EAPN Task force – Advocating for a human rights approach to migration, refugees and asylum seekers – 03/04/2017

**Participant**s: Raquele, Clotilde, Magnus, Stefan, Robin. **Apologies**: Aleksandra.

**Chair**: Kadri and Eleni with support from Sian (EAPN Secretariat);

**Minutes**: Matteo (EAPN intern).

1. **Introduction**

The Task Force first discussed what came out of the EUISG discussion on 17/03/2017. Sian, Kadri and Eleni reported back that Members showed great interest in the topic of migration, even though some networks (especially Mediterranean countries, that have a legitimate concern about the emergency they are facing with migrants coming in their territories in major numbers) demanded to focus more on asylum seekers and refugees than on labor migrants. Other very negative but minority voices came from a few networks (mainly the Czech Republic one) that wanted, without really saying it explicitly, to stress on the economic and cultural fears that follows the migratory phenomenon. The Task force is unanimously concerned about this approach to the issue, since it is firmly convinced that it must keep a human-rights-based approach to the work on the social and economic consequences of migration. The aim of the task force is to develop a position that could be shared by all EAPN members, even those that expressed opinions that go against EAPN core values, without compromising on such humanitarian principles. The chair reads the *General overview* section of the *Key point from Migration Capacity Building and exchange – EUISG\17 March 2017* paper.

1. **Finalizing the Briefing**

The Spanish delegation asked the task force to make a clear distinction between fleeing from war/persecution and searching for a better life, so between international rights and human rights. The Chair reads the *What`s missing from the Briefing?* section of the *Key point from Migration Capacity Building and exchange – EUISG\17 March 2017* paper, analyzing it point by point. Members agree on the following changes to the Briefing:

* To refer to the previous work made by task force was;
* to eliminate quotes from newspapers;
* to mention the negative role of media on migration issues without putting too much weight on it;
* to focus more on the benefits that migrants can bring;
* to use a more country-specific approach on the granted rights of the migrants;
* to clarify the definitions of smuggling and trafficking of migrants;
* to clarify the issue of resettlement.
* Demands of focusing more on the role of old migrants, on the issues of integration and reception and on participation are also considered.

The Task Force then examined one by one the notes sent by different networks and agree on changing many different passages of the document. EAPN will take care of such changes, while other possible variations must be sent at most by April the 18th and the document will be then finalized by the end of the same month. (See action notes at end).

1. **Developing an EAPN Position Paper**

Robin Hanan was proposed to lead on the position paper, and he accepted this proposal.

The Position Paper aims to set out EAPN’s stall on migration and poverty, and will be a base reference document for EAPN. It will be a new document whose length should be 4-6 pages maximum. It must focus mainly on the key messages that the task force wants to convey and on its key advocacy demands and recommendations. The task force decides to start this process of building a paper drawing from *the initial position section* and the *Moving forward* session of the Briefing, since it already contains the position of the networks. The chair clarifies that the Position Paper will be targeted both internally and externally. The document in fact has a double aim, first to build a strong internal consensus on the issue and as a basis for the advocacy work directed to other organizations and institutions. . After a full discussion, the following outline is approved for the Position Paper, that will be draft by the Irish network:

1) Introduction: who we are & the historical context of our proposal;

2) Values and Principles (using a rights-based approach);

3) What we want. Section three would be further divided in three sub-sections, for each of which key messages and recommendations will be examined. The sub-sections are the following ones:

A) Human/International Rights and solidarity.

B) fight against poverty and social exclusion (i.e. active inclusion approach, access to quality work, services and social protection, granted social and economic rights, starting from legal permanence and free access to work and services);

C) Participation and Voice.

1. **Developing an Action Plan – EU and national level**

The Action Plan will set out a plan of actions to deliver on the position paper, including advocacy but not restricted to this...The group agreed that given the current conflicts it was very important to carry out awareness raising and capacity building actions with EAPN members and other stakeholders as well as external advocacy actions

**Target audience**

It will be targeted to EAPN members (Ex Co members, to EUISG members and to the EAPN network)

**Aims**

The aims of the document are:

* to operationalize the content of the Position Paper;
* to make sure EAPN respects its commitment on migration;
* to influence migration policies and to strengthen the voices of migrants within EAPN.

**Actions**

With respect to the specific actions to be taken ( what and how to do), the task force identifies three levels of work.

1. **At an internal EAPN level** the action will focus on awareness-raising, capacity-building, translation of materials, training and on reference groups. Some possible ways to achieve these objectives would be to organize workshops (for example at the GA), to invite EU specialists or members and to mainstream the publications of the reference group.

Development of advocacy messages and key asks following the position paper.

1. **National level action targeted to networks**, possible objectives include: awareness-raising, and working in alliances with other organizations, promotion of exchanges between networks, increasing the participation and voice of migrants, promoting solidarity and engaging in shared projects. Some possible activities to achieves such aims include: spreading the Briefing and the Position Paper, joining existing exchanges and alliances, mutual learning, involving of migrants-leaded organizations, examining existing situations, establishing solidarity channels, organizing study visits and strengthening regional activities.

**The national organizations should aim to establish specific advocacy messages for the national level and to participate in the overall EU demands, identified in the position paper.**

1. **The last level is the European one**, Here the main actions relate to 1) mainstreaming demands in EAPN common positions and then 2) EAPN advocacy actions on a few priority EU policy hooks.

These include the EU Migration Agenda, which will be finalize between June and September, EU funds on migration and mainstream channels, like the European Semester. Another possibility at the EU level would be to tackle the issues of returns, relocation and labor migration.3) It could be ideal at this level for example to propose cross-cuttings or to support common r positions a s part of broader alliances.

A further proposal was made to suggest to EAPN that the next capacity building training to take place in Ireland should focus on migration. It was agreed that Eleni and Kadri would send a letter to EAPN president.

1. **Action Points and Timeline**

**Development of Briefing**

* All to send inputs to Sian and the group by the 18th April
* Sian will put together final draft by end of April.
* Group will have a week to finalize
* Rebecca will finalize lay out from Mid May.

**Development of Position Paper**

* 1st Draft by end of April – Robin
* Response by Task Force by 15th May (track changes and comments)
* Revised draft by end of May
* Final inputs by Mid June
* Draft sent to EXCO/EUISG by 1st week of July
* Final revision/discussion in Task force meeting
* Final draft by end of September
* Approved in EUISG/EXCO October.

**Action Plan**

* Sian will develop draft action plan based on above points and following first draft of position paper
* Aim to send out first draft with position paper in July to members.
* Full discussion in October meeting.
* Kadri and Eleni will send a letter to EAPN President requesting consideration of the next capacity building to be carried out on Migration in Ireland.

1. **Next meeting, Wrap Up and Evaluation**

There is a general positive feedback from all members of the Task Force regarding the work that has been done during the present meeting.

*Positive elements*

* Good atmosphere and exchange
* Learning to communicate better together.
* Have done well to agree a structure together for the position paper.
* Good process in the TF, dividing work and good ownership. This also makes it more inspiring.

*Things to improve*

* Discussion in the afternoon got a bit stuck, so might be useful to introduce different methodologies eg split people into pairs.
* Need to clarify how the principals can be operationalized and what our key advocacy asks are as well as other actions.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be set after summer, **proposed date Monday 11th September** probably in Brussels again for budget reasons. Meanwhile, members will keep in touch by e-mail correspondence, so that they can keep up with the work on the three main documents.