



Implementing the 2017 Dutch Resolution: Recommendations

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1. Executive Summary

At the 2017 General Assembly, held in Dublin, EAPN adopted the Dutch Resolution on broadening the participation of People Experiencing Poverty (PeP). This means, for EAPN, to look at its own structures, and to know what kind of changes may be needed. This document proposes recommended changes and outlines potential short- and long-term actions.

To start with, the Statutes and the Standing Orders need to be updated to ensure the Resolution is implemented. This is the basic premise of this paper and a short-term action. It also means that our understanding of Participation needs to be looked at.

Does Participation have a prominent place in the network? What does it mean when we speak of Participation and how is it implemented?

Participation needs to be put more in the center, so this paper offers a **definition of Participation** and a **conceptual model** as basis for the Participation EAPN strives for. EAPN structures should be involved in a discussion on this, and in 2019 we have committed to agreeing an EAPN '2 pager' on participation. We believe that the Ex Co, the EUISG and the PeP Coordinators Group should be involved in these discussions. This way EAPN will create not just its own definition of Participation, but also a methodology that serves the network to work with.

This paper is also part of the long-term strategic thinking process and should help EAPN create the changes we want to see in the world. Part of this is geared towards supporting and nurturing the anti-poverty movement. In order to implement the Dutch Resolution and help us move in this direction, this paper proposes **the introduction of affiliate members**, which could lead to **broader support, broader engagement, broader participation of people experiencing poverty, a broader public and a broader movement of people taking actions to fight poverty**. This is an exciting moment in a process of change, not to realize a new or better EAPN, but to make the network stronger and even more connected to the time in which we act.

2. Introduction and background

At the Dublin General Assembly (September 2017) the Dutch Resolution (See Annex 1) was adopted. This Resolution is about an increased chance for People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion (PeP) to influence, through the Annual Meeting of PeP, the topics of concern for EAPN. This would be made possible by giving PeP the opportunity to bring forward resolutions, proposals for the PEP meeting, and, through that, asking EAPN for a change of policy and/or to be active on a given issue.

From that moment on a process started to make sure that the spirit of this resolution finds its way into EAPN's structures, ways of working, and culture. At the meeting of the PeP national coordinators (Vienna, May 2018) the Dutch coordinator explained that the purpose of the resolution is not meant to oblige the National Networks (NN) to change their whole way of working and acting. It is meant to make sure that PeP, the target group that EAPN is working for and with, **get a stronger and broader voice, face, and a platform within EAPN**. At the Ex Co and EUISG meetings (July 2018) the Dutch representatives did the same, explaining the aim of the resolution.

This may seem simple, but to ensure that this goal can be reached, we need to study EAPN's official documents and organization, to see what needs to be adjusted to make this change possible. This is the aim of this paper - **to clarify what we need to adjust in order to implement the meaning and spirit of the Dutch Resolution. These adjustments concern the Statutes, the Standing Orders, the internal structures**. Adjustments may also influence our financial model.

This paper is presented to the Ex Co, in the hope that relevant decisions and recommendations can be taken, and where necessary, appropriate resolutions put to the General Assembly, for final decision in September 2019.

It is important to reiterate that the Dutch resolution has no intention to force the NN to change their way of working. It would be great if NN can implement the basic idea of inviting PeP to be able to have more influence and a greater role within their networks in the coming years, especially for those NN who are less familiar with working with and through PeP.

EXCO

The EXCO decided that the process of change, as basically outlined in the Theory of Change and the Membership review, is the basis for the next steps. There is an agreement in the report of the first phase of the Strategic Thinking process (see [here](#)) that the Director brings forward proposals needed to make the commitment to participation not just a discussion, but to put it into reality. This paper sets out these proposals.

EAPN's understanding of Participation

Participation means taking part in a process, a discussion, a meeting, a group or organization, a society. The word Participation is used in a variety of meanings, depending on the person or group that is using it, as the Institute of Development Studies in the Netherlands shows us:

<https://www.participatorymethods.org/method/levels-participation>

The many meanings of participation

As one of the key words in development, participation is used by actors from very different political backgrounds. Lack of conceptual clarity poses real risks to EAPN, so this paper attempts to clarify what EAPN understands by participation.

Representatives from opposite ends of the political spectrum use the language of participation for different ends. Some speak of transforming power structures in society that oppress the poor, while others talk of the economic participation needed to advance a neoliberal agenda. In local politics, 'participation' can mask manipulation, or the legitimization of interventions driven by more powerful actors in which citizens have no control.

This paper proposes the following definition of participation for EAPN:

For EAPN, true participation of people experiencing poverty and / or social exclusion ensures that they can speak up, have a voice, a face and a platform to advocate for their own needs and wishes – and those of other PeP. True participation means that they can be involved in the social and societal agenda of their own networks, and of society as a whole.

The Participation ladder

Looking at the work of Sarah White and Sherry Arnstein we might have found the kind of Participation EAPN is looking for. This table below builds on these models but tries to make them more appropriate for EAPN's reality:

Level of participation	What this looks like in EAPN
Transformative, empowering participation of PeP	<p>Continual, long term engagement of PeP with EAPN, at various levels (local, national, regional); For example, Poor People's Councils in EAPN Portugal, Client Councils in Netherlands.</p> <p>PeP are part of decision-making processes and have a safe environment to raise their concerns and experiences.</p>

	Giving poor and/or excluded power and a platform to speak up, get involved and create new ideas, proposals, changes, but also aiming to empower people directly and change structures within society to ensure more meaningful participation in possible.
Representative participation of PeP	PeP are members of a body, be it on local or higher level – a board, think tank, client council. Representing themselves and / or others who have elected them. Having the real possibility to take part in the discussion, bring forward ideas, proposals, work as a full partner.
Consultative participation of PeP	An important level for EAPN – our policies, positions and actions should be based on input from PeP. This consultation is not enough though – PeP should be part of the higher levels of participation as well, helping establish the consultative process, helping decide on the results of these consultations etc.
Tokenistic, manipulative participation of PeP	We must avoid this level – having PeP on panels or in communication material just to tick a box, without supporting them, without including them in our work or our structures.

EAPN should always be aiming at transformative, empowering participation, and striving to avoid Tokenistic, manipulative participation. This paper attempts to set out how we could do this.

3. Statutory changes needed in order to implement the Resolution

To achieve the purpose of the Dutch Resolution, and to enable EAPN to be a network which is clearly working for representative and transformative participation, this section proposes concrete changes to EAPN's statutes.

	Current text	Proposed change / addition
Article 3 section 1	The international association is not established for commercial return. Its purpose is to establish across Europe a democratic and effective network of voluntary groups or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working against poverty , which shall primarily be an expression of the desire of people experiencing poverty to initiate and effect change in the structures that keep people in a marginalized position. The explicit and main purpose of groups that join the Network must be to empower people and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion to fulfil their responsibilities, to exercise their rights, to break their isolation and counter their social exclusion.	Proposed addition: ...a democratic and effective network of voluntary groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) “and grassroots groups” working against poverty
Article 3 section 2	The Network shall pursue three main objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and enhance the effectiveness of actions against poverty and social exclusion; • To help shape social policies and design action programmes • To lobby for and with people and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion. 	Proposed change, point 3. “To lobby for and with people and groups experiencing poverty and/or social exclusion ”
Article 4	The association shall be composed of at least three members, and shall have two categories of membership: full and associate membership . Only full members will have all the rights given to the members according to the law and the present statutes.	Proposed change “Shall have three categories of membership: full, associate and affiliate membership” Justification This way EAPN can start to better become a network of and for people experiencing poverty, and support and nurture the anti-poverty movement. It could help us bring forward new ideas, new enthusiasm and new power to

		<p>end poverty and/or exclusion, directly from the ground, in the European Union context as within the countries where EAPN is working. This may look like a far-reaching step, but it can also empower our own organization to work with the poor, the excluded, the not wanted on a daily basis to become even bigger and stronger. We could call this new type of member affiliate members – these are individual people, who do not have voting rights, within EAPN Europe.</p>
Article 7	<p>Full and associate members are not required to pay a membership fee to the Network, but are invited to pay a voluntary contribution of an amount set by the General Assembly on a proposal from the Executive Committee.</p>	<p>Proposed addition: The ‘solidarity fee’ of affiliate members will be set by the Executive Committee.</p>
Article 8	<p>The General Assembly shall possess the full range of powers necessary to attain the association's purpose. It shall be composed of all the full members (associate members may attend without the right to vote).</p>	<p>Proposed addition: “...(associate and affiliate members may attend without the right to vote). Justification: affiliate members could be present as observers, without voting rights. The costs of their participation would not be covered by EAPN, nor would they count towards the quorum.</p>
Article 13	<p>The Executive Committee shall elect from amongst its number by ordinary majority a Bureau comprising a president, and vice-presidents whose number shall be determined by the Executive Committee and between whom shall be allocated at least the following duties: support to the presidentship, secretary and treasurer.</p>	<p>Proposed addition: “The Bureau shall include at least two persons who self-identify as currently experiencing poverty and social exclusion, or having experienced poverty and social exclusion within the last decade.”</p>

4. Changes needed to the Standing Orders in order to implement the Resolution

To achieve the purpose of the Dutch Resolution, and to enable EAPN to be a network which is clearly working for representative and transformative participation, this section proposes concrete changes to EAPN's Standing Orders .

Article 3 section 6	"Lobbying for people and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion"	<p>Proposed Change:</p> <p>"Lobbying with and for people and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion"</p>
Article 4	<p>Members of EAPN are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * National Networks (one for each country) of voluntary organizations and grass-roots Groups * European Organizations 	<p>Proposed addition:</p> <p>Affiliate members</p>
<p>Proposed addition</p> <p>Article 4a</p>		<p>National Networks who do not currently allow for affiliate membership are invited to reorganize their structures recognizing the possibility for affiliate membership, asking them to pay a solidarity fee.</p>
<p>Proposed addition</p> <p>Article 4b</p>		<p>EAPN aims to support and nurture the anti-poverty movement in Europe, and believes this movement must be a movement of and for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, supported by the wider European population.</p> <p>NN's are encouraged to work on the participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion (or having experienced poverty and social exclusion within the last decade), and to put their names forward for EAPN</p>

		structures, including but not limited to the Ex Co
Article 4 section 2	EAPN pledges to its members that it will: * work to maximize the active involvement of its members in all EAPN activities.	Proposed addition: * work to maximize the full and equal participation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion on all levels
Article 6 section 1	Delegates are elected by the National Networks and from within these networks. The Executive Committee member will be one of these delegates. All networks will receive an equal amount of votes, maximized by three (3) votes, at the General Assembly.	Proposed addition: All members are encouraged to ensure that at least one delegate to the General Assembly is a person experiencing poverty and social exclusion or has experienced it within the last decade.
Proposed addition: Article 6 section 4		Affiliate members may attend the General Assembly under these conditions * they do not have the right to vote * their travel and other costs will not be reimbursed * they paid their annual solidarity fee in time * they do not count towards the quorum
Article 20.1	The number of delegates for the Strategic Congress will follow the same rules of the ones established for the GA (article 6.1).	Proposed addition: This congress should be a place to discuss the medium and long term strategies of EAPN, as well as to discuss specific issues related to poverty and social exclusion, as decent food, rent problems, social housing, etc

Article 21	The resources of the Network may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* voluntary contributions from members, subsidies, donations, subscriptions, legacies, gifts, offerings and contributions from public or private legal entities or individuals;* exceptional resources, such as loans;* income generated by goods and assets belonging to the Network;* the proceeds of payments for services provided.	Proposed addition: The scale of solidarity fees of affiliate members will be set by the Executive Committee
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5. Changes needed to EAPN's financial model in order to implement the Resolution

1. If EAPN decides to accept affiliate members, the long-term aim must be to have a full-time staff member focusing on membership, to ensure that all EAPN members are able to meaningfully participate in EAPN. In the short term, we could start this process of developing affiliate membership through our existing structures - individuals on the Ex Co, PeP National Coordinators etc.
2. It is anticipated that affiliate membership would bring funds into EAPN, helping with the financial diversification which was mandated by the Ex Co in 2017.
3. If EAPN decides on the participation of people experiencing poverty on the Bureau, then in order to ensure this is empowering and transformative participation, funds for interpretation for meetings and webinars should be assured.

6. Overview of what decisions need to be taken, how, and by whom

<u>Action / Decision</u>	<u>Decision Taking Body</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Discuss this paper and decide which changes to propose to the Statutes and Standings Orders	Ex Co	Mid-April 2019
Discuss and refine the EAPN definition on Participation	PeP Coordinators	May 2019
Discuss and refine the EAPN definition on Participation	EUISG	June 2019
Communicate proposed changes to Statutes and Standing Orders to rest of network	Ex Co	3 months before General Assembly – 14 June 2019
Ask EUISG to include Participation as a prominent theme in their recommendations for the post-2020 EU strategy	EUISG	June 2019
Discuss, refine and sign off on EAPN's definition of participation	Ex Co	Mid-September 2019
Vote on these proposed changes to Statutes and Standing Orders	General Assembly	Mid-September 2019

Annex 1

General Assembly Dublin, October 2017

Resolution from EAPN Netherlands

The PEP conference –European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty- is an important part of our work. The problem is that during the years the possibilities for the national delegations to play their role have decreased.

To safeguard that this important meeting stays the European meeting of (not for!) the Poor and Excluded, EAPN Netherlands wants to bring forward a proposal to the General Assembly in Dublin in October 2017.

“Change the PEP conference in a yearly Summit of the **Experience Experts on Poverty**. Starting in 2018, a yearly summit at which the national delegation of the **Experience Experts on Poverty** can bring forward their resolutions, amendments, thoughts, experiences, proposals, ideas and feeling on one particular item to influence the policies and the execution of laws and regulations that influence their daily life. At the Summit three items will be elected by the delegates as working points for the year to come. EAPN will bring the outcome to the different levels, institutions, and invites all members to use these three topics for their work on local, regional and national basis.”

To do this we have to change the way it works now, make it possible for delegations to prepare their resolutions etcetera, find collaboration partners to collect enough votes to bring it forward to the Summit and, that way, start a process of influencing each other, cooperation and innovation.

This resolution is seconded by:

EAPN Czech Republic

CILAP Italy

7. Used background papers and literature

- European Anti-Poverty Network, Statutes.
- European Anti-Poverty Network, Standing Orders, October 2018.
- EAPN, Theory of Change, November 2018.
- EAPN, Breaking Barriers Driving Change <https://www.eapn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2012-participation-book-en.pdf>
- Notes EAPN Executive Committee EAPN, July 2018.
- Draft Notes EAPN Executive Committee EAPN, September 2018.
- Decision and Action points EAPN Executive Committee EAPN, September 2108.
- Annual Work Program EAPN 2019.
- Implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights – Experiences and Practices in European Countries and International Perspectives, Vienna 28 September 2018.
- Final Analysis of EAPN 2018 membership survey, September 2018.
- PESTEL analysis – results of staff and Bureau reflections for Bureau consideration.
- Bothmer, J., How to learn to participate, E-book, ISBN 978-90-818558-1-5, Utrecht: Stichting Steun (2010)
- Bothmer, J., Participation Program Discussion Forum for Inclusion and Social Transformation, Contribution for the Seminar on Participation, EAPN Spain, 19th of December 2012, Madrid
- Ansem, Q., Bothmer, J., Davelaar, M., Langen, E., & Ansem, Q. (2016). *Rapport Participatie Bouwstenen*. Ulicoten: Stichting Herkansing.
- Leni Jansen. (1997). *Tussen gunst en recht. Clientenparticipatie als bijdrage aan burgerschap*. Wolters Kluwer Nederland B.V.
- Sherry Arnstein. (1969). Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 35(No. 4), 216–224.
- Website European Anti-Poverty Network, December 2018.