February 20th, 2015

**Draft Minutes**

 **EAPN Executive Meeting in Seville**

**14/15th of November 2015**

**Friday: 14th of November 2014**

# The Meeting of the EXCO was preceded by a presentation of the Spanish Network

**The President of EAPN Andalucía** explained that the network was celebrating its 20th anniversary.Poverty over the last 20 years has increased by almost 40%, which is one of the highest rates in EU. There is hope that Europe 2020 will be able to tackle this problem.

**Maria José Sanchez Rubio, Ministry of Social Policies of the Government of Andalucía** congratulated EAPN Andalucía and all EXCO members. She said that social work was never-ending creating frustration about the rise in poverty. The crisis affected all policies and impacted on all, particularly the most deprived.

**Carlos Susias, EAPN Spain closed the opening session by thanking the Minister and the Andalucían Network.**

**Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee**

***Presence****:*

*Exco Members: Stephan Backes EAPN Belgium, Maria Jeliazkova EAPN Bulgaria, Aleksandra Selak Zivkovic Croatia, Karel Schwarz EAPN Czech Republic, Per Thomsen EAPN Denmark, Kärt Mere EAPN Estonia, Tiina Saarela EAPN Finland, Samuel Le Floch EAPN France, Zoran Bikovski EAPN Macedonia, Alexander Kraake EAPN Germany, Maria Marinakou EAPN Greece, Krisztina Jasz EAPN Hungary, Tess Murphy EAPN Ireland, Letizia Cesarini EAPN Italy, Villborg Oddsdottir EAPN Iceland, Laila Blaga EAPN Latvia, Aiste Cerniauskaite EAPN Lithuania, Gilles Rod EAPN Luxembourg, Saviour Grima EAPN Malta, Johanna Engen EAPN Norway, Quinta Ansem EAPN Netherlands, Kamila Plowiec EAPN Poland, Sergio Aires EAPN Portugal, Raluca Manaila EAPN Romania, Jasmina Krunic EAPN Serbia, Alena Krempaska EAPN Slovakia, Carlos Susias EAPN Spain, Peter Kelly EAPN UK, Mike Stannett Salvation Army, Ruth Stannett Salvation Army, Luigi Leonori SMEs,*

*EAPN Secretariat: Barbara Helfferich, Philippe Lemmens , Sian Jones , Tanya Basarab , Nellie Epinat , Regina Mattsson, Sigrid Dahmen .*

*Apologies: Sonja Walbom, EAPN Sweden; Marie Cécile Renoux, ATD; Clotilde Clark Foulquier, Eurodiaconia, Freek Spinnewijn FEANTSA (replaced by Luigi Leonori).*

**1. Approval of the Draft Agenda and draft Minutes (June 2014) – Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

* **The draft Agenda was approved**
* **The draft minutes of the EXCO Meeting of June 2014 were approved.**

**2. Report of Activity by the Director – Information Item – Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

The Director presented the activity report. The President of EAPN spoke about the key meetings he had with the President of the European Parliament and the Social Protection Committee.

Further information was given on the EMIN project, which is coming to an end. A final conference will be held in December. There is hope that there will be funding for a second phase and that EAPN will be successful in the bid for the project. EAPN had worked particularly on social protection based around NN (5 working on it) focus groups, case studies on impact of social protection and health inequalities, and universities got interested. It was a job well done by national networks.

Information was also provided regarding activities related to the Semester Alliance Project. Doubts were expressed whether the Commission would continue to fund a second phase of the Alliance.

**3. Finances – Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

The Director presented the forecast of expenditure for 2014 for the core budget as well as the European Semester Alliance project.

Concerns were expressed about the expected deficit. The Director said that the existing social reserve could possibly compensate, but that it also needed refilling. EXCO members regretted that it was not possible to fund more of the staff costs through the under-spend in the Alliance budget, particularly since the work that went into the Semester Alliance had been more than anticipated.

The President summarized that the Commission set things up so that the solidarity among social NGOs is seriously tested.

**4. Presentation of the Work Programme 2015 as submitted to the Commission – Chair: Kärt Mere, Vice-President**

The Director presented the work programme for 2015.

The EXCO discussed the new approach of funding 15 pilot actions on Europe 2020, with a view of encouraging networks to work together. There was general approval of the new approach.

There were questions regarding the Strategic Plan. It was clarified that the strategic plan was for a 3-year period – reflecting the time of the mandate of the EXCO. The President also added that the EXCO should expect a draft Strategic Plan before its next meeting – the draft will be sent out in February 2015 in order to give networks a chance to consult with members. The draft Plan would include measurable indicators.

**Decision:**

* **Members of the EXCO supported the approach and approved the work programme.**
* **EXCO will receive a draft Strategic Plan before its next meeting**

**5. Presentation of the Budget 2015** – **Chair: Letizia Cesarini-Sforza, Vice President**

The Director presented the budget for 2015.

She explained that due to the cuts and the uncertainty around receiving additional funding for the second phase of the semester alliance, hard choices had to be made. She focused on the need to reduce spending on statutory meetings in light of the additional Strategic Congress for 2015. She said that a EUISG meeting and an EXCO meeting in parallel will be held a day before the Strategic Congress. The Congress in turn will be followed by the GA and the new EXCO which will meet after the GA. She said that the idea of pulling together several meetings stemmed from the desire to ensure as much participation as possible, both in the GA and the Strategic Congress. said it was also underlined that the Commission required a detailed budget of time spent working on any particular issue and that it would not only be necessary to do time budgeting, but that there was a need for developing indicators in order to measure the success of the actions undertaken by EAPN. Last but not least, it was reaffirmed that EAPN should continue to argue against this “project logic” funding and try to make the EC understand the nature of our organisation and why we should continue to be core funded.

**Decision:**

* **The EXCO approved the budget for 2015**

**6.** **European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty – Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

Discussion and Evaluation of the PeP Meeting 2014

The Chair invited the members of the EXCO to comment on the meeting of people experiencing poverty in 2014

Many EXCO members thought that the meeting had a positive impact enabling EAPN to carry the messages from the PeP to the right decision-makers. At the same time, the meeting also expressed the frustration with European policies do actually tackle poverty effectively. Some EXCO members felt that the meeting had been positive being a source of inspiration and motivation for delegates. However, some delegates did experience frustration when coming back to the national level.

There was a general sense of lack of continuity between meetings and between the European and national levels. Some EXCO members felt that the theme of the ESF was too far removed from the day-to-day experience of people experiencing poverty. They would have preferred a less technical subject. EXCO members also underlined the importance of the preparatory (and follow-up) process at national level.

**Conclusion of the Chair**

PeP expressed clearly what was missing in terms of ESF in simple and direct messages. The key message that came out of the meeting is now a valuable document which can be easily used by National Networks. He added that there was no identity crisis around this meeting and its role to strengthen the work to fight poverty. National Coordinators should continue to be the group responsible for it. The National Networks must make sure that good follow-up to the meeting. The meeting also proved that contacts with relevant journalists can give good visibility back home.

**7. Membership Development - Chair: Peter Kelly, Vice President**

Tanya Basarab presented the background to the concept note on establishing a Membership Development Group.

The membership development group is to be created following a proposal of the Bureau approved by the Exco. Volunteers were requested for this group. The following persons came forward:

Vilborg Oddsdottir (EAPN Iceland)

Jasmina Krunic (EAPN Serbia)

Tess Murphy (EAPN Ireland)

Sergio Aires (EAPN Portugal)

Luigi Leonori (SMES Europe)

Kamila Plowiec (EAPN Poland)

**Decision:**

* **The Group will meet as early as possible in order to work on its mandate and prepare its work in the context of the general work programme of EAPN.**

The Chair thanked the people who volunteered for the work.

**8. Fundraising – Sérgio Aires, President**

After the power point presentation around fundraising, EXCO members raised several issues. Regarding the type of projects which should be pursued by the EAPN Fund, a good number of EXCO members are developing work on women and poverty. Early school leavers and Roma were also mentioned in this context.

There was also a discussion about which of the EAPN bodies should be responsible for fundraising issues. Right now, the Bureau was shouldering a wide range of responsibilities. It was felt that an enlarged Bureau and new Membership Development Group should be able to support the smaller secretariat. It was however proposed to leave that question for next EXCO and the discussion about the mandate of the enlarged Bureau.

**Conclusion by the Chair:**

The enlarged Bureau and the new Membership Development Group should be able to support the smaller secretariat in its fundraising efforts. All other issues that were raised on this topic could well be part of the bigger discussion on the next strategic plan.

**PART II: STRATEGIC DISCUSSION**

**9. EAPN Evaluation – Chair: Letizia Cesarini-Sforza**

José Manuel Fresno (external consultant) presented the final report (Power Point Presentation), but focused on working methods and participation in governing bodies.

Members of the EXCO expressed their appreciation for the work and felt that it was a very good assessment evidenced by a balanced evaluation identifying also opportunities to improve. It was also felt that indicators were still needed and had been the subject of each previous evaluation. EXCO members felt that it was time to tackle it now. The President underlined that this was really a weak point, which prevented EAPN from looking at successes and failures in a constructive way.

The issue of advocacy vs capacity-building was raised underlining that both were compatible with each other and should not be seen as contradicting each other. Secondly, the question was raised whether different indictors should be used for NNs and Eos.

José Manuel Fresno responded that there needed to be a balance between capacity building and advocacy. On different indicators for Eos and NNs, he felt that for any evaluation, one needs evidence, i.e. measurable indicators and objectives. He added that one could also thing of having qualitative indicators.

The Chair thanked the external consultant for his excellent work.

**10. The Way Forward: Bureau Recommendations – Chair: Letizia Cesarini-Sforza**

The Chair explained that the Bureau would need to work further on its recommendations to the EXCO and in particular on the issues of indicators.

**Decision:**

* **The Bureau provide a draft Strategic Plan for discussion at the next EXCO outlining the objectives in a revised strategic plan as well as indicators for measurement. The Bureau will study the possibility of continuing to count on the support of the external consultant to support this area of work.**

**11. Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) – Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

Stephan Backes presented a power point presentation on TTIP

The Chair thanked Stephan for a brilliant presentation and underlined that EAPN should do something on it.

EXCO members also expressed their appreciation for the presentation. There was general agreement that EAPN would need to inform/facilitate discussion on TTIP. The EXCO asked for at least 3 people ready to prepare information and a simple position of EAPN (Alexander Kraake, Stephan Backes and Nellie Epinat) to draft something on TTIP. It was requested that the info document should be done as quickly as possible.

The Secretariat was asked to follow very closely any initiatives at European level and to continue to work on TTIP to the extent that resources allow it. The EXCO also felt that there was a need to disseminate information on TTIP more widely.

**Decision/Action Points:**

* **Stephan will continue to work on TTIP**
* **He agreed to prepare a presentation on this topic for the next meeting**
* **Nellie will contact information officers at national level to gather information and draft something for dissemination**
* **There will be an agenda point at the next EXCO agenda to see how far we are in the process**
* **Alexander Kraake ready to give input from the German network into a position paper of EAPN – no need of 40 pages but a short one with principles that we see important.**

**12. Alternative Economic Models: Chair: Sérgio Aires, President**

Maria Jeliazkova presented a Power Point on the work that EAPN had already done so far on alternative economic models.

She also presented some options for follow-up:

* EAPN could invite people from different alliances and alternative movements to speak, but EAPN needs to focus on something that is shared and is important.
* EAPN could use scenario-building methodologies – where we start from where we want to go and to trace the road, not the other way around – should be some choice among the types of activities so we will decide if it can be developed by the whole EXCO (has its value) or a small group to propose to the EXCO what could be done.
* It could be incorporated in EAPN’s activities (linked to PEP meetings, more like people’s assemblies, could be linked to membership development – 1st pillar policy work; task forces).

There was a follow-up discussion on why the working groups were suspended. The President explained that the approach had been deemed too fragmented and added much to the work load of the secretariat when it should have been member driven.

**Conclusion/Recommendations**

EAPN needs a more strategic approach. A group (including Maria Jeliazkova, Krisztina Jasz, and Maria Marinakou) should work with a concrete work plan without support from staff; it was felt that it was time for the EXCO to support secretariat and activities of EAPN. It was proposed to start with a mechanism – methodology of clusters of discussion (ex: Marshall Plan; social economy; inequality; fair taxation; governance; TTIP; Alliances etc.). This could be then done in small discussion groups, then back to plenary and back to groups. A second stage should examine whether there was consensus. No consensus should not mean that the issues would be entirely dropped, just that it should not be followed too closely for the time being. In parallel, EAPN should think about participating and reinforcing some alliance engagement – ex: must be stronger in Social Platform. EAPN could also consider Inviting people to address EXCO meetings. Due to financial reasons this would be most likely be in Brussels.

**13. Co-ordinating the Convention – Chair: Peter Kelly, Vice President**

The President introduced the point explaining that EAPN used to have a very strong role and representation in the Convention. He pointed out that EAPN will bring 38 participants in delegations or by invitation.

The Director explained the set up at the Convention as well as the activities that EAPN was going to be engaged in. EAPN key messages were drafted on the basis of key messages from PEP and EUISG.

EAPN Spain will be quite visible and EAPN will be involved with 4 side events. The Social Minister will be participating on behalf of Estonia. From Italy people will come that belong to the national network.

There was a general agreement that the amendment from FEANTSA would not be considered and voted on as their representative was not there to present or defend it.

**14. Any Other Business -** **Chair: Peter Kelly, Vice President**

1. Relations with FEANTSA:

After several informal questions and demands from Exco members, following the exchange of messages between FEANTSA’s Director, Freek Spinnewijn, and EAPN Director (sent by the first one to all the Exco members) and an agreement that the accusations exchanged were matter of serious preoccupation for EAPN, the President, on behalf of the Bureau, asked the EXCO to give the Bureau the mandate to send a letter to the President of FEANTSA requesting a meeting to discuss on-going issues connected to the relationship between FEANTSA and EAPN. This is even more urgent since there were already problems between the organisations for some time, but particularly due to the most recent events (the mentioned exchange of e-mails), it seemed even more urgent to move to resolve these difficulties as soon as possible. He added that it would be necessary to have these issues resolved through a face to face meeting.

Luigi Leonori, SMES Europa explained that he had a meeting with 4 EOs, including FEANTSA. He said that the issue of transparency had been raised at that meeting.

The EXCO overwhelmingly supported the proposal of the Bureau. It was also pointed out that a distinction had to be made between individual behaviour and an organisation like FEANTSA. It was hope that the relationship between FEANTSA and EAPN, with their common actions, targets and aims, could be safeguarded.

**Decision:**

* **The EXCO voted for sending a letter requesting a meeting with Mike Allen.**
* **Mike Stannett, from the Salvation Army abstained explaining that he did not know the entire history of the matter.**

The meeting closed at 13:30.

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on the 13th and 14th of March – two full days.