



Hungarian Anti-Poverty Network

Annual Report Summary

2016

Introduction

The Hungarian Anti-Poverty Network (HAPN) is a network of civil organizations and individuals--people experiencing poverty and their allies--as members working together for the eradication of poverty by the tools of advocacy, lobby and community organizing. HAPN was founded in April 2004 and joined EAPN just a few months later at the 2004 General Assembly.

We currently focus on three topics:

- dignified living/adequate guaranteed minimum income,
- employment/anomalies of the workfare system,
- sustainability/answers to energy poverty.

Our activities in 2016

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

About our advocacy and lobbying through our campaigns and policy work see the chapter titled "Participation of People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion in Internal and External Workings of the National Network".

- *European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)*

HAPN is a member of EAPN, in which our country is represented both in the ExCo and in the EU ISG. We focused on the EU 2020 in the year 2016, during this year we also contacted the European Semester Officer of Hungary, who participated at our event within the PACT project organized together with EAPN Castilla y León.

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

Participation is one of the main principle of the work at HAPN. Almost all of our activities provide various ways for people experiencing poverty and for their allies to engage with different issues within the three fields of our strategy (income poverty, energy poverty, workfare work and employability).

Activities related to insufficient income and our guaranteed minimum income campaign

- *Action Week for the Dignified Living*

In Oct 2017 we organized a series of events focusing on different aspects of income poverty. The events took place in Kecskemét (forum discussion about local issues related to poverty connected to a community cooking), Hajdúhadház (outreaching event of local activists connected to a community cooking as well), Mátraverebély (awareness raising flashmob by the active participation of the local people experiencing poverty) and Budapest. The event in the capital city was held at the 17th Oct which is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. We sent an open letter to the Ministry of Human Capacities together with the support of 7 other organizations. The letter drew the attention to the lack of guaranteed minimum income in Hungary and to the urgent need of it. The event also generated various press publications as well.

- *Journalism Prize From Below*

Coordinated by EAPN Austria, we joined the project called Journalism Price From Below, which aimed to award the work of those journalists who portrayed poverty and the struggles and efforts of people experiencing poverty without stereotypes. The jury was established by people experiencing poverty.

- *International Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty (“PEP Meeting”)*

As a tradition, our network was represented by a Hungarian delegation at the PEP Meeting. The members of the delegation were women who face various challenges (raising children with disabilities, combating discrimination and racism, being a single parent).

Activities related to the workfare work scheme and the mobilisation of its participants

- *The current scheme of workfare work and its downsides*

Via our community organizer colleague and our member organization called the Workfare Movement for the Future we highlighted on the anomalies of the workfare system. In 2016 besides the challenges of workfare workers with lower level of education, the community

organizing process concentrated also on those people in the system of workfare, who had higher (sometimes even university) qualification.

Legal support

- *Cases*

Our organization gave legal support to people experiencing poverty in various issues from questions related to the workfare work, housing and social benefits.

Community organizing

- *Field work in different parts of the country*

Besides Budapest, we had community organizing activities in Mátraverebély, Nógrád county which is one of the most lagged behind areas of Hungary. The organizing process was run by our organizer colleague by the involvement of the local community.

- *European Community Organizing Network (ECON)*

As we use the method of community organizing, it was an obvious decision to be an active member of the European Community Organizing Network which has international membership.

- *European Community Organising School (ECOS)*

We participate in a project which aims to develop training materials for community organizers at beginner and advanced level.

III. Development and Growth of the Network (including growth and training and capacity building actions)

We keep our members active and engaged via various activities which concentrate on their skills and knowledge.

- *Power in the Backpack*

These events are roadshows at which we discuss questions related to the problems of the workfare system (since it is one of the main employing possibilities at smaller and rural settlements where there are only very few other job possibilities) and various issues connected to social benefits. We also create a place for the local people to talk through local social problems.

- *Trainings*

Our trainings are for free. In 2016 people experiencing poverty could choose from these trainings of HAPN: 1. community organizing in rural communities, 2. special challenges of women experiencing poverty, 3. ethnicity and social exclusion, 4. community leaders' training, 5. fundraising.

- *Local events and miniprojects*

We encourage and based on our capacities financially support our members and partners to organize local advocacy events. In 2016 7 events were implemented in 4 locations tackling issues related to: income poverty, poverty in the LGBTQ community, poverty of parents raising children with disabilities, social exclusion of the youth including young Roma people.

In the framework of our miniproject call (which was open for our members) 3 projects were designed and implemented: 1. a forum theatre project for workfare workers, 2. a study tour for youth experiencing poverty from Olaszliszka, 3. a forum and training for foster parents.

Working for coalitions

- *Together for relevant issues*

We are members of the Community Organizing Coalition which aims to gather those organizations that use the methods of community organizing in order to support disadvantaged communities.

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

HAPN is run by the Hungarian Anti-Poverty Foundation (HAPF). HAPF is a public benefit organization, therefore it has to report to the national control authorities yearly via a public benefit report (in Hungarian “közhasznúsági jelentés”). HAPF has a Board of Trustees with 5 members and a Board of Supervisors with 3 members (the level of legal representation and financial control). The Board of Trustees meet at least 3 times a year. The operational level is run by the staff which has weekly staff meetings. In 2016 HAPN had 3 working groups by the involvement of experts and people experiencing poverty:

1. the Dignified Living Working Group,
2. the Sustainability Working Group and
3. the Employability Group.

Funding: in 2016 HAPN was funded by projects and grants, individual donations were not significant. Applications were written together by the staff and experts, volunteers. HAPF is entitled to get 1% of the VAT of individuals, but in 2016 the amount of donations were a small volume of support.

In 2016 seven colleagues worked at HAPN. Our visibility was provided via our website, Facebook page, newsletter, public events, e-mail and press about our work.