

EAPN Publication: Embedding Governance and Participation in decision-making processes. Updated Scoping Note and Content Index
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Introduction

EAPN has been one of the key stakeholders engaged in the Social OMC at national and EU level. One of our principal demands has been to systematically improve the governance process by establishing an effective on-going structured dialogue, making NGO's and people experiencing poverty recognized partners to the whole policy-making cycle. In 2008, the Commission made strong recommendations on the need to build on good practice and strengthen the governance and participation in the Social OMC. This is currently being built on by a Study which the Commission is developing, with the aim to assess current practice and develop guidelines, benchmarks and checklists to support improvements in this area of all stakeholders.

EAPN has been a key actor, pressing for better governance and is one of the few Social NGOs with active experience at a national and EU level. Last year EAPN published for the first time a booklet bringing together important experience and good practice of EAPN members in promoting the participation of people experiencing poverty at national level (Small Steps, Big Changes). This therefore seems a timely moment to build on this work and to make a specific EAPN input highlighting our experiences and proposals how to embed better governance and participation in the Social OMC, as a model for participative policy development and delivery. The aim would be to produce a practical, attractive and useful guide which would help NGO's and policy makers promote better participation in policy-making, drawing on the Social OMC.

Following the discussion in the SIWG in May, the content and process of this note has been revised, bringing more to the fore members concerns to build on the previous booklet, avoid repetition and focus on producing a hands-on practical guide that would help NGO's in pressing for better governance mechanisms as well as for policy makers. The toolkit will emphasize the added value of involving people experiencing poverty and NGOs as key stakeholders in the policy making process.

Objectives

The publication would be a short, user-friendly booklet aimed at policy-makers and NGO's including EAPN members, who are interested in improving governance and participation in policy-making.:

- 1) Show-case experience and good practice in the Social OMC, involving governance and participation of NGOs and people experiencing poverty.
- 2) Highlight the value-added of NGO's to governance process – in terms of ownership, but also better policy making.
- 3) Provide tool kit/checklists of key steps to delivering a more participative process in the Social OMC and other policy-making processes, including guides to participative meetings etc aimed at NGOs and Policy makers.

Content and Timeline

The booklet would be drafted by Sian and Tanya with the support of the Social Inclusion Working Group and a reference group from the SIWG including: Isabella (Hungary), Anna /Candy (Ireland), Sergio (Portugal) and Graciela (Spain).

Following the SIWG meeting, the original scoping note has been revised and the following content outline agreed.

Contents:

1) Introduction

- Setting out the objectives of the booklet – to provide a practical guide for increasing effective participation of NGOs and People Experiencing Poverty in the Social OMC/ as a model for policy-making processes.
- Establish target audience – NGOs and Policy Makers
- Making a clear link with previous participation booklet.
- Clarifying what the booklet will not do.

2) Setting the Context

- The policy context on governance/participation in the Social OMC and the link to National Policy,
- Summarizing new developments eg Governance Study.
- Outlining the value-added of NGO involvement and PEP in terms of governance and better policy making.
- Reviewing progress so far on participation/governance in the OMC (with box examples).

3) Getting progress – Key elements checklists and tool kits

- 1 Key elements checklist for a progressive governance/participation mechanisms in the Social OMC.
- 2 separate tool kits providing step by step guide on how to get there. These would build on the existing [EAPN NAP Inclusion Tool kit](#).

1) Key elements/Check List for positive governance/participation method in the Social OMC. Setting out the key elements that would ideally be in place.

2) NGO Tool Kit: Aimed at NGOs – providing hints/steps for on lobbying for better and more effective participation and governance involving NGOs and people experiencing poverty in the Social OMC.

3) Policy Maker Tool Kit: Aimed at OMC National Policy makers – providing hints/steps for developing an effective participative governance model for the Social OMC. (the aim would be to provide alternative pathways – 1 for old Member States and 1 for New Member States, or Member States inexperienced in participative, democratic mechanisms.)

- Examples of good practice would be integrated into the checklists/tool kits highlighting in boxes of elements of these key steps.

4) Conclusions and Next Steps

- Summarising main conclusions and highlighting the next steps to embed the new processes at EU and national level.

The product would be drafted in the Summer/Autumn to present a first draft to the November SIWG meeting. SIWG members would be asked to respond to an initial questionnaire about practices, which would be used as the basis for selection of the case studies and experiences.

Timing

- Revised scoping note and EAPN NAP Inclusion Tool kit sent out to the Reference group by the 30th July asking for input/comments and examples to illustrate key steps – by the end of August.
- Draft document to be circulated by Mid October for comments.
- Revised first draft discussed in the SIWG in November.
- 2nd Draft finalized by December.