



EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK

## Terms of Reference – Bureau

### Background

#### EAPN Mission

- To promote and enhance the effectiveness of actions to eradicate poverty and prevent social exclusion;
- To raise awareness around poverty and social exclusion
- To empower the people living in poverty and social exclusion
- To lobby for and with people and groups facing poverty and social exclusion.

#### EAPN vision

It is unacceptable that almost 120 million people are living in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion of in the European Union. We are committed to the eradication of poverty and aim to put the fight against poverty and social exclusion at the top of the political agenda of the EU.

Our vision is a Social Europe free of poverty and social exclusion with access to economic, social and cultural rights for all.

To achieve this, we seek:

- a fair distribution of wealth,
- accessible quality employment,
- high levels of social protection,
- the combatting of discrimination,
- the meaningful participation - through the organisations in which they participate - of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.

#### EAPN Values

We believe that poverty and social exclusion:

- are a denial of fundamental human rights and thus a failure to respect and protect human dignity;
- arise from complex and multidimensional processes that cannot be dealt with in isolation or on the margins.

We believe:

- in the possibility to achieve a better sharing of wealth, opportunities and resources;
- in gender equality;
- in respect for cultural and religious diversity and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation or social origin;
- in the organisation of our work in a democratic and transparent way;

- that people have the right to influence and participate in the decisions that affect them and to have their views and experiences listened to and acted on;
- in seeking to work in partnership with other actors sharing a common vision including actors within; state authorities, public sector bodies, European Union Institutions and with trade unions and employers and with other NGOs;
- in the independence of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

### **What is this document?**

This ToR is an attempt to describe the current reality of EAPN, to provide clarity to EAPN members, and to enable the Strategic Thinking process to have a clear overview of the structures of EAPN.

### **The Bureau**

The Bureau acts collectively to manage the smooth operation of the affairs of the EAPN

### **Mandate**

- To prepare Executive Committee agendas and recommendations for action
- To ensure the implementation of Executive Committee decisions
- To represent EAPN externally
- To managing and support the work of the Director,
- To engage in the appointment of other key staff positions
- To deal with staff complaints
- To monitor the financial management of EAPN including the monitoring of the EAPN Fund
- To take key decisions in between Ex Co meetings, and report to the Ex Co
- To deal with statutory and politically sensitive issues (conflict management, ad-hoc support etc) related to member development.

The Bureau shall not normally have a policy making or resource-allocating role, other than when clearly delegated to do so by the Executive Committee or under the Statutes. However it is recognised that it shall require to undertake key functions in between Executive Committee meetings if decisions are required at short notice and then report back to the Executive Committee. The Bureau is not responsible for the day-to-day management of the EAPN staff team, except for the management and support of the Director.

### **Example of decisions or work of the Bureau**

- To undertake the annual appraisal of the Director
- To help the Director interpret decisions of the Ex Co into a meaningful and realistic plan of action
- To prepare detailed agendas and recommendations for decisions for the Ex Co
- To make strategic and structural recommendations to the Ex Co
- To consider internal problems within members and frame an EAPN response

### **Examples of Bureau work areas which need to be ratified / discussed at the Ex Co**

- Staff recruitment / dismissal
- Changes to staff conditions
- Proposed structural changes
- Proposed strategic changes

### **Composition**

The number of Bureau members is set by the Ex Co (7 in 2018) and should consist of, at least:

- President
- 6 vice-presidents, who shall be allocated at least the following duties - support to the presidency, secretary and treasurer.

### **Criteria**

- Must agree with the overarching goals of EAPN
- Must be mandated by an EAPN NN or EO
- Must have experience and been involved in EAPN issues at local, national or European levels
- Must be willing to give the time required for the functioning of the Bureau (see below)
- Must demonstrate knowledge of European issues, and experience in participation in national and international arenas, ideally at EU level.
- Must have strong leadership abilities
- Must have capacity and ability to develop national networks, fostering ownership and participation
- Must have the ability to engage with other Executive Committee members in democratic decision making
- Must be able to accept majority positions and respect minority opinions
- Must be able to follow-up and deliver on decisions and agreed points

### **Elections**

The Executive Committee shall elect, by ordinary majority, a Bureau. A standard election process is outlined in Annex 1.

### **Ways of working**

- Two - three face to face meetings per year, where finances permit
- Interpretation may be provided where necessary, and where finances permit
- Regular (monthly) webex meetings
- Decisions are taken by consensus – if this is not possible, then a simple majority vote will govern the decision.
- Decisions can also be taken by email – the staff team may send an email to the Bureau detailing the decision that needs to be taken along with a reasonable deadline. Should there be no response before the deadline, it is assumed the Bureau member who has not responded is in agreement with the decision taken by the other Bureau members
- The chairing of meetings will be rotated amongst the members of the Bureau
- Staff members can be present in relevant parts of the meeting. All relevant parts of the meetings are, in principle, open to staff members who are directly involved in the area of work being discussed. This principle depends on the availability of finance, the costs involved, and prior discussions between the staff member and Director based on the agenda.
- A member of staff could thus be present at all times. Where this is not possible, the Director will provide feedback to the staff team, as per the ToR of the regular staff meeting.
- A Trade Union representative(s) must be present at all discussions concerning working conditions / staffing.

### Expectations of Bureau members

- To represent EAPN in a number of different ways – speaking at events, providing press comments, producing written articles, etc.
- To be able to accurately represent the views and positions of EAPN.
- To be able to differentiate between representing the views or positions of their network and the views of EAPN
- To chair meetings and webinars
- To take responsibility for 1-2 specific areas of work within the Bureau – as Treasurer, Secretary, responsible for staffing issues etc. These roles and responsibilities would be agreed at the start of each new Bureau.

### Time commitment

- 2-3 1.5 day meetings per year
- 1 90 minute webinar per month
- 1 day per month preparation / follow up for meetings / webinars
- 1 day a month for 'specific' responsibilities
- Bureau members are elected for a three-year period

### Annex 1: Election procedures



## **2018 DRAFT PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF A NEW BUREAU AND PRESIDENT**

### Section 1. Background

This procedure is a modified version of that used in 2015 – which was debated and agreed by the previous Ex Co. It also builds on the Terms of Reference of the Bureau.

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#### Examples of Bureau work areas which need to be ratified / discussed at the Ex Co

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#### Composition

The number of Bureau members is set by the Ex Co (7 in 2018) and should consist of, at least:

- President
- 6 vice-presidents, who shall be allocated at least the following duties - support to the presidentship, secretary and treasurer.
- The Bureau should be **gender balanced** (no more than 4 members of either sex), and **geographically balanced**.
- One space shall be reserved for a European Organisation. If this space cannot be filled by a European Organisation, it will be made available to a National Network.

#### Criteria for membership of the Bureau

- Must agree with the overarching goals of EAPN
- Must be mandated by an EAPN NN or EO
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- Must be willing to give the time required for the functioning of the Bureau (see below)
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## Section 2. 2018 process

### TIMELINE

#### Deadline 15 July

Google form developed for candidates to the Bureau / Presidency – this will provide the opportunity to show how candidates meet the agreed criteria, their motivation for standing for the bureau / presidency and their hopes for the development of EAPN during the approaching mandate

#### Deadline 27 August

Candidates complete the google form highlighting their interest in standing for the Bureau / Presidency

#### Deadline 10 September

Candidacies circulated to Ex Co members (2 weeks before the General Assembly)

#### 10 Sep – 26 Sep

Members discuss the candidacies internally

#### Ex Co meeting before General Assembly

Members of the Ex Co may declare their interest to stand for the Bureau / Presidency, or nominate other candidates.

#### Ex Co meeting after General Assembly

Election of the bureau will be the main agenda point, following the methodology below.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Election of members of the Bureau (6 vice-presidents)

- a) If there are the same number of candidates as vacancies:**  
As long as the candidates are gender balanced (three women and three men), geographically balanced and fulfill the criteria highlighted above, we proceed with the election without voting.
- b) If there are more candidates than vacancies**

Each member will vote a maximum of four candidates [1]. Voting two women and two men [2]. The six candidates (3 women & 3 men) with the largest number of votes will be elected.

### **Election of the President of EAPN**

**a) If there is only one candidate**

As long as the candidate meets the criteria highlighted above, we proceed to a simple 'Yes / No / Abstain' vote, by secret ballot, recognizing the importance it is of having the confidence of the membership.

**b) If there are two candidates**

Ex Co members will vote by secret ballot. Each member of the EXCO may vote for one of the two candidates [3]. The person with the largest number of votes will be elected as president.

**c) If there are more than two candidates**

Ex Co members will vote by secret ballot, with each member voting for **one of the candidates** [4].

- If a candidate receives an absolute majority of votes, he/she will be elected president.
- If NO candidate receives an absolute majority, the two candidates with the most votes proceed to a second round of voting by secret ballot. The candidate with an absolute majority in the second round will be elected president.
- This procedure will also be amended to allow for a solution should the candidates receive the same number of votes after 2 rounds

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[1] *If a ballot has more than four votes, it will be declared NOT valid and will NOT be included in the vote count. "Blank vote" and "Abstention" are accepted options and will be recorded as "blank votes".*

[2] *If a ballot has four votes BUT without gender balance (more than two women and / or more than two men) it will be declared NOT valid and will NOT be included in the vote count. "Blank vote" and "Abstention" are accepted options and will be recorded as "blank votes".*

[3] *If a ballot has more than one vote, it will be declared NOT valid and will NOT be included in the vote count. "Blank vote" and "Abstention" are accepted options and will be recorded as "blank votes".*

[4] *If a ballot has more than one vote, it will be declared NOT valid and will NOT be included in the vote count. "Blank vote" and "Abstention" are accepted options and will be recorded as "blank votes".*