

# Developing participation in the European work of EAPN



## Current structures, actors involved and questions

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Brussels

Small steps -  
big changes

Building  
Participation  
of People  
Experiencing  
Poverty



# EAPN Participation Framework



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- EAPN uniting various actors in the fight against poverty ***committed to the participation of people experiencing poverty***
  - 20 years of experience building through working groups, campaigning, policy making, transnational projects, GA
  - Benefits for individuals, organizations, policies and improves democracy

# WHAT IS EAPN



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- EAPN is an independent coalition of NGOs and groups involved in the fight against poverty established in 1990
    - **26 national networks** of anti-poverty NGOs and grassroots groups (in the EU, Norway)
    - **24 European-wide organisations**
  - Tackling different aspects of poverty (access to labour market, housing, education, social services...)

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**National Networks + European Organisations**

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**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**26 reps NNs + 3 reps of EOs**

**MAINSTREAMING GROUPS (Gender,  
age & poverty, Migration & poverty,  
Globalisation & poverty)**

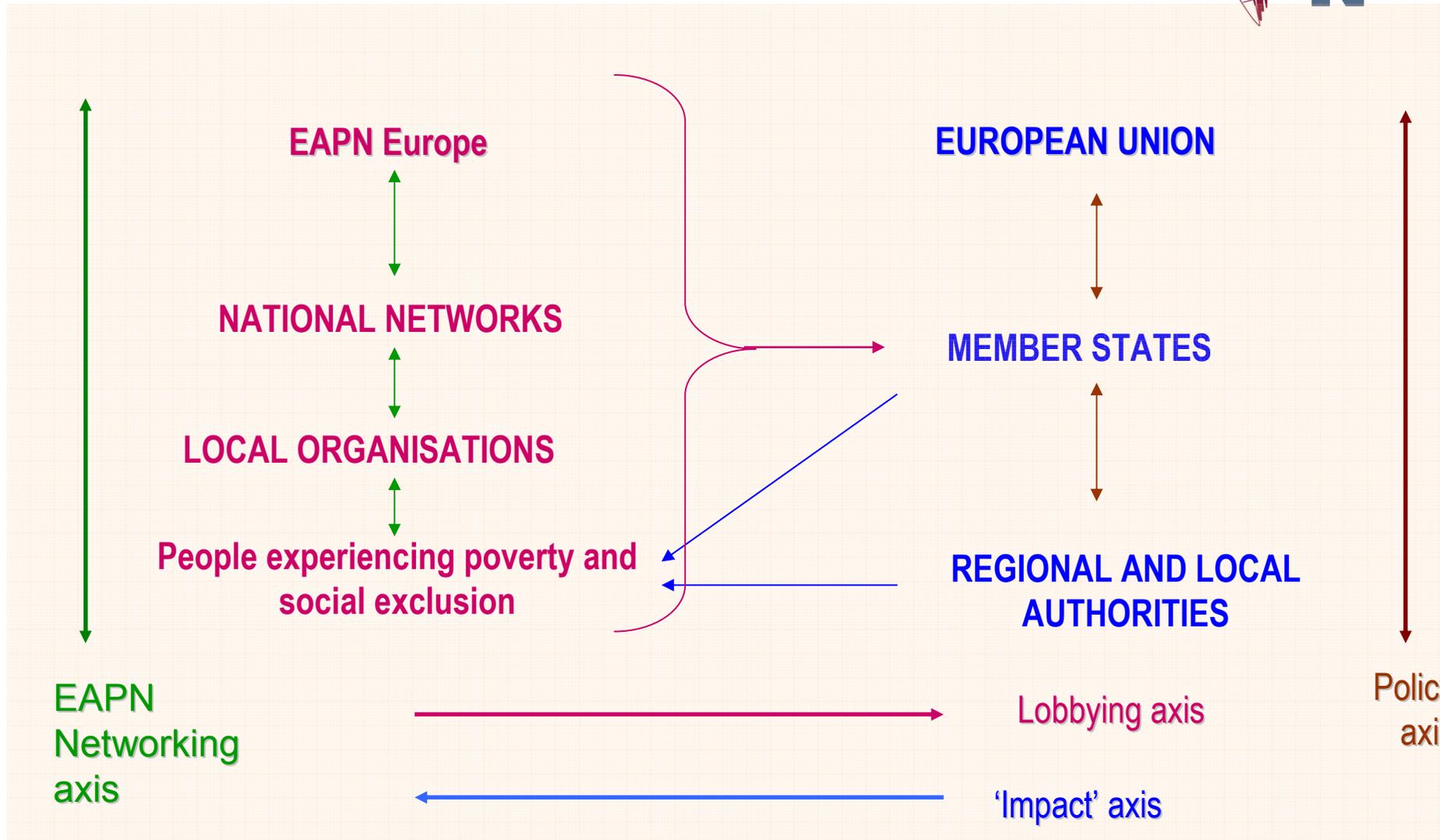
**BUREAU**  
**5 EXCO members coordinating between**

**PLANNING GROUPS**  
**(Sustainable Financing  
for NNs, Participation  
Reflection Group)**

**WORKING GROUPS**  
**(Employment,  
Structural Funds, Social  
Inclusion)**

**CAMPAIGN  
GROUPS (Minimum  
Income, 2010)**

# How it works



# Who are the actors involved



# Where ownership starts



- My network
- Following processes at national
- Inputting into EAPN documents
- Statutory bodies
- Working structures
- Seminars and exchanges
- Communication tools



# 5 + and 5 - on participation in EAPN



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- People experiencing poverty active in organizations members of EAPN participate in working groups
  - EAPN demands better governance and higher participation of people experiencing poverty in anti poverty policies
  - The European Meetings have helped some members develop their work on participation
  - Participation is becoming more visible in the General Assembly and other meetings
  - EAPN will continue to invest more in participation
  - Not all NNs have enough resources to develop participation
  - Language appears to be a barrier to participation for a few NNs
  - Without strong participation at national level it is difficult to pick it up at European level
  - Few NNs include people experiencing poverty in their delegations to GA and other meetings
  - EAPN does not yet have a clear strategy of fostering participation of people experiencing poverty in its European work

# Developing Participation in EAPN



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## Objective:

- Facilitating people experiencing poverty to participate in anti poverty organizations and the European work of EAPN
- Participation of people experiencing poverty in the governance of the OMC and anti poverty policy making

## Actions:

- Building and exchanging case studies and models (publication)
- Reflection (meeting including people experiencing poverty)
- Reflection in some working groups
- Evaluating the impact of the European meetings on NNs
- Developing a plan to embed and strengthen participation in EAPN in the coming years
- Lobbying for increased governance and citizen participation in social policy making
- Toolkit for improved governance of OMC and involvement of people experiencing poverty in social policy making.



# Developing Participation in the European work of EAPN

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## Key issues to clarify

- Individual participation through NGOs versus representation of self-organized groups
- Roles and responsibilities of members of National Networks, NNs, EAPN Europe
- Engaging in European work to support national and local actions
- Building a model from different national elements

# Developing Participation in the European work of EAPN

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More specific questions include:

- What is the meaning of participation of persons experiencing poverty?
- The role, the place vis-à-vis other groups, the link and the continuity of this process?
- How do we define and select people experiencing poverty to participate?
- how do we make sure participation is not tokenistic?
- When a person stop being poor, how do they continue being involved?
- Should a person experiencing poverty be remunerated for their participation?
- Who does a participating person experiencing poverty represent?
- How do we build on the good practices in national context?
- Who should help people be ready to participate in policy making?
- Who should help people participate in the European work of EAPN?
- How can this participation support national and local level engagement?
- Which are the major barriers to tackle?

## Objectives for today:



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- Clarify the main questions
  - Analyze where in the engagement of NNs with European work of EAPN we could develop further the participation
  - Identify key obstacles
  - Develop proposals