other countries
- The documentation/model letters supplied really helped our lobbying process – and it was timely
- Very important milestone for EAPN
- The absence of a translation restricted our use of the material

From what you have seen of the work of EAPN (Secretariat), how would you assess the general quality of its publications, policy documents, etc?

Excellent	4
Good	11
Not so good	0
Poor	0
Don't know	0

#### Content Examples

- Better recently:
  - A Social Europe for all
  - NAP reports & model letters; Network News & Flash
- Weaknesses:
  - Seminar papers
  - Translations
  - Use of other research

Excellent	3
Good	6
Not so good	1
Poor	0
Don't know	0

#### Design & Layout

- Network News, NAPs, E-Flash, Cohesion Fund Evaluation
- Weaknesses:
  - Network News & Flash are difficult to read

From your perspective, what impact has EAPN (Europe) had on policy development at the European or national level?

Significant impact	5
Some impact	8
Not much impact	1
No impact	0
Don't know	0

#### Comments

- Without EAPN there would be no EU-wide strategy on inclusion...
- ...which has been made real by the NAPs in each member state
- Recognition by governments as official voice of NGOs
- EU embracing social inclusion agenda
- Mentions in official EU papers
- Keep the Lisbon strategy alive
- Keep work up – there are stronger actors with different agendas

In your view, what are the three highest priority policy issues that should drive EAPN (Europe)'s work planning over the next three years?

#### External Policies

- Lisbon agenda & Agenda 2007
- Europe-wide social standards
- Promoting equality in economic, social and budgetary policies
- NAPs on Social Inclusion & employment
- Globalisation

#### Internal issues

- Strengthening the Network after enlargement – new NNs, etc
- Intra-Network networking
- Higher levels of participation
- Internal communications

In summary, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of EAPN (Europe) and its usefulness to its members?

Very effective & useful to members	9
Quite effective & quite useful to members	7
Not very effective & not very useful to members	0

“Need to help ordinary person in the street access the issues”

“Must help break down Euro-jargon”

“Need to communicate a positive impression of the EU”

## 2. Survey findings C: enlargement of EAPN

In the opinion of your Network, in what way will enlargement impact on the work of EAPN (Europe)?

- Very positive about enlargement of the Network – gives a new flow of ideas and energy – but it is a fundamental change and means we have to change & it's more work for the Secretariat
- It will challenge our policy themes & work priorities. We will have to think deeper & differently about:
  - Nature of poverty in each new country
  - Political processes and NGO issues
  - New definitions of poverty overall
  - Social 'downsizing'
  - Economic nationalism
- Will need training seminars and other efforts for new member representatives

In the opinion of your Network, how should EAPN adjust its working methods to make a success of light of Enlargement? Please comment.

- We will need to reconsider the whole model of EAPN - our capacity & our structures at all levels:
  - More extensive capacity building efforts
  - Stronger horizontal communications
  - Reviewing governance structures & processes
  - Being more creative & progressive
- Need to think about how we are funded/sponsored
- Need to ensure people in poverty are heard in a larger Network
- Need to ensure NGO voice in not lost in new policy research
- Need to promote greater levels of exchange between the 'old' and 'new' members
- ExCo:
  - Agenda should have a regular slot for a new member to talk about their work
  - We should invite observers to gain experience of our work and for us to learn from them
- We should, however, not lose our core values in all this – nor our financial viability

In the opinion of your Network, what new policy priorities will enlargement bring to the work of EAPN in relation to the fight against poverty and social exclusion? Please comment.

- Increasing understanding about what poverty means
- Working towards full social enlargement
- Ensuring we learn each system's good practice
- Ensuring equality is at the centre of all our policies
- Supporting civil society development as central to the fight against social exclusion – eg models of good working with NGOs
- Consideration of people's fundamental rights and basic needs
- More work on minority ethnic issues
- Consideration about the global dimension of poverty
- Working on social exclusion using the structural funds
- Fighting liberalisation

### **Findings of Member survey**

- A. You & your organisation
- B. Your organisation & your national network
- C. EAPN & anti-poverty policy across the EU
- D. Enlargement of EAPN

### **2. Findings A: you & your organization**

What are the main purpose & functions of your organisation?

Main purpose

- Combat the marginalisation of people in social exclusion
- To provide help to socially excluded groups (education, counselling, job training, accommodation & social services)
- Empowering communities
- To support and advise voluntary and community groups
- Coordination of debt-advice centres
- Defend interests of social help recipients
- Social welfare and health care policy

- Friendship and solidarity between the peoples
- interests of women

### Functions

- As a Regional Network, to spread information between partner organisations, to give training on specific issues, to develop relevant research and to be a platform for local organisations
- Services for people with disabilities, drug addicted, old people, minors, Prostitution, prevention, youth-work
- Development projects in developing countries, Development education, public awareness, etc
- Promoting changes in public attitudes
- Employment & accommodation

### Your Organisation & EAPN

Your role in relation to your organisation?

The process to complete this questionnaire?

- Most respondents were directors, senior management, general secretaries
- Many were Project managers or co-ordinators
- A few were policy and other specialists, or project workers or members
- In terms of the process:
  - The majority completed it alone
  - Some completed it by consulting others
  - One provided a collective response

## **2. Findings B: you & your national network**

What are the main purpose & functions of your NN

### Main purpose

- Fight poverty
- To work on national questions in the social field
- Providing information on EU issues
- Coordinate the regional centres
- To represent people in poverty to EAPN
- Social work
- Public awareness
- Social monitoring
- Research

### Functions

- National – EU/EAPN link
- Spreading knowledge about EAPN to the field
- Focus for lobbying our government
- Advocacy & policy
- Influencing, linking, leading
- Coordinating the NGO voice
- Promoting practical anti-poverty projects
- Training
- NAPs

What is the nature and frequency of your contact with the work or personnel of your National Network? Do you have a special role within the structure of your National Network (for example a member of its Executive Committee or equivalent)?

Weekly	10
Monthly	15
Quarterly	7
< Quarterly	3

Most have very regular contact with their NNs

- Nature of contact
  - Meetings, emails, letters, phone
  - Working groups
  - EAPN meetings
  - Project planning
  - Conferences
- Special role
  - Committee member
  - Professional contact
  - ExCo, etc
  - Minute taker

What benefits does membership of your national network bring to your Network?

Being part of our NN gives us:

- More detailed information on EU issues
- Understanding different perspectives on poverty (\*)
- Exchange of information, understanding & good practice (\*)
- Access – lobbying opportunities
- Contacts & alliances
- Feeling part of a Europe-wide movement
- Planning projects at the EU level
- Information about calls for proposals
- Training opportunities & other events
- Knowledge about what is 'hot'

(\*) Most mentioned

How well do you feel your national network benefits from your organisation being one of its members?

- Sharing our experience
- We offer our staff to support the NN
- Specialist/sectoral knowledge
- What the issues are at our level, in our region
- Ideas about what works when influencing government
- Credibility – our membership, being in a representative network
- Access to local NGOs & other contacts

- Opportunities for joint action
- Continuity/ resources

How well does your National Network evaluate its own performance, learn from others and develop?

Very well	1
Quite well	18
Not so well	9
Badly	0
Don't know	7

Mild praise; looks as though there are development opportunities

#### Reasons

- Evaluation and learning are not really on the agenda systematically, just ad hoc
- The work in the group is very decentralised
- We're very new
- Lack of adequate resourcing to achieve this
- We're only an informal co-ordination and such activity would be unrealistic
- We could learn from each other on this – what are the criteria?
- We do it through participation in national quality & evaluation groups

What are the most notable successes or strengths of your National Network?

- To bring together all the main anti-poverty actors on a regular basis
- Covering all the main areas of social exclusion
- Giving voice to people in poverty
- Linking the local to the national
- Joint working between the anti-poverty NGOs and government
- Running successful conferences and other information & lobbying activities
- Our expertise
- Disseminating European issues
- Staying in existence!

What are the highest priority development needs for your network?

- Permanence:
  - To become financial more self-sustaining
  - Staff
  - More permanent working structures
  - Better work planning
- Greater influence:
  - More members
  - Extend the network across the country
  - Closer working relationship with government
  - A resource for local groups
- Stronger ability to disseminate Euro-level material around the network



## 2. Findings C: EAPN & Anti-Poverty Policy across the EU

Specifically in relation to NAPs Inclusion, how useful were the documents supplied by EAPN for your work?

Very useful	9
Quite useful	17
Not so useful	5
Useless	3
Don't know	3

70% are broadly happy; a small minority are less so

### Positive

- Useful in evaluating the national NAP
- Allowed us to place our comments in a broader European context that would be very difficult to do without the info from EAPN
- Good, solid material - they gave us important information on the issues

### Negative

- Not always used
- Too much paper
- Not translated into our language, so couldn't use it widely
- EAPN's value not always recognised as NN 'translates' them for local use

How would you assess the general quality of EAPN's publications, policy documents, etc

### Content quality

Excellent	9
Good	21
Not so good	1
Poor	1
Don't know	4

### Design & layout

Excellent	4
Good	14
Not so good	0
Poor	0
Don't know	3

### Examples

- Synthesis report on NAP
- Flash
- Network News is excellent
- Structural Funds mid-term review
- Website

- Joint inclusion report response
- New logo is very good
- They use Eurospeak sparingly!
- It's not translated into my language
- It could be more hard-hitting
- Stronger link to local issues?

What impact has EAPN had on policy development at the EU or national level?

Significant impact	7
Some impact	13
Not much impact	7
No impact	1
Don't know	10

Generally positive, but a wide spread of views; many people not sure

- EAPN is one of the most important networks in policy matters in the EU
- The impact of EAPN varies between different countries.
- EAPN keeps an eye on poverty and social exclusion and tries to arouse interest in exclusion
- EAPN contributed to the inclusion aspect of the Lisbon strategy
- EAPN is only one actor among other strong actors on policy development
- The analysis of NAPs Inclusion has been helpful to regional & national anti-poverty work
- I'm not clear what impact EAPN's work has had in influencing policy at European level – has it been disseminated?
- Access to relevant documents & introduce suggestions at the national & European levels

What are the three highest priority policy issues that should drive EAPN's work over the next three years?

- Free up funding sources for the campaign
- The consequences of enlargement
- Keeping an eye on NAPs
- Ensuring that social solidarity remains on the European agenda
- Evaluate Lisbon agenda
- Promote research into poverty issues
- Campaign against (economic) liberalisation
- Building new alliances
- Promote human dignity & social rights, not just against poverty
- Broader than the EU – other social challenges, globalisation, etc
- Supporting NNS' campaigns and their capacity to develop
- Structural funds
- Promoting civil society, NGOs working the field
- Involving people in poverty in the debates

In summary, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of EAPN as an EU wide network and its usefulness to its members?

Very effective & useful to members	13
Quite effective & quite useful to members	19
Not very effective & not very useful to members	1

“Being part of EAPN is very important as a back up in public discussions on poverty on national level – as it is often helpful to be able to refer to a European position”

“Well done and important because Europe gets bigger and solidarity must be organized and promoted”

“We believe that the participation of the local organisations both at a national and European level is very important as well as the direct contact with EAPN”

“EAPN is an alibi within the European institutions, analogous to national networks & organisations, which are muzzles by their financial dependency”

“I find the questionnaire very difficult to answer as it does not reflect our opinion because we have not been part of the creation of the questions”

## **2. Findings D: Enlargement of EAPN**

In the opinion of your organisation, in what way will enlargement impact on the work of EAPN (Europe)?

- An opportunity:
  - to find more of the similarities & common base rather than differences which can seem so huge
  - EAPN could be a tool to increase tolerance between people in east – west; north - south.
- A responsibility:
  - More complexity, more translations, more paper & more costs!
- Time and energy to involve new networks from the new member states in the work of EAPN
- Enlargement will also impact on the structure of EAPN – necessary to avoid organisational difficulties
- New policy questions can be expected eg migration, Roma, CAP reform

In the opinion of your organisation, how should EAPN adjust its working methods to make a success of enlargement?

- Focus on good information to ensure we all understand the situation of excluded people and the context in which they live in each of the countries
- Regional sub-groupings to focus on regional issues
- New members should have the same opportunities to be involved in the development of EAPN as existing members (training, attendance at meetings etc)
- Keep things simple & accessible for all - information, research, analysis, etc.
- For real participation of organizations of people in poverty, we must support the structures at the national level
- We will need to look at ExCo's working methods
- Extra attention to translation & interpretation into other languages to facilitate greater levels of participation
- Development of NNS in the new member states & consequently new of delegates to EAPN's governing bodies
- Mutual learning on an equal level needs to be promoted
- The Task Force is looking into this

In the opinion of your organisation, what new policy priorities will enlargement bring to the work of EAPN in relation to the fight against poverty and social exclusion?

- More attention to basic social questions: Homelessness, extreme poverty, basic social service and means of subsistence

- More focus on women, migration & free movement, indebtedness, employment, income levels, trafficking, children
- Promoting active civil society structures

### 3. Consultant's Conclusions – Overall

1. Overall – high level of participation and very positive results:
  - People value EAPN
  - It is absent of significant dysfunction
  - No corrective action suggested
2. Is EAPN a 'strong and growing network equipped to deliver its mission'?
  - YES!

### 3. Consultant's Conclusions- Challenges

3. But there are challenges arising from:
  - Relative 'youth' of NNs
  - Network's own internal diversity
  - Fragility of funding
  - Enlargement of the EU
  - Changing political climate
4. There are also many opportunities
  - So a key issue is making the right choices of topics to work on
  - That will meet the challenges and seize the opportunities
5. So, EXCO needs to seize the day & use the evidence of this report to inform its choices

### 3. Consultant's Conclusions– Action

6. What choices?
  - Developing NNs and strengthening the links, funding, etc
  - Communication – quality, not quantity, eg more 'human'
  - Policy
    - Develop a new, shared agenda with the 25
    - Don't try to please everybody at once
    - Maximise impact of your message
    - Continue with ideas like NAPs – 'real', practical
  - More inclusion through :
    - More translation
    - More Training
    - Improved ExCo processes
    - A stronger connection with the grass roots
  - Enlargement to 25:
    - Rethink the model



# Section C: European Organisations

## Contents

- Role of EOs in the evaluation process
- Questions asked of EOs at the meeting of 14 March 2005
- A summary of the responses
- Consultant's conclusions

### 1. Role of EOs in the evaluation process

- To comment on Phase 1 report by end of March
- Secretariat will present your views to May ExCo
- Participate in answering questions to follow

### 2. Questions asked

- In your opinion, how representative is EAPN of the range of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working in the anti-poverty field? Suggestions for improvement?
- From your perspective, what impact has EAPN had on seeking to have the fight against poverty and social exclusion effectively addressed at the EU level? Please think of examples
- Do you have any suggestions for improvement in the quality and impact of EAPN's work?
- In your view, what are the three highest priority policy issues that should drive EAPN work planning over the next three years
- How do you feel the relationship between EOs & EAPN could be enhanced to support each other's development?

### 3. Responses

The representatives of the EOs taking part in this meeting spent most time considering Question 5 on enhancing their relationship with EAPN and on commenting on EAPN's performance, as the following notes show:

- The **information** EOs receive is good:
  - However, on the specific issue of calls for proposal, EOs would like more information as well as more interaction and mutual support within EAPN Network .
- Regarding EAPN's **access** to decision makers:
  - EOs want to be consulted before
  - EOs want to be more directly involved
- **Governance:**
  - There is a question about EOs' status: they feel they should be consulted as a full member/network, especially on policy matters and policy documents, but EOs don't yet have a shared view on a range of issues
  - The block is sometimes a reluctance within the management of individual EOs, or the absence of common policy focus among organisations, as well as differences in the nature of the organisations, some of them being mainly focused on their work on the ground

- EOs could help improve **links with NNs**: EOs national members link well to EOs who could link better to EAPN National Networks
- There is an issue around the extent to which EAPN is **representing EOs**. Feeling of being represented varies, notably in relation to:
  - Cooperation at national level between EOs' members and NN
  - Cooperation at the EU level (although it is sometimes not enough only to *feel* being represented)
  - Being Brussels- based or not
  - Better representativity could be achieved by:
    - Better integration of EU concerns in NN
    - Better integration of EOs specific concerns in EAPN work at National and European level.
- There are different **expectations of EAPN** amongst EOs:
  - Access provided to interlocutors is already useful, but there are expectations for access to decision makers and cooperation around lobbying actions
  - There is an expectation of more evaluation of EOs' work and expertise by EAPN
  - How should it work for those members who are already funded on same budget line...
  - ...but the fear of watering down is not the same as competition – need to clarify where EOs compete with EAPN and where they do not
  - Need to clarify role and expectations
- **Lobbying**:
  - Needs to be strengthened at both national & EU levels
  - Feels stronger at national level, so EU level loses out

#### 4. Consultant's Conclusions

- The fact that participants wished to consider first and foremost questions around their status indicates that this is the most pressing matter for them and clouds discussion about other questions
- It is recognised that work has been done between EAPN and EOs on this question, but, at present:
  - They have yet to establish a common identity and some of the blocks to this appear to be with their own organisations
  - Their constitutional status within EAPN is either unclear or unsatisfactory to some of those present
  - The areas where it is OK for EAPN and EOs to compete and where it is not have not been clarified (contend of the alliance) which may be a barrier to increased levels of trust
  - They are an important resource to EAPN that is not fully exploited eg in reinforcing links between NNs and their own national members
  - There is a general feeling that they are not fully in the loop in respect of information flows & consultation processes

# Section D: External Stakeholders

## Contents

- Phase 2 Process
- Focus Group Findings
- Focus Group Conclusions
- Survey Findings
- Survey Conclusions

## 1. Phase 2 process

Agreed process:

- Written **questionnaire** for all external stakeholders:
  - Questions agreed with ExCo
  - Several reminders sent
- **Focus group** at EP

## 2. Focus Group Findings

Focus Group Approach Questions

- To consider a limited number of questions...
- ...about the performance & future priorities of EAPN
- In an open and discursive way
- Ideally building on each other's contributions
- So, each person is free to represent their own views...
- Confidentially!

The consultant recorded the main points

## Questions

- What is EAPN best known for?
- How do you think EAPN is perceived by other people in your field?
- From your point of view, what impact has EAPN had at the policy level?
- In developing its new plans for the future, what are the main issues that EAPN should address?
- How would you see EAPN in about five years' time?

Participants' views 1: What is EAPN best known for?

- Poverty
- Porte-parole
- Network for anti-poverty
- Information delivery
- Rep of civil society



- Raising awareness by being an interlocutor between the grass roots & the national and EU levels
  - There is ambiguity: facilitation on one hand and technical complexity on the other – it's a complex brand
  - Implicated in the EU process and poverty links to all policy areas
  - An advocate for change to policies
  - Independent – provide expert critical views
  - EAPN mustn't be in a corner, but anti-poverty is its central focus
- Interpretation 1: What is EAPN best know for?

- Participants ideas developed as they thought their way into the question
- EAPN is recognised as well known for what it actually does!
- There is also a sense of the complexity of it as a brand, making it inherently problematic to communicate a simple core message with which a target audience can associate
- This is principally due to the complexity of the subject matter of EAPN's work, but also to its diversity of membership & its 'federal' structure

Participants' views 2: How is EAPN perceived by others?

- Non-sectarian, politically neutral
- People appreciate EAPN's philosophy
- Well respected for the consistent flow of information, something they have worked at hard and become almost a GP model
- Maintained a vision of network between EC and members state – people look to EAPN on social inclusion issues before others (eg SP)
- Good reputation in policy circles (nationally & at EU) but not publicly - good or bad?
- A neutral 'brand', not like Oxfam or Greenpeace, so a choice and could be more activist. But if so, couldn't be such a broad platform
- NNs need reinforcing in some countries; in others it's the link to the EU level that is weak
- Profile varies form MS to MS – depends on civil soc traditions
- Opening up Lisbon and keeping it alive, based on a strong analysis keeps you on your toes, especially if grounded in the experience of people living in poverty
- Important to counter common national perception that European level does nothing, although this is hard when interest is low – about education

Interpretation 2: How is EAPN perceived by others?

- According to the participants, people experience EAPN as both neutral and authoritative in its policy work – an essential but inherently difficult thing to pull off
- Its authority is based on sound analysis, its links to 'real' poor people and its ability to communicate consistently well
- Its profile is within the industry and not amongst the public at large. While this is a choice, it would be difficult to change without much stronger NNs and links between the national and EU levels of EAPN

Participants' views 3: EAPN's impact at the policy level?

- Valued input to EC's draft report on social protection
- Interpreting Eurostat's indicators on social inclusion was very valuable in making a clear case, although insufficient technical capacity to follow through to the policy/ political level
- IGC intervention perceived as positive – Social Protection Group kept on going after Convention
- Following up on Copenhagen, working with others

- Quality of Directors – last two both strong but different styles
- NAPs owe a lot to EAPN – passing on ideas about tackling poverty to others
- Annual Roundtable on inclusion – important to be well organised as impact can be weak
- Work on gender, migrants and other actors, although limited by events
- Important to link with MEPs (eg in Dublin around Euro elections) to create better understanding of the issues

Interpretation 3: EAPN's impact at the policy level?

- A number of key policy areas that EAPN has worked on are recognised as valuable
- People seem to stress:
  - The importance of strengthening links between actors both horizontally as well as vertically
  - Keeping the pressure up when either structures are weak or the level of political commitment is low
  - The key to success of EAPN Europe is seen to be work quality, staff skill and communications

Participants' views 4: Priorities for the future?

- As Lisbon declines, maintain debate on poverty at the European level
- Explain the benefits the EU has for anti-poverty more widely
- Explain to national members why the EU level is important and relevant
- Deepen analysis of poverty issues in new MS, renewing thereby the debate on poverty across EU25
- Mobilization is required at grass roots level (eg via national MPs) to explain consequences of EU finances for anti-poverty
- Maintain a multi-dimensional approach to social inclusion
- Strengthen argument about prevention (social protection) as well as fighting against (social inclusion) eg through explaining consequences of policies such as competition or the internal market
- Strengthen participatory democracy by using Constitutional tools such as citizens' petitions, mobilizing NNS, good governance, role of civil society, etc
- Keep the distinction very clear between Social Platform and EAPN
- Capacity building of NNS

Interpretation 4: Priorities for the future?

- It is important for EAPN to maintain its focus...
  - Capacity building NNS and its 'frontiers' with other NGOS
- ...and work on some clear issues:
  - Lisbon
  - New MS
  - Prevention & 'cure'
- Participants also claim that as a civil society movement, EAPN has an important if indirect role in:
  - Explaining the benefits to ordinary citizens of the EU's competencies in social protection & inclusion
  - Using and thereby strengthening democratic instruments provided by the Constitution
  - Strengthening through all this civil society itself

Participants' views 5: EAPN in about five years' time?

- Larger Secretariat with a Director and team of the calibre of those at present, if not more
- Higher visibility
- A European Year of Social Inclusion
- If the constitution comes into play, there will be a different climate which is hard to envision, but national parliaments may be different

Interpretation 5: EAPN in about five years' time?

- Overall participants feel EAPN will be:
  - Bigger
  - Better
  - More visible
  - Even more 'impactful'
- It is a measure of their confidence in EAPN that they only wish for good things...
- ...but it also means their expectations are high!

### **3. Focus Group Conclusions**

Consultant's conclusions

- By and large, what EAPN does is recognised at what EAPN does – and these things are valued highly
- The participants were an informed inner circle of stakeholders who can point to a number of areas where EAPN has made a difference and they can attribute success to the quality of the Director and the staff team and to weaknesses in the varying levels of development of NNs
- Carrying out high quality work on the right issues, maintaining neutrality and communicating well is the basis of EAPN's success – building on this strong base is key to future success
- For the future, participants recognise some clear policy issues that EAPN should work on while seeking to build the capacity and impact of NNs, but they also see the essential indirect role EAPN has, along with other platforms in strengthening democratic institutions themselves
- This focus group sees a clear need for an EAPN with a clear focus, but expectations are high

### **4. Survey findings**

Slides on all principal questions which were under 3 headings:

- Intro
- A. You & Your Relationship with EAPN
- B. How you see EAPN now
- C. How you see the future for EAPN

4. Survey findings Intro

At 11%, the response rate was poor, but there was a good spread, & a low rate was expected from the EP, media & Council

Contact type	Sent Q*	Replied	%	Focus Group
Academics	15	6	40%	1
Commission	20	5	25%	1
Media	21	1	5%	
Parliament	109	3	3%	1
NGOs	33	6	18%	1
Other EU contacts	4	1	25%	
Others	8	1	13%	
Social Partners	8	1	13%	1
Council	45	6	13%	1
International organisations	3	0	0%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6</b>

\*Excluding 18 who declined or whose email address was incorrect

NB: In the case of contact types with a large number of responses (Academics, EC, NGOs & Council (SPC)), any significant deviations from average scores are noted in the slides for each question

#### 4. Survey Findings A: You & Your Relationship with EAPN

Q1: Name & Job Title – not analysed; Q2: Your role:

Contact type	Number	% of total
MEP	3	10%
European Commission	6	21%
European Council	2	7%
Other EU institution	1	3%
Int Govt Institution (other than EU)	2	7%
NGO	6	21%
Social Partners (TU, Employers' organisation)	0	0%
Networks of local authorities	1	3%
Academic	5	18%
Media	1	3%
Others	2	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

Comments:

- Fairly good responses from EC, NGOs and Academics
- Self-descriptions are slightly different from EAPN's database
- One no reply
- The people who replied are probably EAPN's 'inner ring' of external contacts – see recommendations

Q3: Length of contact with EAPN:

	Count	%
No Contact	0	0%
Under 1 year	7	23%

1-3 years	11	37%
More than 3 years	12	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>

Comments:

- 77% of respondents have had over 1 year's experience of EAPN (100% of academics & Commission representatives)
- In addition, 11 people (37%) said they had had contact with EAPN in previous jobs
- In general, we can expect respondents to be well informed

Q4: Frequency and method of contact with EAPN

Frequency	Count	Method	Count*
Weekly	4	Email/ letter	20
Monthly	9	Meetings	20
Quarterly	7	Phone	3
Less than quarterly	9	Mailings	8
		Other	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>

\*Each respondent had two choices

Comments:

- 45% of respondents have contact at least monthly with EAPN (more frequently for academics & EC reps & less frequently for Social Protection Committee reps)
- Email & meetings are by far the most common methods that they keep in touch
- EAPN's effective use of these means will determine the quality of many of its closest external relationships

Q5: How well does EAPN communicate with you? Improvements?

**How well?**

Very well	10
Quite well	15
Not so well	2
Badly	1
Don't know	1

**Comment:**

- At 86%, most people think EAPN is a good communicator!
- Academics has the highest regard compared with other groups
- The issues is about extending & targeting specific groups more

**Improvements?**

- Seminars could reach academics more effectively
- Ensure existing communication tools reach a wider range of local & regional actors
- More contact with other social actors to lead a policy debate
- Broaden the content of communication to include 'scientific' issues as well as policy ones
- EAPN should regularly invite people to subscribe to its email lists
- Either make more time for translation locally or provide information in languages other than French and English
- A shorter one page regular newsletter for members of the EESC and other EU institutions to provide information on policies, access to national newsletters from the national networks, etc
- More direct contact with officials & ministers in each Member State who are responsible for combating poverty & social exclusion

Q6: What benefits does your relationship with EAPN bring you?

Being part of EAPN gives us information, information, information:

- Critical access to EU social policies
- Information on poverty
- The capacity to take strong positions
- Expertise in social exclusion
- High quality documentation on conditions in MSs
- Timely feedback on Commission policies
- A critique of EU social policies & processes
- Comment on our work
- Information that allows us to cooperate with EAPN for mutual benefit
- Data for my research

There were 58 comments!

'There should be more focus on Roma poverty!'

Q7: How well do you feel EAPN benefits from its relationship with you?

**How well?**

Very well	3
Quite well	15
Not so well	0
Badly	1
Don't know	10

20 respondents gave additional comments!

62% feel that there are benefits for EAPN (higher for EC & NGOs, lower for SPC), but 34% can't answer

Most typically, membership benefits include:

- Insights from our research
- The information we provide
- A contact in the EC to give a good word for EAPN and its work
- Participation in Social Platform
- Relationships with Secretariat staff
- Development of our NAPs work
- We share goals

Most typically, more value from membership could be obtained by:

- Getting more from our publications?
- Getting more from my strategic experience
- Learning more about employment issue in EC
- More attention to Roma issues
- Subscribing to our newsletter
- Being closer to the SPC

#### 4. Survey Findings B: How you see EAPN now

Q8: Which of these services or activities have you had contact with in the last year?

Service / Activity	Count	%
Conferences	8	16%
Exchange & training events	3	6%
Advocacy & campaigning	16	32%
Information & publications	23	46%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Comments:

- Information & publications and Advocacy & campaigning are the activities of EAPN that external stakeholders have most contact with
- Very few respondents have had much contact with EAPN's conferences & Exchange & training events in recent times
- Two questions occur:
  - Would EAPN like to change this to develop their relationships with external stakeholders?
  - How can the activities that stakeholders have most contact with reach them even more effectively

Q9: How would you rate the quality & impact of the areas of work that you have had recent contact with?

*The average rating scores run from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)*

	Quality		Impact	
Service / Activity	No of 'votes'	Av rating	No of 'votes'	Av rating
Conferences (NB: EC gives higher scores)	7	4.0	7	3.1
Exchange & training events	2	4.0	2	4.0
Advocacy & campaigning (NB: Higher for SPC, lower for NGOs)	16	4.1	17	3.5
Information & publications (NB: Higher for EC, lower for SPC)	20	4.3	22	3.7
<b>TOTAL / OVERALL AVERAGE</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Comments:

- The quality scores are high – good news
- Quality tends to get a higher rating than impact – not unusual
- But impact scores are still quite high, especially the activities with which participants have the most contact
- SPC & NGOs appear to be groups to target

Q10: What impact has EAPN had on seeking to have the fight against poverty & social exclusion effectively addressed at European level?

How well?

Significant impact	15
Some impact	10
Not much impact	2
No impact	0
Don't know	3

38 respondents gave examples!

83% feel that EAPN has impact (higher for SPC & NGOs, and a diverse range of examples are given of its impact!

The most typical examples:

- Co-ordination of national initiatives
- Mention by high EC official at scientific conference
- Reviews of NAPs
- Preparation for Amsterdam
- Draft ESF Regulation
- Institutions taking issue more seriously
- EC needing EAPN to convince MS
- Mobilising national anti-poverty networks
- EU conference of those experiencing poverty
- Publications
- MS governments' sensitivity to criticism by EAPN
- Influence on public / academic debates
- Attempting to save the Lisbon process
- Employment strategy
- Roundtable on social exclusion

Q11: Do you have any suggestions for improvement in the quality and impact of EAPN's work?

Ends:

- Helping to define good indicators
- More critical of economic consensus
- More about Roma
- Developing common positions with other actors, esp. other NGOs on social, economic & employment policies

Means:

- Keep it up!
- Use press conferences
- Making use of the experience of members more



- Exchange of good practice with members
- Providing MEPs / SPC with timely information
- More support to strengthen national platforms
- Annual report for all key actors
- Better information flows to all members
- Encourage staff exchanges between national networks
- Participate in some national level NGO/government meetings

Most of the 27 suggestions relate to how EAPN engages with its stakeholders (means), but there are suggestions about what it should do too (ends) – to be developed Questions 15 & 16

Q12: which aspect of its work do you feel EAPN is best known for?  
27 respondents gave comments!

- Many general mentions of:
  - Advocacy & campaigning
  - Information & publications
- But also:
  - Monitoring process of exclusion
  - Watchdog / lobbyist function for EC
  - Representing civil society in anti-poverty
  - Representing people experience poverty
  - EAPN conferences
  - Interventions at Roundtables & SPC
  - Commitment to the poor

Q13: How representative is EAPN of the range of NGOs working in the anti-poverty field?  
Improvements?

How Representative?

Very representative	10
Quite representative	14
Not very representative	0
Not at all representative	0
Don't know	4

Suggestions for improvement:

- Do more of the same
- Research on how representative national networks are
- Strengthen NNs' capacity and 'representativeness' to engage more at European level
- Expand in new MS
- Engage more of the European level NGOs
- Ensure smaller, activist groups are heard at the European level

Participants feel that EAPN is representative and that the focus should primarily be at the national level, according to the 9 respondents who commented

Q14: How would you summarise your view of EAPN's overall ability to work with and represent NGOs in the anti-poverty field?



How effective?

Very effective	11
Quite effective	18
Not very effective	0
Not at all effective	0
Don't know	1

EC & Academics are more positive than the average; SPC and NGOs slightly less so

A very positive score overall!

#### 4. Survey Findings C: How you see the future for EAPN

Q15: What in your view should be the key focus of EAPN's work over the next three years?

The 26 comments can be clustered under three headings!

Consolidating:

- Supporting and strengthening the EU's Social Inclusion Process by:
  - working to maintain a distinctive identity for the process within a streamlined social protection and social inclusion process
  - by encouraging that the process become sharper and more focussed
  - by promoting public and political support for a strong and dynamic process
  - by using the process at national level to develop more effective social inclusion policies
  - by actively participating in the various activities of the process from national plans to reports to trans-national exchange of learning
- Strengthening links with other actors

Developing:

- Doing what's being done now on a more massive scale
- Developing a more scientific approach with a dedicated working group
- Working on the integration of marginalised groups more
- Ensuring that poverty is not seen as a narrow technical issues but a part of economic development
- A conference on the governance of EAPN
- Partnerships with national governments

Diversifying:

- Try to diversify funding resources – it is a question of financial prudence, but also of image. Being glued to the purse-strings of the EU is a problem

Q16: In your view, what are the three highest priority policy issues that should drive EAPN's work planning over the next three years?

Policy themes:

- Enlargement / New MS
- Social & employment policy
- Minimum standards
- Origins of poverty

- Implementation of social inclusion strategies at all levels
- Building on Charter of fundamental rights
- Facilitating development of European Strategy against poverty
- Lisbon
- Migration / Common immigration policy
- Nice
- Social dumping
- Housing / Health
- Economic democracy
- Modernising social protection
- Waste of EU resources
- Absolute poverty
- NAPs

Target audiences:

- Outside as well as inside the EU
- Roma
- Mobilising NGOs
- Pensioner poverty
- Minority ethnic groups
- Elders
- Women

Tools:

- Developing good practice guides
- Developing & mobilising national networks
- Good statistics

Amongst the 67 comments, there are many themes. While some overlap or are complementary, EAPN will need to consider carefully not only the policy themes, but also the target audiences and the most appropriate methods to arrive at a coherent and achievable strategy

Q17: Suggestions for ways in which EAPN could strengthen its contact with your sector/organisation over the coming 3 years

The most typical ideas from the 29 suggestions can be captured under the following headings:

- More of the same
- Invitations to conferences & seminars
- Emphasising the link between:
  - Poverty & mental health
  - Poverty & the Roma
  - Poverty & public health
- An annual meeting to exchange ideas on the priorities for social exclusion with the EC
- Providing experts on poverty in each MS, eg to follow up on Lisbon
- Links with:
  - SPC
  - Social Platform
  - European Parliament
  - Relevant national level NGOs, eg at their conferences

- Roundtable conference
- Helping to support \*\*\* political party
- Setting up the Polish NN

#### Q18: Other Comments

There were only 7 additional comments, which can be captured as:

- I have always highly appreciated the open-mindedness of EAPN. Despite their 'expertise' in poverty issues, they have always been open to dialogue and keen to learn from others
- More focus on what works rather than what might seem in principle to be desirable
- Bear in mind that the outcome of EU level efforts to promote social inclusion depend ultimately on effectiveness of actions in individual Member States which are relevant to the particular circumstances in each State. There needs to be much more convincing connections between proposed actions and desired outcomes so that targets can be realistic

## 5. Survey conclusions

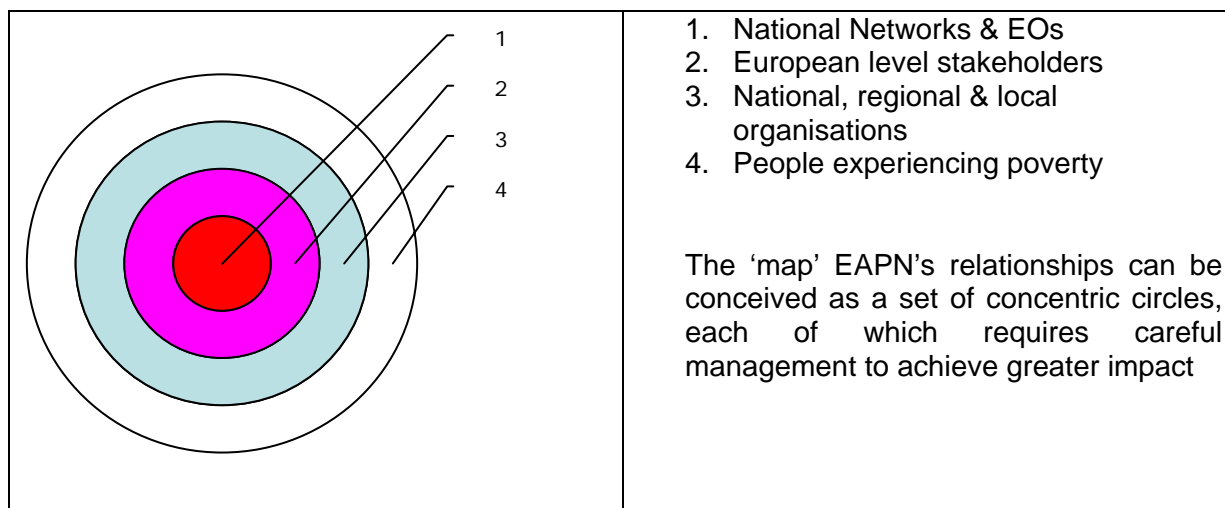
### 1. Consultant's Conclusions - Overall

- While the responses were relatively low in number – although not lower than was expected – the results:
  - Represent the views of those closest to EAPN's work
  - Provide a good spread of views from all the main 'constituencies'
  - Are very positive indeed
  - Support the conclusions of Phase 1 of this evaluation in that...
- ...in answer to the evaluation question of whether EAPN is a 'strong and growing network equipped to deliver its mission'?, Phase 2 confirms Phase 1's answer: YES!
- What follows from this is how to build on success to achieve even more

### 2. Stakeholder Management

Comments:

- EAPN's link to people experiencing poverty is primarily through the inner 3 rings of its stakeholder 'map'
- There is great diversity in the second ring of the 'map', the subject of this survey
- EAPN reaches some of each of the main potential groups of stakeholders, and these people are represented in the replies
- EAPN's challenge is to maintain the loyalty that it has and to engage the interest of those who could be interested but currently are not
- The key to that is putting more effort into differentiating the different needs of each sub-group
- Target contact groups appear to be SPC and NGOs in relation to some issues



### 3. Emerging Challenges

1. Working with stakeholders:
  - Extend the range of active contacts
  - Deepen the relationship experience with those who are already active
  - Focus on those contacts with the (relatively) weaker scores: NGOs & SPC
2. Developing a coherent new strategy:
  - The themes of simultaneously **consolidating** what is good by doing more of it, **developing** into new areas and **diversifying** in terms, for example, of funding, appear to be key in the eyes of the people who replied
  - But satisfying them all will not be easy:
    - The range of interests is broad
    - The range of policy priorities is extensive
    - EAPN will have to focus considerably to achieve greater impact
    - But how does it manage the potential risk of alienating some in the process?
3. Building the relationship with EOs
  - Identity & status are key issues
  - But just a form follows function, their role needs greater clarity too

### 4. Strategic choices

This survey suggests that a number of key questions need to be considered in the upcoming strategic planning round:

- What are our main policy themes?
- Who are the key target groups of our work?
- Who specifically are we trying to influence?
- How do we reach them in the best way on our chosen themes?
- How do we build the national level and the interface between that and each MS's NGO community & government?
- What is the function of EOs in supporting the strategy?
- How do we ensure that the voice of people experiencing poverty is genuinely heard at the European level?

These ideas are developed into recommendations in the report's next section

## Phase 2 Report Appendix: External Stakeholder Survey: Respondents

Name	Organisation	Contact Type
A Bougas	HoU B2 REGIO	Commission
Agrita Groza	Social Protection Committee, Latvia	Council
Arrigo Zanella	Retis	Others
Caroline de la Porte		Academics
Christine Desveaux	A I C (ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES CHARITES)	NGOS
Edeltraud Glettler	Social Protection Committee, Austria	Council
Elise Willame	Social Protection Committee, Belgium	Council
Ernst Ulrich Huster		Academics
Gabrielle Clotuche	ETUC	Social Partners
Geneviève Brems	Agence Europe	Media
Hanna Nicholas	Social Protection Committee, UK	Council
Harkin, Marian	MEP, Employment and Social Affairs Committee	Parliament
Hugh Frazer	DG Empl	Commission
Hugues Feltesse	DG Empl	Commission
Ides Nicaise	BE	Academics
Jan Olsson	Social Affairs Section, ECOSOC	Other EU Bodies
Jonathan Zeitlin		Academics
Josée Van Remoortel	Mental Health Europe (MHE)	NGOs
Kari Valimaki	Social Protection Committee, Finland	Council
Luc Tholoniait	DG Empl	Commission
M Donnelly	DG Empl	Commission
Mary Van Dievel	Mental Health Europe (MHE)	NGOs
Maštálka, Jirí	MEP, Employment and Social Affairs Committee	Parliament
Mcdonald, Mary Lou	MEP, Employment and Social Affairs Committee	Parliament
Michel Legros		Academics
Pawel Krzeczunowicz	Polish NGO Office Brussels	NGOs
Ramon Pena-Casa		Academics
Simon Wilson	Social Platform	NGOs
Tom Mulherin	Social Protection Committee, Ireland	Council
Valeriu Nicolae	European Roma Information Office (ERIO)	NGOs

# Section E: Conclusions & Recommendations

## Contents

1. Combined conclusions
2. Combined Recommendations
3. Next steps

## 1. Combined conclusions

### 1. Brand & communications

1. While it may appear an obvious point, EAPN is known for what it actually does and those activities are more or less universally valued. This means that as a brand, EAPN is strong within its current zone of operations
2. The evaluation shows that people value EAPN's objective, but strong stance on the right policy issues. While communications are rated highly by many, there are in the views of some, typically members, opportunities to improve communications by tailoring messages to suit particular audiences and by working in a wider range of languages. This is particularly pertinent in relation to strengthening ties to PEP where an inclusive approach is essential to success

### 2. EAPN's reach & NN capacity

3. Survey response rates for external stakeholders were relatively low, but those who responded were highly positive. By contrast, response rates for NNs & members were high, but their views were slightly uneven. This points to two findings in the reports:
  - Strengthening the capacity of NNs, not least in new member states
  - Broadening EAPN's reach to a wider range of potentially interested parties at the European level

### 3. The new strategy must face some critical choices

4. While the points in the three previous conclusions will inform the development of EAPN's new strategy, an additional conclusion should also be borne in mind:
  - There is a clear consensus of view about the general policy areas that EAPN should pursue (EG Lisbon), but perhaps less on the specifics
  - This is a particular challenge when limited resources demand a clear focus; yet a clear focus may mean that some members feel EAPN is not addressing their issues
  - What people seem to value most are practical ways in which they can tackle the issues and gain from their relationship with each other EG NAPs
  - What is essential to moderate a process of making hard choices is a strong governing body with clear roles and a high level of team working
  - What kind of mutually beneficial and stable relationship EAPN wants with its European members

### 4. Well positioned; high expectations

5. In terms of the overall evaluation question, there is strong evidence to make the claim that EAPN is indeed a strong & growing network equipped to deliver its mission. This



is due to the hard work of staff, the governing bodies and of members over a period of years

6. However, while EAPN is well positioned - it has achieved much and enjoys a high reputation - much remains to be done and expectations are high both for more and for better i.e. even greater impact in the next stage of EAPN's development

## **2. Combined Recommendations**

### **1. Building network capacity**

Recommendation:

1. Develop a strategy on strengthening to develop the capacity of National Networks (both old and new) including:
  - A. Promoting exchange between NNs to facilitate learning
  - B. Encouraging NNs to increase efforts on their own development
  - C. Ways of NNs increasing their financial stability
  - D. Strengthening links to people experiencing poverty
  - E. Consider more accessible styles of communication between NNs & office
  - F. Training programme

Practical suggestions from respondents:

- A. Internet web forum; exchanges between NNs; best practice
- B. As A. Consider developing a manual for NNs
- C. Sharing funding sources; NN development worker in EAPN
- D. Sharing techniques, as A
- E. Communications review by office esp. to reconsider design & layout
- F. Run organisational development seminars

### **2. Strengthening the Structures and working methods in an Enlarged EAPN**

Recommendations:

2. A range of topics including reviews of:
  - A. Governance to ensure:
    - i. High levels of inclusion and participation and maximum operational efficiency
    - ii. Structures that work in an enlarged EAPN
    - iii. More effective use of meetings
  - B. Communications to ensure:
    - i. Higher levels of accessibility and 'usability' in national campaigns
  - C. Working Groups and working methods to ensure:
    - i. They are suited to an enlarged EAPN
    - ii. They are more effective and efficient
  - D. The use of research to ensure EAPN :
    - i. Uses what's available more
    - ii. Draws on experts when it needs to

Each to result in an action plan to inform next AWP & strategy

Practical suggestions from respondents:

- A. Governance:
  - Reconsider size of ExCo
  - Use GA at a different level
  - Bureau elections more transparent

- More active, lively ExCo
- Members better prepared
- B. Communications:
  - Must understand national issues better
  - More 2-way & personal communications
  - Geared more to support national campaigns
  - Communicate better who does what in office
- C. Working groups:
  - Use people with the right skills more
- D. Research:
  - Get right people
  - Develop own positions on issues
- 

### **3. Developing and Reinforcing EAPN's agenda**

Recommendations:

- A. Developing a stronger statement or vision of EAPN's goals, including:
  - i. To Establish & promote EAPN's OWN agenda
  - ii. To Develop our expertise
- B. Showing the impact that we have
- C. Working towards a higher public profile
- D. Developing a more proactive public stance...on a range of poverty areas

Practical suggestions from respondents:

- A. EAPN's goals:
  - New charter of principles for the 25
- B. Impact:
  - Communicate history & impact of EAPN
- C. Profile:
  - Multi-lingualism
  - Better communications – as above
- D. Policy priorities:
  - Lisbon & Agenda 2007
  - Europe wide social standards
  - NAPs (Social Inclusion)
  - Globalisation
  - Prevention as well as cure

### **4. Managing the EAPN brand**

In once sense, the first three recommendation areas will ensure that much of what comes under this heading is carried out, but EAPN must keep as a priority the central importance to its future success of:

1. Deepening & widening relationships with selected external stakeholder groups, connected to EAPN's agenda at any give time
2. Adopting a more segmented approach to communications that ensures communications messages and tools that match the needs of each different audience
3. Specifically ensuring EAPN has its own direct relationship with PEP as far as possible, for example through the annual meeting
4. By doing the above, recognising its role in acting as a role model to strengthen civil society and democratic institutions within the European project

### **3. Next steps**

#### **Phase 3**

- A review of aspects of governance:
  - Role & status of EOs
  - Size & role of Bureau
  - Making a larger ExCo work in the best way
  - Role & functions of ExCo sub-groups
  - The GA: Function & attendance

#### **Phase 4**

- Learning from the external evaluation: techniques, outputs, approach
- Incorporating monitoring & evaluation systems into EAPN's routine
- Ensuring there is a robust but simple performance management system both to report to the board and report to funders
- Ensuring the essentials of both of these are incorporated into the strategic plan