**2 July 2014**

**(Draft) Minutes of the EAPN Statutory General Assembly 2014**

**Tallinn 28th of June 2014**

1. **Ratification of Delegates:** The delegate list as circulated (GA Doc No 12) was **approved unanimously.**
2. **Apologies and Nomination of Proxies:** Apologies were received from Nicos Satsias, EAPN Cyprus. The following proxies were given:

* FEANTSA (Freek Spinnewijn) gave proxy to AGE (Maciej Kucharczyk)
* Babelea gave proxy to EAPN France (Samuel le Floch)
* Eurodiaconia (Clotilde Clark-Foulquier) gave proxy to Tiina Saarela (EAPN Finland)

1. **Ratification of changes to the Executive Committee**

Samuel LE FLOCH was **unanimously elected** to replace Olivier Marguery in representation of EAPN France in the Exco.

Verena Fabris announced that she would step down as the EAPN Austria representative to the Exco. Her replacement will be announced later. Verena was thanked for her contribution as Exco member.

1. **Approval of the Agenda:** The agenda was **approved unanimously**.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the 2013 General Assembly:** The minutes (GA Doc No 3) were **approved unanimously**.
3. **Activity Report 2013:** Barbara as Director presented the activity report 2013 (GA Doc No 4). The Director and Secretariat were thanked for the enormous work they did to deliver the work programme particularly in a year where they had to face substantial budget cuts.The activity report was **adopted unanimously**.
4. **Financial Report and Auditors Report:** Philippe as Finance Officer presented the Financial Reports Income and Expenditure for the Core Grant, Auditors reports of core grant (GA Docs No 5 and 6). The 2013 Balance sheet and the Auditors report for the end of Year 2013 were tabled at the GA (see appendix). He explained the situation with the reported loss as being in relation to the legal severance pay associated to the fact that EAPN had to let people go and that this loss should come off the books in 2014. He and the President thanked the members and in particular EAPN Spain and Belgium for all the efforts they make so that we could reach our matching funds requirements. There was a question about whether EAPN still had some reserve if they had to let staff go and it was explained that there is still some reserve to be seen in our balance sheet and that EAPN would, when it had the means, try to build up this reserve again. The financial report was **accepted unanimously**.
5. **Discharge of Members:** Following adoption of the financial reports the delegates to the GA **unanimously granted discharge** to the members of the Executive Committee.
6. **Appointment of Auditors:** CdP DE Wulf & Co were **unanimously re appointed** as Auditors. Sergio Aires as President informed the delegates that for no other reason than for good governance that the Bureau will be proposing a change of auditors at the 2015 GA.
7. **Adoption of Work Programme 2015:** The draft Work Programme (GA Doc No 7) was presented by the President. He informed that given that the situation with regards to the funding applications the future it is still not fully clear and that’s why it can only be a draft work programme. The draft work programme follows the main lines as last year’s work programme but Sergio Aires outlined some changes in line with decisions made at the Exco. Comments on the draft work programme included:
   * That it is important that the work programme makes a priority to address the new institutional and political realities and asked who would be the reference person in the secretariat for follow up with the Institutions.
   * The work programme needs to pick up on the ideas that were developed in the world café discussion of the previous day.
   * Suggestions were made to have task forces on: poverty and migration and the feminization of poverty.
   * It was pointed out that the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will have major impacts on our work and should get attention in EAPN.
   * Questions were asked about what could be done to relieve pressure on staff in light of cuts.
   * If we allocate resources for the strategic congress what gets cut?
   * Will the Intergroup on democracy and participation not divert resources and is an inter group on poverty not more of a priority.
   * It was stressed that the work programme must take account of the conditions attached to the Funding call under the EASI (new PROGRESS programme).

Sergio Aires responded that we need to bring forward a strong work programme and application to the Commission in line with staff resources. He pointed out that no amendments to the draft work programme were received but that the suggestions that were made can still be considered, particularly when we are approving a draft work programme. What is there now and proposed for voting is just a draft and that ideas that were developed in the world café and previously agreed positons will need to be detailed in the final version of the work programme and application to the Commission. The Exco and Bureau will have to take its responsibilities to develop the final version, which will have to take account of the institutional and political changes. He said the next Exco meeting will discuss the TTIP.

The draft 2015 work programme was **adopted by large majority with 1 delegation voting against and 1 abstention, carrying 6 votes**.

1. **Adoption of Draft Budget 2015**

Philippe presented the draft budget for 2015 (GA Doc No 8.1 and 8.2) which was developed in line with the draft work programme. He pointed out that the draft core budget was about 230.000 Euro above the maximum we could expect from the Core budget application. The President pointed out that the Bureau wanted to have a core budget with all expenses and that would keep staff at present levels and be sufficient for the draft work programme to be delivered. In the end some choices will have to be made such as combining some meetings with the Strategic Congress to reduce overall costs. The Director pointed out that the gap of 230.000 is equivalent to the amount we could hope to receive if we were successful in getting a second round of the Semester alliance project.

The Budget was **adopted unanimously**.

1. **Application of New Members**

***EAPN Latvia:*** The presentation for membership from EAPN Latvia (GA Doc No 9) was presented by Laila Balga. A full presentation of the Network had been made at the previous Exco meeting. She particularly thanked colleagues in EAPN Lithuania and the Nordic region for their support in setting up the Network. There was a **unanimous vote to accept the application** from EAPN Latvia.

***EAPN Croatia:***

Back-ground: A full presentation of the Network had been made at the previous Exco meeting where Aleksandra Selak [Živković](http://www.cisp.htnet.hr/tkosmomi.htm) had made a presentation about the application to join EAPN on behalf of the Croatian Anti Poverty Network – CAPN. She had clarified the situation with the competing antipoverty Croatian network, called Pulse of the Nation – they focus more on humanitarian aid and charity, rather than empowerment and strategic action, so there is no reason why the two cannot merge in one network. CARITAS Croatia is very actively involved, but, for statutory reasons, declined membership in the network – apparently, this also happens in other countries (eg, Italy). Gilles, EXCO member from Luxembourg, had suggested that CARITAS Europa could try to mediate this situation, because in other countries (Spain, Luxemburg etc) they are essential members of the national antipoverty network. Carlos and Maria Jeliazkova made points about making poverty (and its causes) more visible in the Croatian APN documents, including in the Vision. ***The EXCO supported CAPN’s application by unanimity.***

The presentation for membership from EAPN Croatia (GA Doc No 6) was presented by Aleksandra Selak Zivkovic. She spoke about the extra motivation being accepted as EAPN member will bring to their work and how they looked forward to contributing to EAPN’s work.

There was a **unanimous vote to accept the application** from EAPN Croatia.

**13) The discussion about the final declaration was moved to the final point of the General Assembly.**

**PART II: NON-STATUTORY**

**Mid-Term Review of Europe 2020 (11h30 – 13h00)**

EAPN Policy Coordination Sian Jones introduced the discussion – see PowerPoint presentation. A lively debate followed, with delegates underlining the need for the document to be ambitious and to start with our own stock-taking of the situation, highlighting the devastating impact of current austerity policies on the social objectives of Europe 2020, particularly the poverty target – which is far from being reached, while progress is also marred by inconsistent indicators and contradictory messages and policies from the European Commission. Members also stressed the need to continue to make the causal link with inequalities and redistribution, and to put forward our own vision of sustainable development - however, it was recognized that such a vision needs to be developed through more discussion in EAPN, integrating the climate dimension, and linking also to the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership. Members also stressed the need to strongly demand universal provision of benefits and services, quality of work and employment, as well as specific measures for different groups, including children, families, young people, and older people, among others.

**Next steps:** The draft paper will be emailed to members for comments. It will be annexed to the EAPN overall contribution to the Mid-Term Review Consultation. Members are invited to also respond individually to this consultation – deadline 31st October.

**Follow-up to the European Election – Making EAPN’s voice heard in the process of institutional change. Post-election planning (GA Doc N11).**

The presentation by the Director gave an overview of EAPN’s achievements in its EP Elections Campaign and presented a chronology of what is expected to happen in terms of formation of the newly elected European Parliament and the appointment of the next European Commission. The presentation included a proposal of what actions EAPN should take at European and member level to achieve its objectives. She also pointed out that the European Council just agreed on the future priorities of the European and put forward a new Strategic Agenda, which could point to a new direction, reflecting several EAPN’s concerns and key messages over the last years. She said that the Strategic Agenda acknowledges the need to tackle social exclusion, poverty, unemployment and inequalities; she added that reference is was also made to create more and better jobs; that safety nets are in place – to support change and reverse inequalities. She referred to the Annex to Council conclusions which refer to the problem of aging of European society; rising youth unemployment, and the need to create more and better jobs; as well as the need to reduce the tax wedge on labour.

Members appreciated the power point presentation and asked for it to be made available (see annex). AGE Platform Europe has prepared questions for the hearing of the new Commissioners which EAPN has supported. It was suggested that:

* EAPN prepare a separate list of questions to be sent to candidates for Commissioners (can be done with EUISG group, all recommendations in the mid-term review paper are a good basis for such questions).
* It’s important to show that EAPN is present from the very beginning. It was also pointed out that it would be good to use the argument of disillusionment of people with EP elections and what EU means to citizens;
* A change is needed and we should be pioneering – targeting all negative aspects of it. Working around a European agenda that does not engage with the majority of citizens in Europe is challenging. There will be a change in course because of the pressure from outcomes of EP elections.
* EAPN needs to develop internally a vision on reforming the tax system (tax watch is very important) to contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequalities.

The Bureau said that it is important to support a renewal of an inter-group on extreme poverty so EAPN is trying to liaise with Marie-Cecile, but underlined that democracy and participation were broader questions and EAPN Elections Campaign focused a lot on that, including developing the idea of a hearing with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion in the EP is part of EAPN’s overall approach.

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| **Next steps**  **Secretariat:**   * will draft a list of questions and will circulate them to members; * Will work with EAPN Luxembourg and Bureau to send a letter to Junker; * Background information received from members on candidates for new   Commissioners will be disseminated to all members.   * Barbara will coordinate all the actions from the Secretariat   **National Networks:**   * will adapt and contextualize the questions drafted by the Secretariat and contact their newly elected * MEPs (those that supported the EAPN Manifesto but also other ones) – it was agreed that it’s the responsibility of members to get the questions asked during hearings of candidate Commissioners. * Will report to the secretariat on what actions they take at national level * Will help inform the whole network on the candidates for Commissioners from their own countries. * EAPN Luxembourg will work with EAPN Europe to send a letter to Junker. |

**Closing Plenary (15h30 – 16h00)**

**Adoption of GA Final Declaration**

The president Sergio Aires introduced the Final Declaration (GA Doc No 10) and the discussion. A lively debate followed, with some delegates underlining the incoherence of what is said in the document and what was said during EXCO and GA. Some delegates didn’t feel comfortable with a declaration full of thanks and congratulations to institutions which have not delivered on their promises in relation to fighting poverty and indeed have pursued policies which create more poverty and social divisions. Some delegates proposed to change the document, but the President pointed out the impossibility of changing it without changing the procedure, adding that the members should have sent their amendments by the deadline in the GA procedures document. It was also pointed out that the intention behind the final declaration was to follow up on our election campaign and that the content of the final declaration was consistent with our election campaign messages. It was pointed out that the aim was to try to build relations and supporters within the MEPs elected and to start a dialogue with MEPs who signed our election pledge to get them to follow through on this commitment. The concern about prioritising lobbying for an inter-group on democracy and participation instead of an intergroup on poverty and inequality was raised.

In response to the discussions it was agreed that in relation to the inter group on poverty EAPN would speak with ATD Fourth World. It was also agreed that the Press release we make based on our Final Declaration should reflect our conviction that a real change in political direction is needed. It was also agreed that if possible we would put in the Final Declaration the exact number of MEPs elected who signed our election pledge. It was also agreed that the Final Declaration would note that EAPN Latvia and EAPN Croatia were elected and welcomed into EAPN membership.

**The GA voted the Final declaration.**

**Votes: Majority vote for;**

**One delegation against carrying 4 votes**

**Thanks**

Sérgio and Letizia thanked the Estonian network and in particular Kart and all the volunteers involved for all the work they did to provide perfect conditions for our meeting. The interpreters, the technicians and the secretariat were also warmly thanked for their work.