

# Annual Report 2016



## 1. Development and Growth of the Network

The most important resource of the Network are the member organisations. In the year 2016, the Network had a total of 42 members. Six new organisations joined the Network (Tapaturma- ja sairausinvalidien liitto ry, Eurooppalaiset ry, Kuka kuuntelee köyhää –verkosto, Suomen Caritas ry, Hope – Yhdessä ja Yhteisesti ry, Mielenterveysomaisten keskusliitto - FinFami). One network (Kuule köyhää-verkosto) resigned from membership.

The **Website of EAPN-FIN** was updated regularly ([www.eapn.fi](http://www.eapn.fi)), and information work was also performed via the social media on Facebook [www.facebook.com/eapnfin](http://www.facebook.com/eapnfin) and Twitter [www.twitter.com/eapn\\_fin](http://www.twitter.com/eapn_fin). Seven articles by members of the Board and other Network representatives were published via the Blog.

Information about the activities and events of the Network to its members was distributed via the newsletter and e-mail. In 2016, five editions of the newsletter were published. The newsletter can be ordered by anyone interested via our website. In this way, information can be obtained by both Network members, experts and interested citizens. End of 2016, the newsletter had about 230 subscribers, almost double as compared to 2015.

The information brochure of the Network was renewed in autumn 2016. An information poster was produced during the educational workshop cruise of M/S SOSTE.

### International activities

EAPN-Fin has a representative in the Exco and EU Inclusion Strategies -group of EAPN (EUISG), which both met three times in 2016. The representative of EUISG was also elected to the Steering group of EUISG, which plans and prepares the EUISG meetings. Essential task has been to disseminate about the situation of poverty and social exclusion in Finland to EAPN. Within our possibilities, information was disseminated at national level about current anti-poverty and anti-exclusion activities of EAPN and the European Union.

The European Anti-Poverty Network coordinated the Living Wage-campaign, which advocated the need for qualitative and permanent employment. The campaign was high lightened on the EAPN-Fin website, including a synopsis of the topic.

In the years 2013 to 2014, EAPN had a project named EMIN, which promoted a minimum income high enough to cover basic needs. In 2016, EAPN applied for resources from the European Commission to enable the next phase of the project, EMNIN 2, for the years 2017 to 2018, with ETUC as the main cooperating partner. The aim is to advance the development of minimum income systems. EAPN-Fin committed to participation in the project if financing is granted.

### *Representation in 2016*

- EAPN Executive Committee: EAPN-Fin's representative was Tiina Saarela.
- EU Inclusion Strategies workgroup and its Steering group: representative was EAPN-Fin's vice chairman Jiri Sironen.
- Poverty and Social Exclusion as Violation of Human Rights - Task force: representative was EAPN-Fin's Board member Anja-Riitta Ketokoski.

- Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth -event on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in Brussels: representative was secretary Anna Järvinen as part of the Finnish delegation.
- FEAD Network's Launch Conference on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 in Brussels: representative was Board member Juha Keränen.
- Policy Conference on occasion of the EUISG and EXCO meetings in Brussels on 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016: representative was Chairman Tiina Saarela and Vice Chairman Jiri Sironen.
- EAPN General Meeting (Exco and EUISG) and Capacity Building training in Brygge from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> October: representatives were Board Chairman Tiina Saarela, secretary Anna Järvinen and PeP-group coordinator Jouni Kylmälä.
- The annual, 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of People Experiencing Poverty was held on 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in Brussels. Finland was represented by a delegation of four persons, with Jouni Kylmälä acting as national coordinator.

## **2. Influencing National Governments for Better Policies: Advocacy, Lobbying and Policy-Making linked to European Level developments**

### **EU Steering Period and 2020-Strategy advocacy**

As part of the advocacy work towards the European Semester, we have enhanced the **cooperation with the Semester Officer in Finland to the European Commission**. At the Commission's Representation in Finland, there was a discussion on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 about Country Report, where we participated. On 25<sup>th</sup> April, the Commission's Representation in Finland arranged a lunch meeting, where the deepening of EMU and its social dimension were discussed. EAPN-Fin was entrusted with the nomination of the participants to be invited, and was represented by Tiina Saarela, Jiri Sironen, Jaakko Kiilunen and Anna Järvinen.

The Commission held a discussion forum on 26<sup>th</sup> May in Helsinki, with Commission Vice Chairman Dombrovskis and Finance Minister Stubb as speakers. Jiri Sironen participated in the event. At the discussion, Jiri asked about the current state of the commitment to reduce poverty. No clear answer was given.

EAPN-Fin made its own **national shadow Country-specific recommendations**. In connection with the publication of the national recommendations of the Commission we made a **position statement and background paper** together with SOSTE.

In total, we performed more advocacy work towards the European Semester process than in former years. The position statement was distributed widely: Ministers Rehula, Mäntylä and Lindström together with their assistants, the Anti-Poverty Group of Parliament, the representatives of the Ministry of Finance and Social and Health, the Members of the European Parliament, the members of the European Social Policy Network (ESPN), the members of the Social Protection Committee and Employment Committee, the Finnish Semester Officers.

### **The European Pillar of Social Rights**

As member of the Finnish delegation, Network Secretary Anna Järvinen participated in the Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth organised by the European Commission, which discussed the Commission's initiative on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The topic was also present at a policy seminar by EAPN in June, in which Chairman Tiina Saarela and Vice Chairman Jiri Sironen participated.

EAPN-Fin participated in the European Commission's seminar of European Pillar of Social Rights by contributing to the planning, nomination of participants to be invited, and by participation in the event

itself on 19<sup>th</sup> September. Board member Yrjö Mattila and Vice Chairman Jiri Sironen were speakers at the event. Also, Board members Anja-Riitta Ketokoski and Secretary Anna Järvinen were present.

Vice Chairman Jiri Sironen also participated in the discussion event of the Finnish members of ETSK on the Social Pillar on 30<sup>th</sup> September, where he also held a speech on behalf of SOSTE.

EAPN-Fin answered to the internet questionnaire of the European Commission on Pillar of Social Rights at the end of the year. The answer was also published on our website and distributed widely to our stakeholders.

EAPN-Fin also participated in the workshop arranged by a coalition of NGOs formulating Citizen-Based Society's Recommendations towards the Finnish action programme for achieving the aims of the Agenda 2030: Objective 1 (no poverty) and 2 (no hunger).

## **Work groups**

The basic work of the Network is performed by means of work groups. In 2016, active work groups were on Child Poverty, Health and Poverty, Social Policy and Expertise by Experience. The work groups met several times during the year.

### ***Child Poverty work group***

The work group surveys the poverty situation of families with children and of children themselves, and helps to provide synergy among those already working on the issue. The aim is to achieve a broad focus on child poverty in many activities. In 2016, the work group met four times. The group followed up and brought to the attention of government the consequences of budget cuts for families with children and for children themselves. The work group produced a postcard for attention of decision-makers in which measures to reduce child poverty are proposed.

### ***Health and Poverty work group***

The work group updated the Social Protection Check List, which can be found on our web page. The group completed a questionnaire on the fulfillment of § 11 of the Law on Social and Health Patient Fees. The law paragraph rules that social and health patient fees are to be reduced or not to be collected in case the fees endanger the basic livelihood of persons. The questionnaire wanted to find out how extensively §11 of the law is implemented. The results of the questionnaire were presented in advance on the training cruise of M/S Soste, and were published at the beginning of 2017.

### ***Social Policy work group***

The work group met three times in 2016. It followed the activities of the EUISG work group and performed advocacy work with regards to the European Semester. The work group began updating the Poverty-explainer, which was completed in the beginning of 2017. For updating the publication, Niko Eskelinen was employed.

### ***Expertise by Experience work group***

It was decided to add the activities of the jury of the "Respectfully about Poverty" Journalism prize and the PeP group to the tasks of the work group. The jury of Journalism prize met three times and chose the award recipients. The PeP group prepared the meeting in Brussels and assigned a delegation for the event.

At the ***Poverty Group of Finnish Parliament***, EAPN-Fin was represented by chairman Tiina Saarela. Network secretary Anna Järvinen performed as expert secretary representing SOSTE.

## Events and seminars

VVA ry has been responsible for coordinating the **Homeless people's night 17.10.** citizens' movement. As it did not have sufficient resources for advance information work on the topic, this was performed by EAPN-Fin in spring 2016.

In cooperation with the **Poverty Group of Finnish Parliament**, the following seminars were organised in 2016:

- **How to sustain children over recession?** 8.3. (about 50 participants)
- **The effects of spending cuts – how does subsistence allowance cope?** 16.3. (about 40 participants)
- **Basic income trial in Finland: aims and possibilities** 26.4. (about 50 participants)
- **Information discussion on over-indebtedness** for members of parliament on 12.5.
- **The impact of gap employment markets towards employment promotion and reduction of poverty** 19.10. (about 90 participants)

As part of the **Baltic-Project** coordinated by Latvia, seminars were arranged on **Human dignity, basic need and building of a new life – NGOs and church in multicultural work** 1.3. and 15.3. EAPN-Fin was requested to join the project at short notice, because the former Finnish partner involved had not been able to fulfil its obligations. Chairman Tiina Saarela also participated in the final seminar of the project in Riga.

Together with SOSTE, a seminar was organised on Europe-day 9.5. on the topic **Refugees and European poverty. Our problem or that of others?** The event had about 50 participants.

On the training cruise of M/S SOSTE on 5.10., a seminar was organised on the topic **How does poverty appear in current Finland?** The event had about 70 participants. EAPN-Fin also had a poster space, where info brochures of the Network and the Poverty-publication were distributed.

## 3. Participation of People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion in Internal and External Workings of the National Network

### Proposal for a national meeting of people experiencing poverty

EAPN-Fin's aim is to strengthen the voice of people experiencing poverty and their participation in political decision-making. As part of this aim, EAPN-Fin has proposed to organise an annual meeting of people experiencing poverty. On the one-day event, the cabinet members would meet delegations from different parts of Finland of people experiencing poverty. The event would be linked to the annual event supported by the European Commission on meeting people experiencing poverty.

Part of the Network's board went to meet Minister Rehula on 12.1. and to discuss this proposal. The minister's assistant was met already earlier in November 2016. Rehula expressed interest in the proposal but stated that currently, no funding is available for its implementation. Rehula wanted that EAPN-Fin meets also with Minister Mäntylä or at least her assistant. Rehula stated that he wants discussion and meetings to continue, but is not ready to commit to organising of the hearing activity.

Chairman Tiina Saarela and secretary Anna Järvinen met with the assistant of Minister Mäntylä, Niina Perälä, on 7.4. and discussed the proposal. Perälä was basically supportive to the idea and promised to discuss it with the Minister and later to come back on the issue. However, from side of the Ministry, no return on the issue was made.

## **Pep-group**

EAPN-Fin is responsible for appointing the Finnish delegation to the European Meeting for People Experiencing Poverty (PeP) in Brussels. In 2016, Jouni Kylmälä served as national coordinator. The National Coordinator gathers the delegation and is responsible for preparing the delegation for the meeting in Brussels. Jouni Kylmälä attended the meeting of coordinators in April.

The PeP meeting held in Brussels on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016. From Finland, four representatives attended: Anna-Maija Tikkanen, Mikko Siltanen, Rauno Haapanen and Jouni Kylmälä. Half of the group had attended also the previous year's meeting, and half were new members. The group met almost monthly, altogether 8 times in 2016.

The topic of the meeting in Brussels was again the European Pillar of Social Rights. For the event, the Finnish delegation prepared its own proposal of a 6-hours working day: instead of increasing the labour force, it is necessary to increase demand. One way to achieve this is to share the work available. Sharing the work available by means of shortening the working hours has been experimented in Finland in connection with the recession of the nineteen-nineties. The result of the experiment were clear: productivity could be increased considerably by reducing working hours. Of the outcome of the trial period of the 1990s, employment councillor Pekka Peltola informed at the meeting, who earlier had been leading the employment ministry's experiment.

PeP-group member Rauno Haapanen attended the meeting of the delegations from Nordic countries in Copenhagen before the Brussels event. At the meeting, a joint advocacy paper for Brussels was prepared. Apart from preparing the Brussels event, the group reflected the increase of activities to other areas in Finland. Also, the group is ready to participate in preparing a possible national event of people having experienced poverty.

In 2016, it was further promoted to increase the cooperation and information sharing between the coordinator and the Board by means of inviting the coordinator and other delegates to participate in the Board meetings. Board secretary Anna Järvinen participated in many meetings of the group.

## **Respectfully about Poverty -journalism award**

EAPN joined the journalist award project of the Austrian EAPN in 2015. The project aims at developing an annual award for journalists who write respectfully about poverty and the life of people experiencing poverty. The award winners are chosen by a jury comprising of people that have experienced poverty. The journalist award seeks to promote and make known those actors who perform quality journalism with regards to the poverty issue.

The opening meeting of the project was on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 in Vienna. Based on its outcomes, a project was started in Finland by organising a workshop on 24.5. for journalists, experts by experience and experts. The topic was: 'How to write respectfully about poor people and poverty.' From the results of the workshop and the experiences gained from Austria, the criteria for a Finnish journalistic award was adapted. At the event, also name proposals for the award were collected. The name chosen was 'Respectfully about Poverty' award. Board member Juha Keränen made a logo for the competition.

Secretary Anna Järvinen participated in the meeting of the international project group on 1.-2.6. in Budapest and on 21. – 22.9. in Zagreb. At the Zagreb meeting, also one jury member from Finland participated.

The jury met three times in Autumn 2016 and chose the award winners. The jury was led by Board member Matti Cantell and secretary Anna Järvinen. The award presentation was held on 29.11. About 20 persons

were present at the event. The main recognition was granted to the radio discussion of the YLE Horizon program *Does excess food maintain food queues?* The program was produced by journalists Anna Patronen and Ville Talolla of the Church Information Center. Additionally, two merit recognitions were awarded for journalistic work: the first to journalists Anu Silfverberg and Reetta Nousiainen for their article '*Free work available*' published in Long Play. The second was awarded to the 'Kotiliesi' magazine publication '*With little money*', journalists Riitta Lehtimäki and Pauliina Susi.

#### **4. Governance and Internal Democracy (including internal governance, respect of statutory requirements, management in the network and funding)**

The network's assets are the members, their material and work input, and cooperation with people who have experienced poverty and exclusion. EAPN (Europe) supports the participation in the activities of the European network in form of travel and accommodation support.

EAPN-Fin is not a registered organisation, nor has the network any fulltime employee. The home organisation of the Network is SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health, which means that SOSTE supplies the network with the services of a part-time secretary and with financial administration and PR services. Anna Järvinen of SOSTE works as the Secretary of the Network.

For the **Journalistic Award**, support was applied for from 'Kansan Sivistysrahasto' at the end of 2016. In spring of 2017, we received a negative response to the application.

From the **EAPN grants application round**, we received support for the PeP coordination, translation and for the update of the Poverty-explainer.

EAPN-Fin has a Board elected by the General Meeting, which included in 2016 the Chairman, Vice Chairman and 12 Board members. The Board met 7 times in the reporting year.

##### **Board Members 2016**

Tiina Saarela, Chairman, Center for Diaconia and Society  
Jiri Sironen, Vice Chairman, Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention  
Matti Cantell, Finnish Federation of Settlements  
Esa Iivonen, Mannerheim League for Child Welfare  
Merja Karinen, Central Association of Mental Health  
Juha Keränen, National Organisation of the Unemployed  
Anja-Riitta Ketokoski, HYVA  
Anastasia Lapintie, Kriminaalihuollon tukisäätiö -Krits  
Tuula Luoma, Finnish Red Cross  
Yrjö Mattila, Finnish Society of Social Rights  
Tarja Pajunen, The Central Association of Finnish Pensioners (EKL)  
Anne Perälähti, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health  
Pirjo-Riitta Liimatainen, Finnish Association for Mental Health  
Sari Laaksonen, Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters

The General Meeting was held on 29.11.2016. At the General Meeting, statutory matters were discussed: the Annual Report of 2015, financial statement, activity plan and budget for 2017 and the election for Board members.

From among the Board Members posts, about half are due for re-election annually. For all open posts, new candidates were proposed and elected, and the Board continues in 2017 in maximum size: Chairman, Vice Chairman and 12 Board Members.