**Note of EAPN race and diversity meeting, June 8, 2021, 2-4pm**

Chair: Helder Ferreira

Participating: Alphonse Basogomba (IDEC, Board of EAPN Ireland); Katherine Duffy (EAPN UK); Ian Johnson (IFSW); Anne Loftus An Ni Lochlan (Galway Theatre for Change Board of EAPN Ireland) Honoratte Basemake Muhanzi (EAPN Norway)

Apologies: Victor Momodu (EAPN UK); Julie Pascoet (ENAR); Nazek Ramadan (EAPN UK); Slovakia

Helder introduced the context, work already done and aims and objectives of the meeting, to energise the work in EAPN. In the context of stepping up on racial justice, in 2020 EAPN issued a statement on diversity and institutional racism. There has been an initial diversity audit of the network. Katherine and Alphonse have been following the DG JUST initiative on the Action Plan Against Racism and the proposed National Action Plans Against Racism (government to present them by 2022). Helder noted that the EU is stepping up its agenda on anti-racism and that EAPN will need to take a position regarding aspects of the agenda, but that our member ENAR is the one focused on anti-racism. Helder reminded us of the different settings and situations across Europe, and that EAPN will work in the context of our fundamental principle of non-discrimination, in the context of combating poverty. He emphasised that EAPN will be a better organisation by standing to its values and transferring them into practice.

The Work Programme for 2021 contains specific elements to improve our antiracism practice. Given the challenging context on staffing and funding, we must decide our first priorities for this agenda so that we achieve a stronger base to go forward. Helder outlined four initial priorities, mostly internal to the network:

1. A 2-pager on diversity and non-discrimination, for a general audience, as we first need to be clear what we mean. We highlighted that, given the previous 2-pagers he has seen, this may start its life as a longer document and later be refined!
2. Awareness raising on racial discrimination and the risk of unconscious bias; this could develop into a training offer at a later date, when we are more able to assess what would work in EAPN
3. Follow up on the diversity audit
4. Actively consider how to ensure recognition and action on diversity in the anti-poverty policy work

**Points made in discussion**

* Europe was built on diversity
* Have to convince people it is something good. At a personal level, one route is to use people’s own experiences to gain empathy for suffering of others. At an organisational level, need strategy and finance, targets, audit
* Have to go beyond not being racist to goal of being actively antiracist
* We must get some simple processes in place internally that will allow us to be more actively antiracist (e.g. outreach to minority communities, internal complaints procedure)
* We must reflect on being more actively antiracist in terms of work with people in poverty
* We must recognise that people can be both ‘victims’ and ‘perpetrators’
* To support EAPN policy work, those responsible for producing policy output need guidance and resources, and not just receive a request to integrate race and diversity into their current work practices. For example, we could aim to provide good sources of data (not so readily available at EU level and often nationally), and studies, so that those preparing reports can realistically aim to explicitly include the situation of relevant minority groups in their Member State (as the situation is very heterogeneous) and/ or at EU level
* Our antiracism must have good solid links to our anti-poverty priorities. Not an add-on, but integrated
* We value difference, and this should be expressed in our public messaging
* The next formal meeting of the civil society group following up on the Action Plans on Racism has been delayed, due to delay in appointment of the new EU race equality coordinator

**Next Steps**

1. It was agreed that the first priorities will be the 2-pager and the awareness-raising activity
2. An approved note of the meeting will be circulated in EAPN, and an expanded group meeting will be scheduled to pursue the implementation of the priorities