

REPORT

EAPN STRATEGIC CONGRESS

BILBAO 2-4 July 2015

**Business School Buildings of the Deusto University**

EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK

RÉSEAU EUROPÉEN DES ASSOCIATIONS DE LUTTE CONTRE LA PAUVRETÉ ET L’EXCLUSION SOCIALE

SQUARE DE MEEÛS, 18 – 1050 BRUSSELS

TEL: 0032 2 226 58 50 – FAX: 0032 2 226 58 69 ~ team@eapn.eu ~ www.eapn.eu

EAPN – STRATEGIC CONGRESS

BILBAO, JULY 2015

Conference Venue:

Meeting rooms:

Wifi-code:

Draft Programme

9.00 – 9.30 Registration

9.30 – 10.30 Plenary - Welcome address & opening session

* Sr. José María Guibert, Rector Universidad de Deusto
* Sra. Salomé Adroher, Directora General de Servicios a la Familia y la Infancia (MSSSI)
* Sra. Susanne Conze, Representante de la Comisión Europea - Policy Officer at DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labor mobility
* Sr. Sergio Aires, Presidente de EAPN EU
* Sr. Iñigo Urkullu, Lehendakari de Euskadi

**10.30-11.00 Coffee Break**

**“What is Your Vision of a Europe Free of Poverty?**

**Priorities, policies and actions**

**11.00-12.30** Keynote Speech and Debate:

**Towards an integrated strategy to combat poverty. The role of social policies such as minimum income and the importance of the participation of Third Sector organizations and individuals with experience in poverty as essential elements for combating poverty and social exclusion.**

Keynote Speaker: Imanol Zubero, Doctor en Sociología y Profesor de la Universidad del País Vasco

Chair: Carlos Susías, Presidente de EAPN-ES

Discussants:

* Jana Hainsworth, Presidenta de la Plataforma Social Europea
* Susanne Conze, Representative of the European Commission - DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labor mobility
* Letizia Sforza, Vice President of EAPN
* Javier Salgado, Coordinador Grupo de Participación Estatal de EAPN-ES

**“Towards a New Strategic Plan for EAPN”**

**EAPN has being working on the European Semester, as this is the key driver mechanism of the forthcoming years in European convergence and monetary union. How can we be more innovative and more efficient in criticizing the current neo-liberal political approach to the EU’s economy and pretended solutions imposed on countries under the corrective arm of the Stability and Growth Pact? How can we influence the European Commission and strengthen the Social Dimension of the EMU. How to put forward a Directive on Minimum Income successfully? What is our roadmap that will make us matter more?**

**EAPN needs to reshape its 3-year-Strategic Plan to help bring about a more Social Europe where the voices of people experiencing poverty gain influence on policy makers. How can EAPN best face the challenges of finance, capacity and governance?**

**12:30 – 13:00 I. Presentation of the Draft Strategic Plan and Methodology by the Director of EAPN**

-------------------------

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break

**14.00 – 16:00 II. Definition of Strategic Objectives and Priority Outcomes**

Participants divide into 4 Working Groups based on the four Strategic Objectives.

16.00 – 16:30 Coffee Break

**16:30 – 17:00 Plenary – Report back from the Working Groups**

**17.00 - 18.00 II. Plenary Discussion**

* On results of the workshops: questions, answers discussion

**18.00 – 19:00 III. Plenary: Recommendations to the GA for a New Strategic Plan:**

 Wrap-up by EAPN President Sérgio Aires

* Presentation of the Recommendations to the General Assembly
* Follow-up process

**Introduction and Overview**

EAPN General Assembly in 2012 decided that EAPN will hold a strategic congress in 2015 in order to take stock of the EAPN’s work over the last five years, but more importantly decide on EAPN’s new strategic orientation. The Strategic Congress 2015 was the culmination of an almost year and half long process of evaluation, stock taking and consultation with EAPN members accompanied by an external evaluation.

**The Strategic Congress** was designed to take account of the current economic and political trends and to discuss how the work of EAPN fitted into these trends. It addressed questions such as what EAPN could do to better fight poverty in Europe? What should EAPN concentrate on in the years to come? What are the lessons learned from the last Strategic Framework and how it helped to fight poverty? What needs to be done to improve stakeholder participation and what is EAPN’s vision for the future?

The Strategic Congress brought together the representatives of the entire European Network which comprises 31 national and 18 European Networks from all over the European Union. Representatives were elected by the national and European networks to represent them at the European level.

On the first day EAPN held the meeting of its Executive Committee (41 persons attended) and the meeting of its EU Inclusion Strategies Group in parallel.

On the second day EAPN’s first Strategic Congress was held with 125 participants from 31 different European Countries. The first session was also attended by 25 guests from the Spanish and Euskadi network.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The plenary session was opened by the following persons:

* Mr. José María Guibert, President of the University of Deusto
* Mr. Juan María Aburto, Mayor of Bilbao
* Mrs. Salomé Adroher, Director General of Family & Child Services (MSSSI)
* Mrs. Susanne Conze, Policy Officer at DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, European Commission
* Mr. Sérgio Aires, President of EAPN
* Mr. Iñigo Urkullu, Lehendakari, Euskadi

Key speaker: Imanol Zubero, Phd in Sociology and Professor at Basque Country University

Facilitator: Carlos Susías, President of EAPN-ES

Comments were made by the following persons

* Jana Hainsworth, President of the Social Platform
* Susanne Conze, Policy Officer at DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility,
* European Commission
* Letizia Cesarini Sforza, Vice-President of EAPN
* Javier Salgado, Coordinator of EAPN-ES Participation Group

**Proceedings**

**PART I: THE POLITICAL CONTEXT**

**9.30 to 10.30**

Welcome and thanks from Carlos Susias, President of EAPN ES to participants.

* **Mr José María Guibert, President of the University of Deusto**

Mr Guibert underlined that Europe is facing worrying trends of growing poverty and inequality, with increasing difficulties faced by key target groups. Wealth must be created through growth and jobs, but distributed fairly, tackling inequality, poverty and social equity. “We need to intervene and support those who suffer most from the results of this inequitable system. The University of Deusto is a Christian University that supports the 3rd Sector in its work, providing education, training, research and support to participation. The University has a new strategic plan to create interactive multidisciplinary platforms to work on key priorities, poverty, gender, social justice and social inclusion, organizing mixed research teams to exchange with the 3rd Sector and other actors. In this context we strongly welcome EAPN to the University”.

* **Mr Juan María Aburto, Mayor of Bilbao**

The Mayor welcomed EAPN to the city of Bilbao. ”Poverty is one of the most serious problems faced by our society and cannot be justified. We cannot remain silent and must work together to change the policies. This conference will contribute to these changes. In the Basque Country we have a good social protection system, with a guaranteed Minimum Income, access to housing, backed by the strong commitment of the Basque country with the most vulnerable. Our greatest commitment is that nobody is left behind. The aims are simple – to enable people to lead a decent life, and have a cohesive city and country. The viability of the Social Protection system, agrees with the foundation of the EU. We want to build a real Social Europe with the economy at the service of people, not slaves to an economic system. Limited resources must be managed with equity, equality and justice, fighting xenophobia and racism. What is unsustainable and indecent is Poverty, when we have enough food for everybody. It is also the source of fanaticism. Work is the main vehicle for integration, but our system is making this impossible. Everyone is now my competitor. A job with a decent salary is a privilege and flexible jobs without rights become the norm. We have to have a solidarity-based and sustainable vision, not prioritize individualism and rivalry, losing our values. We must focus on employment but also solidarity and promoting well-being. We have to open a window to hope for a future together. We have to hope to be entitled to dream. I believe in politics as an instrument for social transformation. Let’s together work for this so that everybody can lead a decent life.”

* **Mrs Salomé Adroher, Director General of Family & Child Services (MSSSI)**

Ms Adroher congratulated EAPN on its work in the fight against poverty working with and for the most vulnerable. “The Adminstrations at different levels are co-responsible in the fight to promote social inclusion. We see the 3rd Sector as an essential ally. EAPN was founded in 1991 and re-founded in 2004. It is now an essential ally for Social Inclusion policies for the government and seen as strategic interlocutors, in collaboration with the European network. We have 3 lines of joint work: 1) to consolidate the legal framework, 2) to guarantee funding, and 3) to recognize you as an essential interlocutor/stakeholder in the policy process. We are currently working together on a new legal and financial framework, and in the areas of procurement. But of all these, the most important is governance. With our joint Council we work constructively together. EAPN has worked with all regional governments since the start of the National Plans on social inclusion and now with other initiatives. You are a critical, but constructive partner, and always faithful to your goals. Your way of working with people experiencing poverty is crucial. For example in our work together developing the Law on Children, you insisted that we listen to children, to people in poverty, as they are essential to design the policies. The only way to get good policies is to listen to the people.”

* **Mrs Suzanne Conze, Policy Officer, DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour**

Ms Conze thanked EAPN for the chance to participate in the discussion. “This Strategic Congress takes place in troubled times, even without mentioning Greece, UK, migration, TTIP which form the background to our discussions. The reality is very complex. The 5 Presidents Report has been published about the future of the EMU. President Juncker said that to complement this, the EMU must be more socially fair. He aims for upward social convergence, between Member States and regions, with more focus on employment and social performance. Access to education and social protection is crucial. The Commissioners had an orientation debate at the beginning of June, where they discussed the future of Social Europe. We are at the beginning of this debate: defining a social protection and rights floor. How can this impact positively on social inclusion/poverty and how can we achieve it? On long term Unemployment there will be a Council Recommendation shortly, looking at employment rights, tackling working poor and striving to stop a race to the bottom. This is all in line with recent statements of Commissioner Thyssen. Civil Society is crucial in this debate and goes hand in hand with the social dimension. Democratic society needs civil society and active participation. More selfishly, from the Commission it is essential to have a better understanding from the perspective of people who are in poverty or unemployed. The EMIN project is a good example as it provides a different perspective on minimum income, than a research think tank. The European Platform Against Poverty is a key instrument in the current framework, however we are reviewing Europe 2020. In the Autumn, we will make this process more efficient. The social initiative for 2016 needs to be prepared so we want focussed thematic meetings with stakeholders, leading to a Convention early next year which can conclude on the proposals. It will be a complex process and we have to convince players and governments. The meeting of people experiencing poverty is crucial, to bring in their voice to social policies. Inequality is not bringing us forward in Europe and this puts social cohesion is at stake. We now have an opportunity to make progress together”.

* **Mr Sérgio Aires, President of EAPN**

Mr Aires thanked the Basque network, the City and University for hosting the Assembly.

“We are here at a historic moment, with democracy at stake. Poverty is an indicator of this. We must look at the causes and not be blinded by the consequences of a totally wrong model of society. There are 2 clear signs. Firstly, the humanitarian crisis of migration shows the founding principles of the EU are at stake. Secondly, we have the damaging economic solutions proposed to the crisis, based on austerity. These unbalanced proposals based on lies are damaging our democracy. On behalf of EAPN we want to show our solidarity with Greek colleagues, but also to underline that the same problems are suffered in most countries. Is the EU Responding adequately? We think that we are not. 123 million people are at risk of poverty. This figure is out of date, and are an underestimate. Is there any serious action to change this? We hear nice words and opportunities offered, but in the end it’s the same road. Even the hopes raised in 2010, with Europe 2020, are being dashed. There’s been a revision of the strategy with a consultation last year. We should have had the new proposals this year, but we have nothing. Nothing about the poverty target, with no signs of political will. The lack of stakeholder engagement is crucial. Member States are mainly responsible, but this is not just about implementation, we need to be in the design and the evaluation. This is what participation means. Instead we have no strategy, and a blind continuation along the road to disaster. What’s our solution? We are clear: We should be honest about who is responsible and where the money is going. We need to have the courage to regulate the financial markets imposing a Financial Transaction Tax. We must try to find where the money has gone and take some action. We have to close tax havens. Is it possible to have social justice within this context? In the Basque Country, social protection is seen as an investment and an engine for the economy not an enemy. We must stop saying it’s a luxury. It is a crucial element for healthy and equal societies. The argument is used that there is no money – but where is this money? Who spent it? We must stop the privatisation of public services and goods which are essential for human life – starting with water, also in the context of TTIP. Employment is crucial, but not at any cost nor any kind of employment. There are a significant number of poor who are workers and work is increasingly precarious. We must continue to invest more in the social economy as partners, and the involvement of people experiencing poverty is crucial. Finally, Structural Funds, the 20% of ESF is a good sign, but what is going on? In some Member States they are not implementing the new frame, fighting poverty is considered to almost anything. We lack a European integrated antipoverty strategy so it is difficult for Member States to implement an effective poverty strategy as they are required to. We are missing also other targets: child and elderly poverty, tackling homelessness, promoting education and supporting Roma, achieving an adequate minimum income for everybody. But we also need to raise hope. We still believe in democracy and believe that poverty is a political choice. We must go back to EU foundations and bring peace and democracy, and do this quickly, before it is too late.

* **Mr Inigo Urkully, Lehendakari, Euskadi**

Mr Urkully highlighted that he wanted to offer a realistic, objective and critical vision for an EU free of poverty and social exclusion. “The social impact of the crisis has been much greater than we expected, with the decline in employment, combined with labour reform has had a major impact. We’ve managed to survive, but the social crisis continues. Today we are still dealing with this: the stagnation or decline of wages, even worse for the unemployed, and lack of work opportunities. We have large groups of long-term unemployed or who only have access to precarious work. Youth are important, but are mainly protected by their families. 88% of the unemployed are over 25 and 2/3 have direct responsibility for their households. Poverty has increased. In 2008, 4.2% were poor, now in 2014 it is 5.9%, from the Survey carried out by the Basque Government. We need information to have a realistic vision and this we’ve been building over the last 25 years. However, these figures don’t reflect the full reality. Mitigation of poverty and inequality has come about through the full income guarantee started 25 years ago. It covers different benefits ie housing, emergencies etc and it was key to limit the social impact of the crisis, compared to other regions. The benefits are not just to provide access to minimum resources, but contribute to the long-term preservation of the economy. We have the highest per capita income in Spain, 39% higher than average. So social investment in the income guarantee has had clear positive effects. Social policies have been crucial to revitalise the Basque economy. Our goal is the people and this is our priority. But we must talk about the future. The Basque country has built a consensus on social services, favouring collaboration with the third sector in order to ensure the sustainability of the social protection system. Fighting poverty also requires advocating towards different stimuli, encouraging new sectors of growth and investment. Only in this way can we achieve a cohesive society and guarantee public services in the future.

**11:00 – 12:30 KEYNOTE SPEECH AND DISCUSSION**

**Towards an integrated strategy to combat poverty: the role of policies**

**such as Minimum Income and the importance of the participation**

**of Third Sector organisations and individuals with experience of poverty**

 **as essential elements in the fight against poverty and exclusion**

**Imanol Zubero, PhD in Sociology and Professor at the Basque Country University**

I would like to thank you for the invitation to be here today. Usually, people who come to these events know even better than me what the situation is on the ground. I will start with a Greek myth – as you know, Europe was kidnapped by Zeus, the King of the Gods. Today, Greece is being kidnapped for a second time, by the God of Fear. We all face a lot of insecurity right now – the latest Eurostat (2014) says that 39% of European citizens have a positive view of the EU, 37% have a neutral view, and 22% have a negative view. 62% do not trust their national Parliaments, and 50% do not trust their Governments. People feel that their voice does not matter. More than half of our citizens are optimistic about the future of Europe, but over 40% are pessimistic, and think the worst is yet to come. These are fears and insecurities that block us and incapacitate us from critical thinking, leading to individual and collective selfishness. It is a weakening of the social fabric and social cohesion, coupled with democratic failure. If “need” is dominant in our lives, then there is no freedom. Human beings depend on their biological and social condition – first, we need to live, and then we can meditate about our surroundings. We need personal and physical wellbeing to be able to exercise our critical thinking. This idea is attributed to Thomas Hobbes, but even if it is not really his, it fits well with his philosophy. He was, maybe, the philosopher who best understood the need for collective security. If material needs are not met, we can’t face society in order to build a real human experience in our lives. Trying to find individual solutions to systemic problems is not the way. “Freedom from want” is the fundamental basis of the welfare state, ever since its inception in 1948. Ignorance, misery, hardship are not conducive to social progress in communities and societies. These words are still so true today. Social security starts from a needs assessment, we need to provide enough security to people, guaranteed by the State, a protective, peaceful, and democratic Leviathan. But reality is not this way today. The Joseph Rountree Foundation documents well the poverty now happening in the UK, for instance, and that it has risen by a third since 2008. We have a Europe 2020 Strategy, which aims at reducing poverty by at least 20 million people, but in reality, we have 9 million more people in poverty, reaching 1 in 4 citizens of the European Union. We are no longer in a post-war context, like in 1948. Wealth is growing fast, but it is distributed very unequally – among countries, and among the people in these countries. 10% of the richest people own more than half of the wealth of Europe, while the rest owns less than 10%. In the Treaty of Rome, in 1957, social dialogue was already mentioned as a fundamental part of the European process, at the heart of the European construction. But those days are gone. Trade unions are weak now, with limited capacity for both protest, as well as for putting forward proposals. 25% of contracts in Spain today have a duration of only 7 days. In 2013, a third of Spanish employees received wages of 600 euro or less. 46% of Spanish employees make less than 1000 euro a month. Having a job is no guarantee against poverty, only 35% of Spanish workers are not poor. This precarisation is further weakening trade union power, which, in turn, weakens their bargaining power. The most vulnerable people, communities, and regions are less and less able to have a voice for their own rights. This questions the entire European idea, and what it was based on. We need minimum income, basic income, decent work. But what I want to focus on is not *how* to achieve this collective security, but *why* we must do it. We need solidarity, trust, compromise, loyalty. The ILO reported that, if we were to sum up the development of our countries since the 90s, that word would be “insecurity”, including in countries we consider rich and developed. The OECD, in 1997, was saying “There is a vision of a very dynamic, flexible and productive economy, coupled with a weak and precarious society”. These are words – but there are real people who live this situation every day. The failure of the State to guarantee security has translated in mistrust, rejection, or even hatred of the institutional structures we have in our countries. An example of liberalism which incorporates social concerns was Ralf Dahrendorf, who said in 2006 “The systematic gap between opportunities that different groups have is incompatible with the idea of civil society”. Using part of our resources to support those in vulnerable situations is a political choice. This is not the privilege of some, but a responsibility for all. If Europe is to be a real community, we need to get back civil and social dialogue between equals – not between rich and poor, between privileged and weak, between North and South etc. This dialogue is currently under threat. We need to involve social organisations alongside trade unions, because they know best what exclusion is and how to fight it. Including the excluded, giving them a voice is one of the first duties deriving from our shared understanding of equality. The third sector organisations are an invaluable asset to the European project, and to any project. Pablo Neruda was writing “Who are those who are suffering? I don’t know, but they are my people”. Coming back to the Greek mythology, Europe was born out of a kidnapping. What happens today in Greece will be fundamental for our future as a continent, as a community. Let’s hope that we will choose the right path, towards a Europe truly united in diversity. We need to give people the opportunity to be the protagonists of their own lives, free from want and hardship.

**Letizia Cesarini Sforza, Vice-President of EAPN**

It has been a privilege to be here and listen to the previous speaker. I would like to come back to the idea of a European community, where wealth is shared. We are one of the richest regions in the world. The social part of Europe 2020 has been abandoned, but nobody has the courage to say this. We need honesty – we are never going to have 20 million people less in poverty by 2020. Immigration is another great challenge, and we are just at the beginning. We should look at the causes of this phenomenon. No parent would put their own children on a precarious boat, if they felt land was safer. These people are coming because they are desperate, because they have no choice. We need new forms of solidarity, strong ones, also with Greece, because we cannot have people who don’t have access to food in this day and age. We need to say this loud and clear, but it is not enough to say it – we need a place at the table, so that we are taken into account. For that, we need resources, we need support to do our job and play our role. People need adequate resources for a dignified life, which is why adequate minimum income is fundamental.

**Jana Hainsworth, President of the Social Platform**

I have been President of the Social President since May, and I am Secretary General of Eurochild. I want to thank Professor Zuber deeply for his very inspiring intervention this morning. We are all extremely lucky to be here today, and we need to thank the European Commission for supporting us to have this space of exchange and solidarity here today – we must never take this for granted in the world that we live in. The one certainty we have these days is uncertainty. But we have a European Network fighting for the right cause, at grass root level and at the highest level, working together. Civil society is such a fundamental part of our communities, and we need to strengthen their voice. We are not social partners – we promote diversity, we promote difference of opinion, and we need to keep doing that. We work with people who are angry, hurt, and desperate. We are facing enormous challenges, but we also have a unique opportunity to build a new narrative.

I would like to speak about empathy, at three different levels:

* cognitive empathy, when you speak to someone whom you understand. It is very important to understand where people are coming from, even if their background is extremely different than ours.
* emotional empathy, which is the ability to connect with someone who is suffering, and the understanding that no one is safe, any one of us can fall into hardship.
* spiritual empathy, where we care for each other and want to build a better world for all, not just for those we like and can identify with. This is, probably, the biggest fight we have.

We are not here to fight our own corner – this has not worked so far, and it won’t work. The psychological impact of the austerity measures, documented in the UK by the Psychologists’ Association, is extremely severe. It fuelled individualism and a breakdown of the social fabric. Children learn quickly that they don’t have control over their lives – we need to change that. We need to empower people from day 1 of their lives and show them that we listen, we understand, and we are responsive to their needs. Our entire social welfare system is not built on empowerment and rights, but rather on charity and condescendence. We also need security and safety. The fragility of our societies is so tangible, people are scared and feel vulnerable. Also, connectedness – can we rely on our families, on our peers, on our communities. There is a sense of fragmentation, we don’t have the time to interact with the people around us, to listen to them, to engage. We need to change this.

**Javier Salgado, Coordinator of the EAPN-ES Participation Group**

We speak about needs, about solidarity, about the welfare state. These are words I don’t understand. I understand hunger, cold, disempowerment. Civil society, EAPN, other organisations, do their best to bring these real words to the public forum. But there is no political will to take this into account. People need to grow and feel safe, and for that, they need decent jobs. It is not just about money, it is about having a purpose, feeling useful, contributing to society and to our communities. If you want to talk about policies, let’s speak about policies that prioritise this. What can we do to improve wellbeing and dignity? Decent jobs allow people to have a future and hold their head up high, but they are also the engine of any economy. We need a Europe where we all feel protected, where nobody is left behind or left outside, where dignity is the ultimate objective. Civil society has so much to say and contribute, and we need these experts to build the future of Europe – the expertise of people who have lived poverty and exclusion directly. They are the ones who know what they need and how to find solutions to problems they experienced on their own skin. Investing in people means investing in the economy, investing in a future that we all want, and where we are all welcome.

**Susanne Conze, Policy Officer at DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, European Commission**

I would like to say so many things, especially after hearing the interventions this morning. I will limit myself to a few things that the European Commission is able to do. An important topic today was tackling inequality and providing security. Two reports were published during the past months, by the OECD and by the IMF. Both have looked at inequality, and have concluded that it is extremely harmful. Increasing wealth in the highest tier of society lowers GDP, while increasing it at the bottom of the scale actually raises GDP. This is because people at the bottom of the scale invest the income they receive – in goods, in services, in the economy, but also in their own education, skills, wellbeing and participation. But how can we achieve that? There is broad consensus that we need to do something about it, including in the European Commission, if you look at statements by President Juncker, for example. The issue of political will is not as dire as you may see it – it is the HOW which is not always easy to find. We need to look at how to guarantee the social and employment rights of people in Europe, how to create a real social protection floor. The social targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy are definitely not gone, and nobody wants them gone. We need to reflect on the status quo and why we are falling behind, and how to bridge gap, but we are fully committed to that. Civil society is also very important for us, but it is not always easy to get everybody on board – there is a huge range of stakeholders out there, aside civil society. But we would like to develop a clear process and mechanisms so that we can work together, and we need your help for this. We welcome your input, and be assured that it is taken into account.

Interventions from the floor :

**Maria Marinakou, EAPN GR** – I would like to come back to the Greek myth of Europe. You all know how democracy started in Athens, with people speaking together and making decisions. But the fundamental principle was that what was agreed upon had to be put in place immediately. If it wasn’t, it was demagogy, and demagogy was punished severely. So democracy is very much about action, or it used to be. Today, we see that demagogy is becoming stronger than democracy. We need to build a real future for Europe, where we all together contribute to a better day, and make it happen.

**President of SOLIDAR, Spain** – We need social and civil dialogue with the decision-making institutions, and we need social mobilisation to achieve this. For instance, the Greek crisis is also due to the lack of dialogue with stakeholders, including civil society.

**Katherine Duffy, EAPN UK** – There are good people everywhere, and we need to identify them and cultivate relations with them. There are a million people in Britain going to food banks. And there are good people working in structures and institutions, but they don’t do good things. It is these people that we need to reach and get them to change course. A clear example would be support for adequate minimum income and a social protection floor, and the good people in the European Commission need to start working on this.

**Concluding remarks - Imanol Zubero, PhD in Sociology and Professor at the Basque Country University**

Realism can sometimes lead to scepticism and pain, but we need to take a hard look at realities. There are policies that simply do not work. Also, dialogue is not enough, as it was just said. Talking is important, but implementing decisions and real action are what makes a difference. Dialogue is a tool, and a very important one, but it is not enough in itself. Emotion and feelings are also a tool to achieve social transformation and social change and progress. We can all be proud of being here today. We are social activists who want to change the world – what we need to do is to change people, build people, and build moments like this, of togetherness and unity. We need diversity, dialogue, openness, and we need to know how to channel this into real action for progress. We are experts, coming together in networks, and we need to raise our voices together. Civil society needs to educate decision-makers to want the same change, in order to cultivate the political will we need. If we are able to come together, to feel together, to create spaces of interaction, then we are able to transmit that to decision-makers. Keep working, and keep being part of this transformation process.

***The first part of the meeting closed at 12:30***

**PART II: EAPN NEW STRATEGIC PLAN**

Introduction: Background to the Draft Strategic Plan:

EAPN is a coalition of networks and organisations that fight poverty and social exclusion – including its causes – and promote social inclusion in Europe. EAPN’s mission is to **shape policies that result in a reduction of the rate of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Europe**. EAPN’s vision is a Europe without poverty and social exclusion. As a network of civil society organisations fighting poverty and promoting social inclusion, EAPN believes that the values enshrined in its Mission Statement form the basis for achieving this result, which is in line with the current Europe 2020 Strategy and is therefore monitored on a regular basis.

In view of the setbacks in the fight against poverty and social exclusion during the first half of the Europe 2020 Strategy, EAPN believes that a more democratic policy approach is needed so that more effective policies to fight poverty and social exclusion are put in place. The policy process – including all its phases – must be more open and more participatory in order to revert the current trends and to fight the causes and reduce the consequences of poverty and social exclusion in Europe. Hence, EAPN in all its capacities and mandates **works towards substantially reducing poverty and social exclusion by the end of this strategic planning period (2015-2018)**.

Although EAPN is aware of the fact that there are a variety of external factors that the network is unable to influence, it has set itself four Strategic Objectives which will structure its work and are considered essential to achieve this result during the set time frame. The first Strategic Objective (SO) focuses on the *empowerment of people with experience of poverty and social exclusion*. The second SO addresses the *policy-making process* while the third SO aims at improving the *monitoring of policy implementation*. The fourth SO defines *how EAPN would like to strengthen its role as a civil society organisation* by position itselfinternally and externally.

More precisely, the four Strategic Objectives of EAPN are:

**SO 1:** More people with experience of poverty and social exclusion are actively promoting social and human rights (3 Expected Outcomes).

**SO 2:** The EU and national policies provide more adequate conditions for and solutions to fight poverty and social exclusion as well as its causes throughout Europe (3 Expected Outcomes).

**SO 3:** The implementation of any policies and their positive or negative impact on poverty and social exclusion are monitored more effectively throughout Europe at all levels (4 Expected Outcomes).

**SO 4:** EAPN is a more effective member-driven organisation that has increased its recognition as a key civil society actor fighting poverty, social exclusion and inequalities (4 Expected Outcomes

The four draft Strategic Objectives were then scrutinized by the delegates attending the Strategic Congress in the following way:

* Delegates split into 4 groups
* These groups revised the strategic objective assigned to it and the related outcomes.
* Each group was facilitated by a member of the Membership Development Groups
* The time allocated to the work in groups was 2 hours.
* All four revised strategic objectives and related outcomes were presented to the plenary and submitted to debate in the session from 16.30 to 18.00.
* Results of the working groups and the discussion was recorded by the minute takers –volunteers in the groups;
* The results were collected and presented to the Plenary by one Member of the Bureau

There was lively discussion in the Plenary with a focus on Strategic Objective 3 and its 4 expected outcomes. A considerable number of delegates felt that the monitoring requirements under the Strategic Objective 3 were beyond the capacity of EAPN and its Secretariat.

Delegates then agreed to accept Strategic Objectives 1,2, 3 and the outcomes that each working group had defined though with some more editing from the floor. Delegates rejected Strategic Objective 3 and decided to recommend to EAPN’s GA to review that Strategic Objective. They also recommended that EAPN’s Executive should be mandated to do this work and come forward with a proposal of a revised Objective 3 (including outcomes). In this context delegates also agreed that the EXCO may make further changes to other three objectives and outcomes.

The meeting closed at 19:00.

|  |
| --- |
| **STRATEGIC CONGRESS PARTICIPANTS: BILBAO - 3 JULY 2015** |
|  |  |
| **NAME** | **ORGANISATION** |
| **AUSTRIA**  |  |
| Bierling Wagner Eugen  | EAPN Austria |
| **BELGIUM**  |  |
| VANDERMEERSCHEN Elke | BAPN |
| PETERS Gaëlle | BAPN |
| DESSY André | BAPN |
| **BULGARIA**  |   |
| MINEV Douhomir | EAPN Bulgaria |
| JELIAZKOVA Maria | EAPN Bulgaria |
| YOSSIFOV Boris | EAPN-Bulgaria  |
| **CROATIA** |   |
| ZGANEC Nino | EAPN Croatia |
| SIMUNOVIC Ivana | EAPN Croatia |
| JEDVAJ Suzana | EAPN Croatia |
| **CYPRUS**  |   |
| KAZANTZIS Ninetta | EAPN Cyprus |
| KOUKOU Marina | EAPN Cyprus |
| SATSIAS Nicos | EAPN Cyprus |
| **CZECH REPUBLIC**  |   |
| SCHWARZ Karel | EAPN Czech Republic |
| MROZEK Stanislav | EAPN Czech Republic |
| **DENMARK**  |   |
| LARSEN Per K. | EAPN Denmark |
| LOGSTRUP Rune | EAPN Denmark |
| THOMSEN Per | EAPN Denmark |
| **ESTONIA**  |   |
| TOODU Anu | EAPN Estonia |
| KIIRA GORNISCHEFF | EAPN Estonia |
| MERE Kärt | EAPN Estonia |
| **FINLAND**  |   |
| KAURALA Marjatta | EAPN Finland |
| SAARELA Tiina | EAPN Finland |
| AFSHARTOUS Mahmoud | EAPN Finland |
| **FRANCE**  |   |
| DIETRICH Jeanne | EAPN France |
| LE FLOCH Samuel | EAPN France |
| DELPLANQUE Richard | EAPN France |
| **GERMANY**  |   |
| KREBS Wolfgang | Federal Organisation for debt advisers |
| KRAAKE Alexander | Deutsches Rotes Kreuz |
| SCHNEIDER Jürgen | EAPN GERMANY |
| **GREECE**  |   |
| LEVENTIS Olga | EAPN Greece |
| MARINAKOU Maria | EAPN Greece |
| **HUNGARY**  |   |
| MARKUS Jozsef | Hungarian Anti Poverty Network |
| LASZLO Johanna | Hungarian Anti Poverty Network |
| JASZ Krista | Hungarian Anti Poverty Network |
| **ICELAND**  |   |
| ODDSDOTTIR Vilborg | EAPN Iceland |
| FJOELNISDOTTIR Thorbera | EAPN Iceland |
| MAGNUSSON Tryggvi | EAPN Iceland |
| **IRELAND**  |   |
| MURPHY Tess | EAPN Ireland |
| GINNELL Paul | EAPN Ireland |
|   |   |
| **ITALY**  |   |
| CESARINI SFORZA Letizia | CILAP EAPN Italia |
| TEODOSI Nicoletta | CILAP EAPN Italia |
| TELESCA Vito | CILAP EAPN Italy |
| LATVIA |   |
| BALGA Laila | EAPN Latvia |
| SNARKIS Norbert | EAPN Latvia |
| MEZECKIS Leons | EAPN Latvia |
| **LITHUANIA**  |   |
| BINGELIS Eitvydas | EAPN Lithuania |
| LUKYTE Lina | EAPN Lithuania |
| RUTKEVICIUS Rolandas | EAPN Lithuania |
| **LUXEMBOURG**  |   |
| ROD Gilles | EAPN Luxembourg |
| URBE Robert | EAPN Luxembourg |
| DONDELINGER Nadia | EAPN Luxembourg |
| **MACEDONIA**  |   |
| DUKOVSKA Biljana | Macedonian anti poverty platform |
| SHIKOVSKA Ljatife | Macedonian anti poverty platform |
| CAROVSKA Mila | MAPP |
| **MALTA**  |   |
| MAGRI Vincent | EAPN Malta |
| GRIMA Francis Saviour | Anti Poverty Forum Malta |
| CALLUS Godwin | Anti Poverty Forum Malta |
| **NETHERLANDS**  |   |
| ANSEM Quinta | EAPN Netherlands |
| GROOT Maschinka | EAPN Netherlands |
| LEEMKUIL Sonja | EAPN Netherlands |
| **NORWAY**  |   |
| ENGEN Johanna | EAPN Norway |
| WESTERHEIM Dag | EAPN Norway |
| MUHANZI KASHALE Honoratte | EAPN Norway |
| **POLAND**  |   |
| PLOWIEC Kamila  | WRZOS |
| SUSZWEDYK Dariusz | EAPN Poland |
| SZARFENBERG Ryszard | EAPN Poland |
| **PORTUGAL**  |  |
| AIRES Sergio | EAPN Portugal |
| CRUZ Paula | EAPN Portugal |
| JARDIM MOREIRA Agostinho | EAPN Portugal |
| ALBERTO REIS José | EAPN Portugal |
| **ROMANIA**  |   |
| Raluca MANAILA | EAPN Romania |
| Loredana GIUGLEA | EAPN Romania |
| **SERBIA**  |   |
| BABOVIC Marija | EAPN Serbia |
| KRUNIC Jasmina | EAPN Serbia |
| SATARIC Vlade | EAPN Serbia |
| **SLOVAKIA**  |   |
| MAREKOVA Slavomira | Slovak Anti Poverty Network |
| GALOVICOVA Anna | Slovak Anti Poverty Network |
| MALEK Ivan | Slovak Anti Poverty Network |
| **SPAIN**  |   |
| SUSIAS RODADO Carlos | EAPN Spain  |
| MALGESINI Graciela | EAPN Spain |
| GUNTIN UBIERGO Rosalia | EAPN Spain  |
| CANDALIJA Jonas | EAPN Spain |
| GUITERAS Angels | EAPN Spain |
| SALGADO Javier | EAPN Spain |
| ALLENDE Isabel  | EAPN Spain |
| RONCHI Marcello | EAPN Spain |
| **SWEDEN**  |   |
| WALLBOM Sonja | EAPN Sweden  |
| HAGGREN Gunvi | Verdandi |
| WALLANDER Mathias | EAPN Sweden  |
| **U.K.**  |   |
| DUFFY Katherine | EAPN England |
| MOMODU Victor | EAPN England |
| KELLY Peter | EAPN England |
| **EUROPEAN ORGANISATIONS DELEGATES 7** |   |
| LEONORI Luigi | SMES Europa |
| BURGER Stephan | Eurodiaconia |
| KUCHARCZYK Maciej | AGE |
| RENE-BAZIN Bruno | BABELEA |
| D'ADDATO Agata | Eurochild |
| JOHNSTON Ian | IFSW Europe |
| RENOUX Marie-Cécile | ATD Quart Monde |
| RAVANEL Béatrice | FEBA |
| SPINNEWIJN Freek | FEANTSA |
| **EAPN 9** |   |
| DAHMEN Sigrid | EAPN |
| FARRELL Fintan | EAPN |
| LEMMENS Philippe | EAPN |
| FERRO Amana | EAPN |
| JONES Sian | EAPN |
| TANCAU Magda | EAPN |
| EPINAT Nellie | EAPN |
| HELFFERICH Barbara | EAPN |
| SORRENTI Antonino | EAPN |
| **SPEAKERS** |   |
| HAINSWORTH Jana | Eurochild |
| CONZE Susanne | EC |

1. Please find attached full list of participants [↑](#footnote-ref-1)