

EAPN Eesti MTÜ was established in 2010 and is a member organization of the EAPN's European network, which objectives are fighting against poverty and social exclusion in Europe and creation of policies that would enable decent standard of living to all citizens.

Members of the Estonian network are actively taking part in working groups, implementing groups, round tables and conferences of EAPN Europe. The members of our network collect the information about coping and what opportunities of getting help the vulnerable target groups have, about labour market measures and about involvement of NGOs and forward it to the European Commission and to the international organizations that belong to the network. We cooperate with different ministries, Statistics Estonia, Unemployment Insurance Fund and with tens of different NGOs.

The aforementioned information is being reflected in the shadow reports of the European network, which are put together as a comparison to National Reform Programmes and Estonian Government's agenda. We also observe and shape the mutual stands on how the Europe 2020 strategy and the guidelines of the European Commission are being executed.

The members of the network are engaged in the work of monitoring the policies, quality of employment and communication work groups, as well in the work groups that ensure the funding from the Structural Funds. The meetings in Europe have been preceded by intensive data collection by network members and corresponding Estonian work groups, data analysis and development of our proposals. The information received from meetings have been distributed to members of the network and to our joint partners. The documents released by EAPN Europe that are connected to the Europe 2020 strategy have been introduced in conferences, seminars and in meetings with politicians, teachers, social and youth workers and the representatives of the NGOs by the members of the network. Training of the social work students of the Lääne-Viru County and offering the practice base for the youth work students of the University of Tallinn have become a tradition.

Members of the network took part in debates related to poverty and education in the Festival of Opinion Culture in Paide; on the main stage took place the discussion "How expensive is poverty?", which gathered record amount of listeners and received a wide media coverage. It was moderated by MEP Kaja Kallas.

A summer school for the members of EAPN Europe took place in Estonia – a Learning Forum, where the members from Dignity International also participated in. Representatives from more than 100 organisations from around the world attended this 10 days event. Participants went to field trips to Põhja-Tallinn, Paldiski, Saue, Keila and Märjamaa.

In March 2013 the representatives of the network met with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights to discuss opportunities to reduce child poverty. The Commissioner for Human Rights: "Child poverty in Estonia needs more attention".

Many members of the Estonian network are participating in work groups that are aimed at creating short term, specific policy papers; they also contribute to creation of EAPN Europe's policy reports. The Estonian network translated the policy paper on child poverty and well being and the policy paper on using the means from the Structural Funds into Estonian.

Numerous opinion stories and articles from the members of our network have been published in the media.

<http://www.eapn.ee/Meediakajastused>

The members of the network also stressed the importance of equal educational opportunities starting from the basic education as an important measure against poverty. We also discussed the accessibility to and affordability of public services. We started the discussion about working poor and their needs.

The network's this year's main theme in Estonia was child poverty. The members participated in discussions in Parliament's Social Committee, in Child Ombudsman's Bureau, in Ministry of Social Affairs and also at conferences and seminars held by member organisations.

Within the network the Child Advocacy work group was created, which will be run in half year terms in rotational order by different member organisations of the EAPN Estonia.

Collaboration with Nordic Platform continues. EAPN Estonia belongs officially to the EAPN Nordic countries work group since 2011. Two members representing the Estonian network attended the meetings in Norway.

We participated in the activities of the European Year of the Citizens Alliance and composing of the Manifesto of the European Year of the Citizens.

In summer 2013 the EAPN Estonia MTÜ's four-member delegation attended the European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty which was organised in European Parliament in Brussels (18.20 June). The topics of this year's meeting were: 1) the cost of the food basket, minimum income, minimum wage; 2) how is the crisis affecting your everyday life?; 3) good practices and the solutions. The delegates also met with the Estonian MEPs.

New organisations have joined the network, new members have been trained. We have also done trainings for volunteers of the Food Bank Estonia, Toidubank.

The network prepared and took part in the picket against wage gap which was organised by our member organisation Estonian Women's Union / Eesti Naisliit and sent a memorandum on the corresponding matter to the government. In September the members of the network also took part in a traditional event for homeless people initiated by Tallinn's Social Work Centre, "On the other side of the doorstep" in Tammsaare Park, Tallinn.

We mutually prepared and carried out a themed day for women with disabilities.

The cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs continued on following subjects: raising the minimum for coping and the family support, development of the new child protection act, drawing up a national development plan for children and families, drawing up a green book of family supports and services.

The cooperation with the Bureau of the Chancellor of Justice continued, several meetings were held, we participated in Roundtable where the Bureau's study on child poverty in Estonia was introduced. In collaboration with Tallinn University Pedagogical College we are partners in the European Social Fund's measure 1.3.1 project "Development of continuous education system of the social welfare sphere / department".

The network's task in this project is to engage in the discussions related to the creation of new professional standards in the field of social welfare. Our recommendations for raising the competence of the leaders of the social welfare institutions are: openness, involvement of the volunteers, international cooperation, project writing and leading know-how, being informed about the European level of their subject field. We value highly the cooperation with TPS because the future social workers are the first ones to whom the people in the need turn to. The respectful and caring attitude of the social worker helps an unemployed or the person living in deprivation to maintain dignity. There is a regrettable amount of people who are not aware of the assistance

possibilities or they consider the process of getting help to be way too complicated and they decide not to get help at all. People are also afraid of sanctions or their kids to be taken away. We are taking part in work group for development of the new social worker's professional standard in the Chamber of Qualification.

We are continuing our collaboration with the Tallinn's North Police Department, where our role is to educate youth work constables about the close ties between poverty and youth offences and about prevention. Our contact in the police forces is Kristel Kaunismaa.

In order to find more partners and to initiate cooperation the activities of the network have been introduced to teachers, social workers, youth workers and to representatives of the local municipalities.

There are two members in the board of EAPN Eesti MTÜ. Every member organisation appoints their representative into the executive committee (EXCO). There are 23 members and 4 partners in the network. Trainings are organised for the members and they are meeting regularly at least once a month. In important issues work groups are convened and partners from outside the network are involved. We are working with the Estonian Caregivers' Union and the Estonian Patient Advocacy Association to solve the problems of the caregivers. We have mapped the competences of our members and the target groups we're working together on daily basis. People experiencing poverty and social exclusion also belong to our member organisations and in order to gain more grassroots level insights we're assembling PEP work groups. There is a so called Client's Council working in the Social Work Centre of Tallinn, and the members are homeless people and people who live in social housings. When considering the fact that in Estonia teachers, kindergarten and youth workers also experience poverty, one can conclude that among our members the people with direct experience of poverty are in majority - most of them are the working poor. Since a big part of the members of our network are service providers, cooperation and meaningful mutual activities are a natural part of our every day life.

We work closely with media and meet with employees of different ministries, representatives of the political parties and members of the Parliament's Social Committee to affect policies, we compose memorandums and run joint projects.

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