# **A close up of a sign Description generated with very high confidence**

Notes of EAPN Executive Committee

23-24 March 2018

Oviedo, Spain

**Participants: (members):** Eugen (Austria), Aleksandra (Croatia), Karel (Czech Republic), Tiina (Finland), Richard (France), Jens (Germany), Tess (Ireland), Vito (Italy), Laila (Latvia), Aiste (Lithuania), Biljana (Macedonia), Saviour (Malta), Quinta (Netherlands), Honoratte (Norway), Kamila (Poland), Sergio (Portugal), Raluca (Romania), Jasmina (Serbia), Anna (Slovakia), Carlos (Spain), Peter (UK), Luigi (SMES), Ian (IFSW)

**Participants (staff**): Philippe, Sigrid, Elke, Leo

**Apologies:**Caroline (Belgium), Maria (Bulgaria)Ninetta (Cyprus), Per (Denmark), Kärt (Estonia), Olga (Greece), Krisztina (Hungary), Vilborg (Iceland), Nadia (Luxembourg) Lena (Sweden) Freek (FEANTSA), Mike (Salvation Army),

**Analysis of progress against objectives of the meeting**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Analysis of progress** |
| **To start planning EAPN campaigns for 2018 and 2019** | 😐 Progress made on the EAPN campaign for the European Parliamentary Elections, with three clear objectives identified and a small group of members volunteering to lead on this campaign. Little detailed discussion on the campaign took place. |
| **To consider and ratify the Terms of References of different EAPN Structures, as a contribution to the strengthening of EAPN’s governance** | 😊 All ToRs ratified. Strong discussions raised a number of issues which will be discussed as part of the Strategic Thinking process |
| **To consider and decide how EAPN positions are prepared and signed off** | 😊 Good discussions around the two papers, both of which were ratified with minor changes. |
| **To consider and agree draft EAPN positions** | 😊 MFF and Future of Europe papers were agreed unanimously, while the Migration paper passed, with a large number of abstentions. Financing for Social Protection paper issued on behalf of Working Group. |
| **To take the next step in the strategic thinking process, notably by completing a ‘historical scan’ of EAPN** | 😐 The historical scan was undertaken, though we identified fewer clear political victories and campaign / advocacy tactics which led to those victories than hoped. |

**Session 1 - Setting the Scene**

Minutes of the October 2017 Ex Co were approved. It was noted that the Ex Co should be actively engaged in the risk management, not merely informed.

**Session 2- Director and Bureau report**

The Powerpoint can be accessed on Members Room, [here](https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/EAPN-EAPN-Director-Bureau-report.pptx).

**Key discussion points**

Members

* EMMAUS international has not been an active member for years – their Board has now decided to ‘rejoin’ EAPN.
* The Peace Institute in Slovenia is ready to form a Slovenian network and apply for membership, hopefully at the 2017 General Assembly. We will need to know what Slovenia (and all potential members) will bring to EAPN, not just what EAPN can offer new members.

Staff

* We are seeing an increased risk of burnout and workload related stress. The Director proposes to form a time-bound Task Force, with members of the staff and ExCo, to best deal with these issues. (Ian, Quinta and Luigi expressed interest)
* 1,5 % issue – a response has been received from staff, Peter / Jasmina will follow up with Philippe.

PeP

* The theme will be institutional participation, education or health, TBC on 11 April in a meeting with DG Employment. (Note, education is the agreed theme)
* We are pushing for interpretation on a rotational basis, as well as 2-3 extra delegations from our European Organisations per year.

Calendar

* **5-7 July, Brussels:** Policy Conference / Ex Co / EUISG / Strategic Thinking
* **27-29 September, Vienna:** GA / Ex Co / EUISG / Capacity Building / Strategic Thinking
* **7-8 November**, **Brussels:** PeP Summit

Funding

* Despite the late payments of the funds for the 2018 work programme, we do not have cash flow problems because of EMIN2 and energy poverty funds. Expenditure is in line with what was planned in the 2018 work programme. We have not needed to use the overdraft facility from Triodos as of yet.
* We expect an answer on the 2018 budget shortly. (Note, DG Empl has confirmed that we will receive the funding)

**Decisions**

|  |
| --- |
| **D1. When members are supporting the organisation of a specific meeting, staff and Bureau must consult with the member at an early stage, for timing, venue etc. Members must be treated as full partners in the organisation.** |

**Actions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| A1. Finalise ToR for a Burnout Task Force, discuss with Ian, Quinta, Luigi, staff. | Director | End May |
| A2. Make proposals / recommendations for dealing with burnout in EAPN | Task Force | For September Ex Co |
| A3. Follow up discussions with union reps about 1.5% | Peter / Jasmina | End June |

**Session 3 – Campaigning**

**Key discussion points**

* For the 2014 campaign, we asked MEPs to pledge their support to our campaign, which over 10% of incoming MEPs did. See [here](https://electingchampionsin2014.wordpress.com/2014/06/03/success-over-10-of-new-european-parliament-commits-to-fighting-poverty/). However, it was hard to do much follow up as the demands were considered too general. This is something to be aware of for the 2019 campaign.
* We need to build a campaign which works for EAPN members – we know that national networks have different capacities for campaigning. 4 national networks have a communication officer, 7 have a communication strategy, 16 use Facebook, 10 use Twitter, 3 are open to developing their communication work.
* We need a campaign that is **flexible** - **easy to use** and **not time-consuming**. We need a campaign which **can be used at the national and European level,** which is **not too expensive,** and which is **very visual.** The campaign **must involve voices from experts with experience of poverty.**

**Decisions**

|  |
| --- |
| **D2. The guiding principles for this campaign were unanimously accepted by the Ex Co, notably:**   * Must have a national and EU level aspect * Must be flexible in terms of membership engagement * Must amplify voices and faces of people experiencing poverty, stories from the ground * Must not have severe budgetary implications * Must reach out beyond our usual suspects * Must make use of social media and visual materials * Must have a self-disseminating, multiplying potential (i.e members can contextualise is and make it bigger) |
| **D3. An online voting system identified the following three main objectives for this campaign:**   1. **Awareness raising about the importance of the fight against poverty and what EAPN wants from Europe (152 votes)** 2. **Building up a longer-term engagement from the MEPs on the fight against poverty, once they are elected (136 votes)** 3. **Awareness raising about the importance of social Europe (135 votes)**   ‘Second level’ objectives are:   1. Strengthening EAPNs position and profile (130 votes) 2. Making candidates announce their support for social Europe and the fight against poverty (127 votes) 3. Working in coalitions to reframe the debate and refocus on values like justice, solidarity, equality and inclusion (125 votes) |
| **D4. Portugal and the Netherlands committed to leading the development of this campaign with Elke.** Ireland, LithuaniaAustria, Finland, UK, Norway, Italy, IFSW others may be able to support. |

**Actions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| A4. EAPN Ireland, Austria, Finland, UK, Norway, Italy and IFSW to confirm their level of engagement to Elke. | EAPN Ireland, Austria and Finland | End May |
| A5. Other members interested in shaping this campaign to confirm to Elke | Members | End May |
| A6. Convene EAPN staff meeting to decide ways of working | Elke (with Leo, Sian, Magda and Rebecca) | End May |
| A7. Conference call with EAPN Portugal and EAPN Netherlands to frame the campaign in more details. | Elke, EAPN Portugal and Netherlands | Early June |

**Session 4: EAPN Governance**

**Key discussion points**

* The Terms of References presented by the Director and the Bureau are reflections of reality – the aim of these discussions is to develop a clear and shared understanding of the roles of different structures within EAPN. Such roles should be considered under the strategic thinking process.

General Assembly ToR

* The Ex Co voted in favour of this ToR (EAPN Cz abstained, all others voted in favour), with the recognition that EAPN’s two values could be stronger in relation to the impact that poverty has on people. (A ‘parking lot’ issue to be revisited during the Strategic Thinking process)
* EAPN’s system of voting was also called into question – another issue to be revisited during the Strategic Thinking process / General Assembly

Executive Committee ToR

* The Ex Co unanimously voted in favour of this ToR, with the condition that the following changes are incorporated:

1. Risks should be assessed “at least once a year”, because all decisions of the Ex Co should be taken in full recognition of the relevant risks.
2. The election process for the Bureau should be clearly annexed, as well as the process for changing these rules.
3. A clause on staff participation should be added (EAPN Spain abstained from this)

* The Ex Co should consider conflict of interests (under ways of working) – this should be discussed further during Strategic Thinking process.
* The importance of receiving background documents two weeks in advance was reiterated

Bureau ToR

* Staff would like to have the possibility be present at relevant parts of Bureau / Ex Co discussions. This is the current practise, and it should be written into the ToRs to ensure this continues.
* While it is hard for members to ‘prove’ their candidates ‘meet’ the criteria outlined, it is accepted that these are the kind of qualities / experience EAPN is looking for in bureau members. Members could assess their internal candidates against these criteria.
* The Ex Co unanimously voted in favour of this ToR, with the condition that the clause on staff participation is added (EAPN Spain abstained from this)

**Decision**

|  |
| --- |
| D5. Representatives of the staff team should be able to be present at relevant parts of Bureau and Ex Co meetings. |
| D6. The three ToRs were adopted by the Ex Co. They will be used in every election process. They will be used as reference documents for the Strategic Thinking process, informing internal discussions as to whether our structures are ‘fit for purpose’. They will also be made available on the EAPN website. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| A8. Finalise the ToRs, incorporating suggested changes | Leo, with Philippe / Rebecca | End May |
| A9. Upload ToRs on website | Comms Team | End May |
| A10. Ensure ToRs are used during the Strategic Thinking process, and key questions are followed up (voting rights, election procedures, EAPN Values) | Leo and consultant | Ongoing |

**Session 5 – EAPN Sign-off processes**

1. **Protocol for forming EAPN positions**

Key discussion points

* 2 weeks is too short sign off process – for official positions we would need 4 weeks.
* We need to be clear that our members are in agreement with our values – even if they choose to opt out of a specific paper. This should be included in the annex, with a direct link to our values.
* The opt out should not automatically be used – only if members insist on being publicly named. In most instances members should expect that they will not be in full agreement with everything produced by EAPN, and will not need to publicly opt out. A less divisive option is simply to not use the paper!

With the above changes, this protocol was adopted with 17 votes in favour, 2 abstentions and 2 votes against (Germany and Austria)

1. **Protocol for public and media statements**

Key discussion points

* If no response is received from a member on a specific paper, it should be assumed that the member agrees. This has to be clarified to members.
* If 30% of the Ex Co disagrees with a specific statement, then it is blocked – not 30% of the whole membership.
* Press releases will not include the paragraph on opt outs.

This protocol was adopted with 19 votes in favour and 2 abstentions

**Decision**

|  |
| --- |
| D7. The 2 protocols were adopted by the Executive Committee |
| D8. Members accept that once a decision is taken by the network on the agreed procedures, the decision stands, and members will accept this decision. |

**Actions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| A11. Include the relevant annexes in all future positions | Staff team, under leadership of Director | Ongoing |
| A12. Present documents to Policy Team | Leo | Mid May |

**Session 6 – Key EAPN positions**

Three papers were presented in plenary (MFF, Future of Europe, Financing for Social Protection), and then discussed in three different ‘marketplaces’. The migration paper and action plan were also discussed.

**Key discussion points (general)**

* It was noted that we have too many different positions to discuss – we need to prioritise more clearly so that the work is more manageable for staff and members.
* If the Ex Co is going to consider positions, executive summaries are necessary.

**Key discussion points on MFF paper**

* It was agreed that we should not be campaigning for a separate fund (outside the ESF+) to fight poverty – this would be too heavy.
* In such papers, we should aim to better reflect the voices of experts with experience of poverty.

The Ex Co voted unanimously to adopt this paper as it stands.

**Key discussion points on Future of Europe paper**

* For this to be an official EAPN document it needs a short Executive Summary.

The Ex Co voted unanimously to adopt this paper

**Key discussion points on Migration position paper** **and action plan**

* It was noted that the Ex Co had originally requested action / position on the refugee crisis – the situation became more complicated when the Task Force widened the scope to migration rather than focusing on the refugee crisis.
* This paper was ratified at the EUISG, with a large majority of networks voting in favour. The EUISG requested Ex Co consideration of the documents because of internal sensitivities for certain members.
* It was noted that this paper represents the best compromise possible between the viewpoints of different members of the Migration Task Force.
* EAPN Spain and EAPN Netherlands need to vote against this paper / action plan because it is not in line with the way they work with migrants at the national level. They will not block the paper.
* The details about ‘criminalisation of humanitarian support for migrants’ on P5 needs to be checked for accuracy.

9 members voted in favour of the paper and action plan, 10 abstained and 3 voted against. As such, the paper and action plan are passed with an ordinary majority.

**Key discussion points on Financing for Social Protection paper**

* The section on ‘Consider EU prospects’ could be reworded
* Axis C – normalizing responsibilities – could be clarified
* The paper could go further in demonstrating that enough funds are available to finance social protection –a further focus could be on demonstrating the growth we have seen over recent years, and thus stressing the need for better distribution.
* The presentation of this document was widely welcomed and should be shared so members can translate and use.

This document was issued on behalf of the Financing for Social Protection Committee, and thus wasn’t voted on by the Ex Co (as per the protocol agreed above)

**Decision**

|  |
| --- |
| D9. The papers were adopted by the ExCo |

**Actions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Actions** | **Responsible** | **Deadline** |
| A13. The Financing for Social Protection paper and the presentation should be shared with members so that they can start to contextualise and use it at the national level. | Leo and Elke | Mid May |
| A14. Provide an Executive Summary for the Future of Europe paper | EAPN Spain | End May |

**Session 7: Strategic Thinking**

Notes in a separate document.

**Session 8 - Evaluation**

This evaluation focused on to what extent we kept to the point – as this was recognised as a weakness of the last Ex Co meeting. There was a general sense that this meeting was more focused, and the following points should be kept in mind for future meetings:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 😊(To keep, to celebrate!) | 🙁(To improve!) |
| We are moving to a different way of working as an ExCo | Documents need to be shared 2 weeks in advance |
| We are becoming much clearer about the role of the ExCo | We could have fewer items to discuss, with more time – this would be less stressful |
| Everyone participated! | Plenary feedback sessions need to be shorter and more dynamic |

**Parking Lot issues to be revisited (either at future ExCo or during Strategic Thinking Process)**

1. EAPN Structures
2. EAPN democracy, values and principles
3. EAPN Voting Rights
4. Bureau election process
5. PeP
6. Campaign objectives and messages