



Ex Co webinar on Comm'on Guideline

31 March 2020

Participants: Magnus (Sweden), Eleni (Cyprus), Carlos (Spain), Luigi (SMES), Richard (France), Vito (Italy), Olga (Greece), Jo (Netherlands) Kata (Hungary), Biljana (North Macedonia), Ian (IFSW), Karel (Czech Republic), Kamila (Poland), Vera (Austria), Aiste (Lithuania), Caroline (Belgium), Kart (Estonia), Anne (Ireland), Honoratte (Norway), Sandra (Portugal)

Apologies received:

Staff: Sigrid, Elke, Magda, Sandy, Leo

Objectives

- to present the guidelines to the members and have an initial discussion
- to stimulate the reflection and discussion on how the guidelines can be implemented at the national level

Background docs

- [COMM'ON Guidelines](#)
- [PowerPoint](#)

Presentation of the COMM'ON Guidelines

The Comm'on Group produced a Comm'On Guidelines with the support of Elke and Magda (EAPN Staff members) that are composed of **5 chapters**. Each of the chapter has been developed by a specific duo of national network with active support from the other networks and Elke/Magda:

- **Participation of PEP:** EAPN NL AND AT with Magda
- **Capacity building and training:** EAPN AT AND NO with Magda
- **Amplifying the voice of PEP in our comms work:** EAPN with Elke
- **Accessibility of our comms work:** EAPN with Elke
- **PR and visibility:** EAPN with Elke

Break out group discussions

Which opportunities do you think the implementation of these guidelines will bring to your network?

The guidelines will help:

- the organisations to be **more inclusive**.
- **to organise PEP's work, giving them the floor to speak, to motivate pep and making them feel comfortable to act and speak up for themselves.**

- **to analyse the structures** and to identify how the national networks can effectively implement the guidelines.
- **to exchange views, experiences with other networks and EAPN Europe.** e.g. more knowledge sharing on how to achieve participation, how to deepen it...?

Which challenges do you see around the implementation of the guidelines?

- **Lack of financial and human resources as well as time and energy** e.g. no time nor money to hire someone and train the person to do comms work. There is a need to enhance capacities of all people in charge of comms. Be aware of the particularities of every national networks (some have resources, comms staff...).
- Some already went through a reorganisation of their structure, work programme and don't see a change in the near future (EAPN ES).
- **Difficulty to obtain stories from the grounds.** PEP are afraid to share their experiences.
- **Challenge of the language (EAPN AT):**
 - o The use of the plain language
 - o The use of the national language: the guidelines being written in English and needed to be translated into the national language.
 - o Lack of **methodology on how to deepen the links between policy work, capacity building and communication work.** We need to build a bridge between those 3 because our main call is to influence politics (EAPN Belgium)

How do you want to take this forward inside your network?

- To the question 'Who would you involve?': the majority respond that they will involve their **members** and the **PEP national coordinator**. They will have a discussion on how to implement and what is feasible.
- Regarding **the comms work**: the level of difficulty depends.
 - o For some, it will go smoothly especially for those who participate in the development of the guidelines.
 - o For the other, it would require more work. To do so, they will involve organisations such as EAPN Hungary that knows different organisations using community organising as an approach and will involve them and use their expertise in their comms work.

For EAPN Belgium, it would be nice to have at the European level an analysis on:

- how the different national networks are doing in terms of participation
- how participation can influence the politics

Plenary feedback and next steps

Magnus from EAPN Sweden recalled that the differences in the media and public sphere in the countries need to be taken into account when analysing how we distribute and what comes out of the process. We should avoid the 'one size fit no one'.

On this matter, EAPN President, Carlos Susias, said that 2 things need to be considered:

- Huge differences in the media but also inside every org (not the same time, resources) and we need to adapt to the different situations

- Basic guidelines are really good, we already have funding difficulties and it will get worse and we will have to make great effort to take into account PEP. **But let's not get frustrated to not be able to reach it tomorrow.**

The idea of the guidelines is not to give a step by step methodology but to share a common set of directions.

Next steps:

- The guidelines need to be **discussed by other EAPN groups** such as the EUISG group. So the focus will be how could this guideline impact their work and challenges and the same goes with the NC group. We need to take on board their views.
- The next step for the National Networks: **to start reflecting this on the national level.** *How can this guideline help you at the national level?*
- Next meeting: the meeting planned in Vienna will not take place. We need to **find other way to organise ourselves.**
- The **Agenda** is therefore:
 - **To take on board your feedbacks**
 - **To help implement it** – biggest challenge is resources. Comms projects and find funding for that
 - **To develop new frames and narratives**