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**Notes of Ex Co Meeting EXCO N 1a**

**Cologne, April 2017**

1. **Apologies, Agenda, Minutes**

**Participants**

**Networks**: Peter (UK), Philippe EAPN, Krisztina (Hungary), Tess (Ireland), Nadia (Luxembourg), Laila (Latvia), Karel (CZ), Eugen (Austria), Jens and Stefanie (Germany), Tiina (Finland), Ana (Slovakia), Raluca (Romania), Kamila (Poland), Quinta (Netherlands), Nino (Croatia), Biljana (Macedonia), Richard (France), David (Belgium), Kart (Estonia), Vito (Italy), Per (Denmark), Saviour (Malta), Maria (Bulgaria), Olga (Greece), Vilborg (Iceland), Johanna (Norway) Sergio Aires (Portugal)

**EOs**: Ian (Int Fed of Social Workers), Luigi (SMES),

**Staff**: Leo Williams, Philippe Lemmens, Sian Jones, Elke, Rebecca Lee, Sigrid Dahmen, Amana Ferraro, Fintan Farrell, Magda Tancau.

**Apologies:** Ninetta (Cyprus), Jasmina (Serbia), Carlos (Spain), Freek (FEANTSA), Lena (Sweden), Mike (Salvation Army)

**Agenda**: Approved

**Minutes of the last meeting**: Formally adopted.

1. **Administration and Finances**

**2a. EAPN Meetings Calendar 2017**

See background document N2A

**Key points**

* The Annual Policy Conference will be in Brussels on 15 June 2017
* The next Ex Co meeting will be in Brussels on 16-17 June 2017
* **General Assembly / Ex Co / EUISG / Capacity Building meeting** will be held in **Ireland on 19-21 October 2017**
* EAPN France expressed an interest to host an Ex Co meeting in France (Lille) in March 2018.

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A1. Share expressions of interest to host future meetings of the Ex Co with Leo (**[**leo.williams@eapn.eu**](mailto:leo.williams@eapn.eu)**) - noting that in principle meetings in Spring and Autumn will need to be combined with other meetings.** | **Ex Co members** | **Ongoing** |

**2b. Director’s Activity Report**

See powerpoint on Members’ Room.

Leo (EAPN Director) presented his early thinking around short, medium and long term goals. All details are contained in the presentation in the members’ room.

**Key points from discussion**

* We need to evaluate our working methods
* We need to include more about the People Experiencing Poverty in our regular work
* We will need to better define the value of EOs in EAPN

**2c. Proposal to have an extraordinary GA in June to approve the accounts**

See background document N2E

**The recommendation**

The Bureau recommends that the second Ex Co meeting of the year (to be held in June) incorporates an extraordinary General Assembly, solely to approve the accounts of 2016. We would organise a regular GA in October 2017. This would be in line with legal requirements.

**Key points from discussion**

If the EC takes too long to approve our accounts, it will not be possible for EAPN to approve them in June.

It is difficult to organise the regular GA in June because it is too early to decide what we will do in the following year.

It may be possible to organise an extraordinary General Assembly by Webex.

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| **Decision** |
| **D1. We will have an extraordinary General Assembly in June 2017, linked to the meeting of the Ex Co. EAPN NE abstained, all others voted in favour.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A2. Look into the legal possibility of organising General Assemblies by webex** | **Leo** | **June** |
| **A3. Organize the extraordinary GA** | **Staff and Bureau** | **June** |

**2d. 2016 audited accounts**

See background document N2C

**Key points from discussion**

* The auditors did not have any comments – their report will be available at the Ex Co in June.
* We see a slight overspend on staff in 2016
* We see an underspend on Services, due to some national networks not taking up contracts for work on PEP, EU 2020 and EAPN translations

**2e. Budget vs. expenditure 2017**

See background document N2D

**Key points from discussion**

* We need to see the totals for each budget line
* We need to add the funds from the energy poverty project into the global budget
* We have 185K of outstanding debt from 2016, and we are still waiting for payments from EMIN2 and the 2017 core budget – hence the cash flow problems we are currently experiencing.
* Some Ex Co members are not clear on their financial responsibility towards EAPN. This needs to be addressed.

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A4. Update the global budget as per the key points above** | **Philippe** | **Early June** |
| **A5. Provide clarity on the responsibilities of Ex Co members** | **Leo** | **For October meeting** |

**2f. Staff remuneration overview**

See background paper N2B

**Key points from the discussion**

* This is the first stage of the process of revising the salary scales for the future. Figures presented represent the current situation, as requested by the Ex Co.
* **Costs to the employer seem very high - but it is important to realise that the ‘tax wedge’ (the difference between total labour costs to the employer and the corresponding net take-home pay for average single workers without children) in Belgium is higher than in any other OECD country, at 55.7% (see** [**here**](http://www.oecd.org/ctp/tax-policy/taxing-wages-tax-burden-trends-latest-year.htm)**)**
* Staff salaries represent some **38% of expenditure from the core budget** (if co-financing is included). If co-financing is not included, this figure rises to just **48%.** If we take into consideration the expenditure from the projects, then the percentage obviously falls drastically. Of the global budget (core budget plus all projects) staff salaries represent 29% in 2017.
* There was not a clear agreement as to whether this percentage is acceptable, not whether certain salary levels are acceptable. Note - certain salaries are at a high level because staff members have been working at EAPN for many years.
* The EAPN salary grid is not currently applied, and this needs to be rectified.

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| **Decision** |
| **D2. EAPN needs a long term vision of the staffing needs of the network.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A6. Follow up with Peter and Jasmina** | **Leo** | **Asap** |
| **A7. Discuss the staffing issues** | **Bureau** | **May** |
| **A8. Work on a revised salary grid and clarifications of benefits for future staff** | **Leo and Philippe** | **June** |
| **A9. Consider the proposal for salary grid and future benefits** | **Ex Co** | **June** |
| **A10. Clarify exactly the legal / extra legal benefits** | **Leo, with Philippe and David Praille (BAPN)** | **October** |

**3. Migration**

See background paper N3

**Main Presentation Points**

* The main output of the Migration Task Force in 2016 was the **internal briefing** which aims to build capacity and promote debate. It is a first step in developing a common external position paper, advocacy demands and action plan.
* The briefing was used at a capacity building session with the EUISG in March. Concerns were raised about whether EAPN should be focusing more on asylum seekers and refugees than migrants - though the agreement was to  focus on human rights of **all** migrants, whilst recognizing challenges of international and EU frameworks.
* Concerns were raised about the threat of migrants – to jobs, social cohesion and to European culture and identity. Several members underlined that EAPN must stay true to its mission and values. EAPN’s commitment to human rights is non- negotiable.
* The Task Force is currently working on an external position paper and action plan. The paper will include EAPN’s mission, values and key principles, provide short justification, then key messages and policy demands. This will cover 4 areas: **Rights; Poverty and social exclusion** eg access to quality work, services and social protection; **Participation; Solidarity.**

**Main Discussion Points**

* Criminalising and trafficking women is a key issue
* Need to work together in Alliances and not compete, especially with our members.
* Mustn’t forget long history of migration and long-term migrants not just asylum crisis.
* Mustn’t be instrumentalist – not just what benefits us, but solidarity – ie older migrants/mentally ill and vulnerable migrants.
* Access to health and mental health services is often the first priority.
* More clarification of the right to flee is needed
* A major priority will be to decide what common action will we take at EU level
* More focus on participation and on awareness-raising with the general public to avoid scapegoating migrants – they are not the cause of all the problems.
* Recognizing challenges of transit -  many migrants keen to move to other areas/countries.
* Problem of governments who are trying to attack migrants and drive a wedge between vulnerable groups eg Hungary
* Should we undertake an awareness raising campaign on these issues in Europe, working with others?

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A11. Finalise the briefing** | **Task Force** | **end of April** |
| **A12. Use the briefing as a discussion document, and include migrant organizations and migrants.** | **NNs** | **Ongoing** |
| **A13. Provide feedback on the draft position paper and action plan** | **Ex Co members** | **End June** |
| **A14. NNs are encouraged to send back the fiche on migration to Sian** | **Ex Co members** | **15 June** |
| **A15. Consider the idea of an awareness raising campaign** | **Sian and Task Force** | **Ongoing** |

**4. Welcome from Caritas Director and Bishop Ansgar Puff.**

The Director and the Bishop gave welcome speeches to EAPN.

**5. Info session and discussion on the situation of refugees and migrants in Cologne**

Notes are not available for this session.

**6. STUDY VISITS**

Notes are being finalised and will be made available on the Members Room.

**7. EAPN Work on FEAD and ESF/20%**

Following brief presentations of FEAD, ESF and the 20% Monitoring of ESF expenditure (see background documents available via the Members Room), the Ex Co split into two clusters to discuss how they would take forward work commitments on FEAD and ESF / 20% in 2017.

**FEAD cluster**

(Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg, Estonia, Norway, Greece, Finland, Denmark, Malta, France, Netherlands, Poland)

* The cluster had some difficulties to discuss the process because most of them were not familiar with the FEAD programme.
* The cluster agreed to develop a questionnaire, starting from the reality of Member States and different stakeholders at national level.

**Proposed deliverables:**

* 1. A 2-3 page report on how FEAD works in the EU, as an internal capacity building tool
  2. A set of recommendations informed by a Human Rights approach for the national and EU level

**Agreed ways of working**

* Online – email, Facebook group, members’ room.
* Offline – cluster meetings during future Ex Co meetings

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| **Decision** |
| **D3. The work of this cluster will be led by a steering group: David – EAPN Belgium, Olga – EAPN Greece, Kart – EAPN Estonia, Vilborg – EAPN Iceland** |
| **D4. The work on FEAD does not concern only the members of the cluster, but the cluster will drive the work.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A16. Propose a draft Terms of Reference for this cluster, clarifying deliverables, timescales etc.** | **The Steering Group, supported by Magda** | **End of May** |

**ESF / 20% cluster**

**Key points from discussion**

* There is little knowledge about the 20% at national level
* It is mainly used by government departments, and it is sometimes used in a political way
* Participation in monitoring committees does not give enough power to NGO actors
* Surprising to see how few ExCo members knew about EAPN’s [Barometer report](http://www.eapn.eu/barometer-report-eapns-monitoring-the-implementation-of-the-20-of-the-european-social-funds-for-the-fight-against-poverty/) – it is a key document for the network
* The monitoring of the use of the 20% of the ESF is also being discussed in the project which Fintan is leading – he hears frustration in European Commission, and rumours that if these conditions are not met, the money will be withdrawn.
* Countries have different interpretations of the definition of 20% of the ESF

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| **Decision** |
| **D5. Cluster leaders are EAPN Portugal and Spain** |
| **D6. Main deliverable with be a second edition of the Barometer report** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A17. Develop a ToR and an action plan.** | **Cluster leaders, supported by Fintan** | **End of April** |

**Ways of working**

* Cluster leaders will draft a questionnaire which they will circulate to the cluster
* Cluster leaders will have bilateral conversations with all members – another way of collecting information to complement the questionnaire

**8. Policy Issues**

Background paper N8

*Introduction*

Sian Jones (EAPN Policy Coordinator) presented a PowerPoint on the most recent policy developments at EU level, focusing chiefly on the White Paper on the Future of Europe. The policy conference in June will also touch upon this, looking at a post-Europe 2020 Strategy in a broader context.

*Political reflection on the White Paper on the Future of Europe*

Members discussed the following questions:

- What are your, and your Governments’, initial reflections on the 5 scenarios?

- Should we try to influence the discussion about the 5 scenarios, and if so how best to do so? What actions are you able to take at the national level?

**Main points from the discussion**

**Estonia**: What Governments want and what people want is sometimes very different, talking to people in poverty brings forward ideas that Governments don’t always take forward;

**Hungary**: Our PM has two faces, so it is very difficult to understand where he positions himself, as he says one thing in Brussels and another thing at home; he sometimes says he wants to take the country out of the EU, but the Hungarian economy is weak so it would collapse without EU support. There is currently a ‘Let’s stop Brussels!’  campaign, featuring issues such as energy poverty, the workfare scheme, and taxation, which are very negative for people experiencing poverty, and backlash against foreign-funded civil society organisations;

**Ireland**: There hasn’t been a debate about this in the media, while EAPN IE will have some meetings around the country, where this could be a topic. Should we educate people on the benefits of the EU, or should we just listen to their point of view, which risks being rather Eurosceptic, influenced by British tabloids?

**Germany**: Government supports scenario 3, about a 2-speed Europe, but we see it as a problematic issue if some countries are left behind;

**Portugal**: Europe **already** has 2 speeds, and even more than that; the issue is not countries who *want* to do more, but who *can* do more;

**Bulgaria**: While some countries may support this multi-speed Europe, we are firmly opposed, as it is a dismantling of solidarity and a formalising of negative practices and wrong directions already in place;

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| **Decision** |
| **D7. There was a clear agreement by show of hands that EAPN should be working on this in the coming months.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A18. Create an online group (email cluster) of interested members to take forward the discussions, and decide how we should try to influence these discussions and with what messages.** | **Leo** | **Early June** |

**9. Projects and Fundraising**

Following an overview of the background paper, the discussion focused on the recommendation to establish a **‘Funding sub-committee’** to work with the Secretariat to do the following:

* Create a financial dependency strategy
* Rework, finalise and implement the finance and fundraising strategy
* Consider the opportunities and risks of being involved in multiple European projects

**Key points of the discussion**

* Many members welcomed the idea of such a sub-committee
* Many members were keen on working on further projects, notably energy poverty or child poverty
* The project approach was thought of as a way to support out funding, to explore new opportunities and to develop the network.
* We should consider the risks associated of working on multiple projects, and avoid spreading ourselves too thinly.
* Core funding provides more flexibility than project funding – which also demands a lot of space and energy.

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A19. Draft ToR and circulate to the Ex Co by the end of May.** | **Leo** | **End of May** |
| **A20. Decide whether they can be on the Committee** | **Ex Co members** | **15 June 2017** |
| **A21. Create an online group (email cluster) of interested members to take forward the discussions** | **Leo** | **End June** |

**10. Application for EASI FPA 2018 – 2020**

* **Main points from the discussion**It is important for us to learn from the last process – have we considered the mistakes made last time? What worked, what didn’t work? Such a reflection should inform our application for this FPA.
* The Bureau should lead on this application, working with the staff team.

**Key external political issues proposed**

* Combatting populism in a way which resonates with people experiencing poverty (
* The legitimacy of Europe
* Europe 2020 and the poverty target
* Inequality, as a key driver behind many of our issues
* Migration
* Democratic deficit and participation

**Internal issues to consider**

* We need to conduct a SWOT analysis
* The language we use is often too ‘top down’, too aimed at European Institutions – this makes it hard to connect with people on the ground
* We need an exciting vision which can be achieved in our lifetime!

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| **Decision** |
| **D8. The proposed process for the application was agreed.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A22. Triangulate these conversations (with staff and bureau notes) with a view to making the first draft of the application.** | **Leo** | **Early June** |

**11. Communication**

Elke (Communications Officer) introduced a discussion topic on to strengthen the engagement and voice of people experiencing poverty in our communications work, in line with our strategic objectives and expected outcomes, notably that people experiencing poverty recognise EAPN as ***their*** network.

Note – we already involve PeP in our communication work in the following ways:

* **Voices of poverty Blog, linked to the PEP meeting,**
* **PeP national coordinators: common comms plan in process**
* **Policy conference: video with messages from PEP**
* **In most of our publications: quotes from people experiencing poverty**

The Ex Co split into four groups for discussions.

**Key points from Group 1 (Macedonia, Latvia, Czech Republic, SMES, Belgium, Luxembourg, Romania, Italy, France, Lithuania)**

* Important to use videos, speaking groups, photos not just documents.
* Important to restoring trust with PeP, particularly in terms of the media, and prepare them to speak publicly
* Important to promote a more positive message about PEP.
* We lack experience in using social media effectively
* Difficulties of mobilising people in poverty who are not used to speaking publicly.

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| **Network** | **How they engage PeP in network** | **How could that be linked to the EU Comms work** |
| **Macedonia** | Some tweets, promoting visually. Social media to follow up on interesting life stories. Important to avoid victimizing people. Make them feel confident to speak about their experience. |  |
| **Latvia** | Annual PeP programme in Parliament. All media / comms work requires money, which they don’t have. |  |
| **Czech Republic** | Present the stories and experiences of PeP – hard to find the people, hard to find journalists interested in it. |  |
| **SMES** | Present the issues without putting people in a difficult situation - have 50 life profiles that we present and did work on dignity and well-being with 50 homeless people. |  |
| **Belgium** | Good history of engagement of PEP at different levels, especially the regional networks. We try to engage them in the meetings and dialogue with the politicians and cabinets. Good to use different ways of communication, not just documents, but pictures and other. | Important to build trust, to prepare people to speak publicly |
| **Luxembourg** | National PEP meeting in June, where they meet with our ministers. Did a film about people living on the streets – important not to stigmatize them. | Do more that can ‘touch people’ - photos and pictures |
| **Romania** | Delegate this activity in World Vision, an EAPN member with good media and communications budget. Our PEP is focussed on child poverty. they have. As EAPN Romania, we try to have a positive message about poverty. | Collect good life stories, select the right PeP to talk to policy makers. Important to make the right choice! |
| **Italy** | Lack of experience, People are ashamed to say they are in poverty. |  |
| **France** | Key members in EAPN promote participation. French law obliges medical and social services to create ‘speaking groups’, engaging PeP. In the homelessness sector, EAPN helped create an Advisory Council, then divided into regions. 100 people with 23 regional councils. We work on social laws and make proposals at the national level on housing and other issues on poverty, health, work etc. We then elect people every year, that represent people in poverty to the political authorities. We have the national council for the struggle against poverty – made up of politicians and regional representatives, employers, and trade unions. So PEP take part in the drafting of the laws. They always are involved by government. |  |
| **Lithuania** | Use social media | Share good practices and experiences. Members need new ideas and inspiration. |

**Key points from Group 2**

* We don’t language the language in EU style report, but it is hard to abandon it totally as we do aim many of our documents at EU decision makers. Our task is to build a bridge between ‘jargon’ and easy-to-understand language. (Netherlands has good experience here)
* We need visibility via more ‘actions’
* We need to better share our experiences
* Key messages have to be presented by PeP
* Testimonies and success stories are good
* We have to prepare our colleagues very well to speak in public

**Key points from Group 3**

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| **Network** | **How they engage PeP in comms work** | **How could that be linked to the EU Comms work** |
| **Croatia** | * Conferences start with speeches of PEP; Translated poverty explainer in Croatian and the homeless presented this book. * Journalist award with PEP in the jury. Well-received by journalists. Fear that people wouldn’t do it was unfounded. | * Community actions on the same day. * 1st of December light-chain around all capitals’ parliaments. * Standardize 2-3 activities, with key messages for example. * Let PEP themselves be spokespeople. * Use ‘different’ language and don’t feel pressured to ‘push’ PeP into speaking the language of the politicians. |
| **Hungary** | * Journalist prize - popular but hard to find PeP to be in the jury. * Working groups on public work scheme programmes is active in comms: it has a blog, written by PEP. Publicised books with PeP involvement (in preparation, interviews, creating questionnaire). |
| **Norway** | * Media prize for those writing about poverty. Prize was a thumbs-up made out of broken glass by homeless people to show that beauty can come out of what’s broken. * Poverty hearings where politicians and PEP discuss. * 1st Sunday of December 2017, we’ll organise a light-chain around parliament when xmas lights go on, inviting all PEP, immigrants, refugees. * Next year we’ll produce a book w pictures, poetry, stories to sell and give as gifts – PEP will be interviewed about hopes, dreams, future. |

**Key points from Group 4**

* Importance of having structures and processes that allow us to properly enable and engage PeP in communication activities
* We should recognize the stigma around being a person experiencing poverty and we should find ways of overcoming that
* There is a fine line between participation and exploitation – we should not take their story and use it for a different agenda.
* When we have events, conferences, launching reports we need to think about the opportunities to actively involve PePs – structure helps
* Question: do we do enough to highlight what EAPN does around participation at national and EU level? Do we talk about it enough? Do we reflect enough on it? We should also reflect on how to draw the link between national and EU level.

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| **Network** | **How they engage PeP in comms work** |
| **Ireland** | * No clear strategy to engage PeP in our communications work. * Social Inclusion conference taking place annually in Ireland and PePs make presentations at this conference. |
| **Austria** | * Use sociocracy to support PeP to discuss and work together * Involve PeP in EAPN Austria Board * True communication without genuine participation of PeP in the network is not possible |
| **Poland** | * Press attention for conferences and events where PePs participate. * Using EAPN Fund, have a “reference group” that brings together social workers, NGOs and PeP to develop a position paper that brings forward the view of people experiencing poverty. |
| **Bulgaria** | * It is stigmatizing to ask people to speak on behalf of people experiencing poverty, on behalf of the poor. They might agree to speak in the name of different groups that are labelled differently – pensioners, people with low income, etc. * PeP are a very diverse and fragmented group and this makes having a unique voice and unique message from this group difficult. The PeP is also a group that has different layers and this makes it difficult to talk to them. Maybe we should organize meetings like ATD. We should work with them separately, in different environments. For example in our case, it is difficult to work with Roma and Bulgarians at the same time. |
| **Denmark** | * Not been successful – trying to get a new Board member to help design communication activities. |
| **Iceland** | * All work revolves around PeP and the PeP meeting |
| **Portugal** | * 18 local groups of PePs in EAPN PT. The next step for us is that PePs become members of our network and this process has already started last year. * Every year, PePs develop and activity plan. * Journalism Prize Project - work on a project with photos of PePs that is part of a campaign. This project has been inspired by a project we visited in Bruges – Enough is Enough. |
| **Germany** | * Used to organize a national PeP meeting as an open space for PeP to express their views. * Insufficient funds mean this no longer happens * PeP who attended the PeP meeting in Brussels report back to the group |
| **UK** | * In Scotland they have a group of community activists who are involved in the NN and who are involved in communication activities such as press declarations or events. They also did case studies with community workers. |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A23. Consider the suggestions of the buzz groups** | **Comms Team and Peter** | **TBC** |
| **A24. Implement certain participatory comms activities with PeP in the preparation of the PeP meeting** | **Comms team** | **Ongoing** |

**12. Brexit and its consequences**

Peter Kelly gave a presentation on Brexit – details can be found in the power point.

**Key points from the discussion**

**Portugal**: Brexit is not a topic which gets much political attention.

**Poland**: Brexit is a big issue as there are many Poles in the UK, though many have started returning to Poland. Prime Minister went to negotiate with Teresa May. The feeling from the Government is **“if they can do it so can we.”**

**France**: Not too many repercussion yet, though the extreme right is using it as a pretext to talk about Frexit.

**Austria**: Right wing party took it up, pushing for an Austrian exit. People were surprised by the vote for Brexit.

**Netherlands**: Right wing parties used it in their election campaign, which ended up with an unexpected positive outcome.

**Ireland**: Brexit is huge issue for Ireland. There is no clarity what will happen with the border. There are regular press articles highlighting a possible Irish exit.

**Germany**: Trying to get the London stock market to move to Frankfurt!

**Denmark**: Britain is Denmark’s biggest trading market with Denmark – there is thus a big worry about job losses. Right wing parties are also using Brexit politically.

**IFSW**: We should be taking away boundaries, not building new ones. It is going to take up so much time, time that should be spent on important issues.

**Concluding remarks**

Brexit will have far reaching consequences for everybody. We need to consider the opportunities to influence and engage at national levels. We must protect human and social rights for all.

**13. Reporting and contracts with national networks**

Philippe presented the changes made to annual contracts in 2017, notably:

* New deadline for NNs to submit reports for annual contracts is 31 December, to fit into reporting deadlines with the Commission. The reports will have to be accompanied by a statement of non-duplicity – which means that an organisation did not use the money twice for European funding.

**Key points from the discussion**

* Timing is difficult at the national level – contracts are signed and paid at earliest in April, but the work needs to start in January.
* Deadline to apply for 2017 contracts is 31 May 2017
* Contracts have the parts:

1. National work on the preparation and follow up work on the PeP – the costs related to the travel to the European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty are not eligible.
2. The work done at national level on EU2020
3. Translation of EAPN documents in national languages

If there are financial documents to justify in kind contributions (work of volunteers), then this can count as co-financing

The ExCo members split into 4 groups and exchanged their experiences and views on annual contracts around the following questions:

* How are contracts used to support the work of NNs at the national and European level and their development?
* What are the reasons for which NNs take up contracts?
* What are the reasons for which they do not take up contracts?

**Key points from group discussions**

* **How are contracts used to support the work of NNs at the national and European level and their development?**
* Some NNs use the contracts to work on the PeP at national level and for translation
* EU2020, PeP Meeting
* Events
* Websites
* Staff members
* **What are the reasons for which NNs take up contracts?**
* Finding funding sources at national level is very difficult. In some countries, the annual contracts are the only source of funding, ensure resources for specific activities plus translations
* Some countries use the contracts as a complementary source of funding – it gives some financial independence, it allows them to organize supplementary activities
* **What are the reasons for which they do not take up contracts?**
* Difficult to find co-financing; in addition to this
* Contracts involve significant reporting work for little money (too bureaucratic)
* Contracts are rigid, there is no flexibility

**Suggestions**

* Activity reports should be used to know about the activity of other NNs
* Translation – there could be more flexibility in spending translation money on various documents
* Many NNs work on a voluntary basis and the budget of national contracts should have a line on reporting
* New format for reporting – there could be one report (rather than one annual report and one report for the contract) but better structured. We need to discuss about the link between activity reports and annual reports. There could be a space in the report to share problems, a space where to talk more freely about activities. There should be a similar structure for EAPN annual report and national reports.
* Stronger and clearer templates for reports would be useful

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A25. Follow up on these discussions and suggestions.** | **MDG and Magda** | **End May** |

**14. Alliances, Structured Dialogues**

***EAPN Annual Policy Conference in June***Amana (EAPN Policy Officer) briefly presented the Concept Note for the Policy Conference, which is available on the Members Room.

**Key discussion points**

* We must ensure that people experiencing poverty also participate in this conference, the same point was raised last year, but not enough efforts made to ensure this.
* The title is very negative (fight, against, poverty, exclusion, inequality), maybe we could include some positive words as well, as like ‘solidarity’ or ‘cohesion’.

***Alliances and Structured Dialogue - presentation***

Leo (EAPN Director) introduced the overview table of existing alliances. EAPN is also involved in some global alliances, as well as structured dialogues with different Directorate-Generals in the European Commission, which are not reprised in this table and will be discussed in future.

**Key discussion points**

* The document doesn’t capture the involvement of members in these alliances
* Is there a duplication between EAPN and the Social Platform? Almost all of our EOs are also members of the Platform. EOs are also involved in many of the other alliances highlighted here.
* Most of these alliances are Brussels-based and do not offer funding to bring members from the national level, while EAPN can’t financially support this attendance; every time there is an opportunity to bring members, this is done;
* Council of Europe should be much more prioritised!

**Potential engagement of Ex Co members in specific alliances**

Certain Ex Co members highlighted the possibility of representing EAPN in different alliances, notably:

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| **Alliance** | **Potential representative** |
| Investing in Children alliance, after the summer though (note that Kart (EE) was involved and did not find it to be a positive experience at the national level) | Quinta (NL) |
| Social Platform | David (BE) |
| Semester Alliance | David (BE) |
| Urban Poverty Partnership | Richard (FR) |

**Political Guidance**

Most members (14) felt that we are engaged in too many alliances (in terms of how many alliances, how much time spent on each, level of staff engagement etc). A minority (6) feel that our engagement level is right, and 1 member would like us to engage in more alliances.

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| **Decision** |
| **D9. When we have finalised the application for the Framework Partnership Agreement, we should take this conversation forward, undertaking a very strategic impact assessment of these alliances in reference to our strategic priorities, recognising the guidance of the Ex Co.** |

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| **Action point** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| **A26. Follow up with individual members who are interested in representing EAPN in certain alliances.** | **Staff team** | **June** |