



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Organization's projects, events and other activities addressed to the target groups in the calendar year

EAPN-Latvia's projects:

- 1) From January 1st 2020, EAPN-Latvia and its 4 project partners continue the implementation of the project "The link between social rights and social entrepreneurship", which is co-financed by the Nordplus Adult program (Denmark). It takes place in Latvia (Riga), Estonia (Tallinn), Lithuania (Vilnius), Denmark (Odense) and Norway (Bergen). Within the framework of this project, by October 31st 2021 it is planned to train at least 10 educators, incl. 4 educators from Latvia.
- 2) From January 1st to December 31st 2020, EAPN-Latvia implemented the annual People Experiencing Poverty (PeP) program in Latvia "We bring together our members and experts with experience in poverty to make their voices heard", which was co-funded by EAPN Europe with the European Commission funds. 14 NGO experts were involved in this program. Program activities (incl. the activity dedicated to the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on October 15th 2020) took place in Riga and Aloja with the participation of more than 60 residents and decision-makers. Poverty Watch report 2020 was prepared within the framework of this program.
- 3) On July 22nd 2020 EAPN-Latvia has entered into an agreement with the State Employment Agency on the involvement of one unemployed person with a disability in the active employment measure "Measure for certain groups of people", which is being implemented within the framework of the ESF project "Subsidized jobs for the unemployed" (No. 9.1.1.1/15/I/001). This active employment measure is being implemented at the center of the EAPN-Latvia member organization "Dobele association of people with disabilities" in Dobele until October 18th 2021.

- 4) From September 1st 2020, EAPN-Latvia and its 9 project partners have started the implementation of the project "Building a Network to Boost Social Secure Europe" - BOSS", which is co-financed by the European Commission's Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership. It takes place in Latvia (Riga), Estonia (Tallinn), Denmark (Copenhagen), Norway (Oslo), Sweden (Bromölla), Poland (Rzeszow), France (Nice), Italy (Florence), Cyprus (Nicosia) and Romania (Bucharest). Within the framework of this project, by June 30th 2022 we intend to establish a European-level NGO network and increase the knowledge of 20 NGO leaders (incl. 2 NGO leaders from Latvia).

- 5) From October 1st 2020, EAPN-Latvia and its 8 project partners have started the implementation of the project "Strengthening the NGO network - a tool for social security", which is co-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Denmark). It takes place in Latvia (Riga), the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad region and St. Petersburg), Belarus (Minsk), Estonia (Tallinn), Denmark (Copenhagen), Norway (Oslo), Poland (Rzeszow) and Sweden (Bromölla). Within the framework of this project, by April 30th 2022 it is planned to increase the knowledge of 18 NGO experts in the social and health promotion sector (including 2 NGO experts from Latvia).

Participation in other organizations' projects:

- 1) From January 1st 2020 to October 31st 2021, two EAPN-Latvia experts continue to participate in the project "Equal opportunities - a way to social welfare" of the Women's Rights Institute, which is co-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Denmark). It takes place in Latvia (Riga), Estonia (Tallinn), Lithuania (Vilnius), the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad), Belarus (Minsk), Poland (Rzeszow), Denmark (Odense) and Norway (Bergen).

- 2) From April 2020, 3 representatives of the EAPN-Latvia member organizations participated in trainings within the framework of a project "OSIRIS - Supporting the smart specialization approach to the silver economy for increasing regional innovation capacity and promoting sustainable growth", which is co-financed by Interreg Baltic Sea Region and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Latvian cooperation partners in this project are: Riga Technical University and the association "CONNECT Latvija".

EAPN-Latvia's cooperation partners:

EAPN-Latvia is a member organization of the Latvian Child Welfare Network (represented by Ilga Liepina) and a member organization of the Latvian Social Entrepreneurship Association (until October 15th 2020 represented by Iveta Valeine, from October 15th - by Laila Balga).

In 2020 EAPN-Latvia regularly cooperated with the National Library of Latvia, Latvian Women's Non-Governmental Organizations' Cooperation Network, Latvian Association of Senior Communities, Latvian Free Trade Union Confederation and Latvian Association for the protection of consumers' interests.

By the decision of December 2nd 2020, Laila Balga, the EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board, was approved as a member of the Riga City Council Advisory Board for Social Integration issues.

Organization's performance or achievements during the calendar year for the benefit of the target group and in the area concerned

Implemented support measures for the target groups:

- 1) On March 9th in Riga experts from European Social Policy working group - Andris Burtnieks, Elina Alere-Fogele and Laila Balga - gave an interview to a researcher from the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences in connection with a study by Latvian Ministry of Welfare "Annual evaluation of active policies to reduce poverty and social exclusion".
- 2) On September 23rd in Riga EAPN-Latvia organized a seminar "European Pillar of Social Rights: Principle #20 - Access to Basic Services".
- 3) On October 28th in Riga representatives of the EAPN-Latvia member organizations supported a picket of entrepreneurs and cultural workers by the LR Parliament (Saeima) building.
- 4) On November 24th the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia, the National Library of Latvia and the Association of people with disabilities and their friends (APEIRONs) awarded the Annual award for supporting people with disabilities in the nomination "Service Provider. Support. Assistant. Quality of Life" to the EAPN-Latvia member of the Board Marite

Rozentale (Chairperson of the Board of the EAPN-Latvia member organization "A Call to You"), who was nominated for this award by the Board of EAPN-Latvia.

- 5) In 2020 we prepared 4 informative brochures which are now available on the EAPN-Latvia website (<http://www.eapn.lv/latvija/>):
- "EAPN Position Paper on Adequate Income";
 - "Delivering Agenda 2030 for people and planet. EAPN proposals for a post-Europe 2020 strategy" (in Latvian and in Russian);
 - "EAPN Key Messages on the European Green Deal and "Just Transition".

Involvement of EAPN-Latvia employees in the international programs:

- 1) On January 17th in Riga Elina Alere-Fogele, the representative of the European Social Policy working group, gave an interview to a researcher from the Netherlands within the framework of the PUREFOOD project, which is co-financed by the European Commission.
- 2) On July 14th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga, Aigars Sveicers and Egils Rupeks participated online in the EAPN European Political Conference "How to ensure the poor don't pay for Covid-19?"
- 3) On September 16th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Egils Rupeks and Andris Burtnieks presented Latvia's experience in developing an adequate, accessible and enabling minimum income scheme within the framework of the conference "Our Social Europe - Strong Together" organized by the German Presidency of the European Council.
- 4) On October 15th the EAPN-Latvia representative Egils Rupeks participated in the Eurofound webinar "Have your say: the future of the European Pillar of Social Rights".
- 5) On October 13th three EAPN-Latvia representatives (Laila Balga, Egils Rupeks and Terezija Mackare) participated in a webinar "Transition to a more socially just Europe. Action Plan for the European Pillar of Social Rights", which was organized by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.
- 6) On November 20th the EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga participated in a webinar organized by the network "SMES-Europa" (Mental Health and Social Exclusion) on the current situation and the planning of the Erasmus+ project.

- 7) On December 1st the EAPN-Latvia representatives Egils Rupeks and Elina Alere-Fogele participated in the EAPN-Europe webinar “Looking back & looking forward: EUISG advocacy and working together (2020-2021)”.

Participation in decision-making within international organizations:

- 1) On January 20-23th Elina Alere-Fogele, representative of the European Social Policy working group, provided her comments on the “EAPN Key Issues and Good Practice Paper (Education, Vocational Training and Lifelong Learning)”, “Response to the 2020 Annual Sustainable Growth Survey” and “Draft Employment Report”.
- 2) On April 23rd the EAPN-Latvia representative Elina Alere-Fogele participated in the EAPN EU Inclusion Strategies Group (EUISG) online meeting.
- 3) In June 2020 Egils Rupeks, the EAPN-Latvia representative, participated in two EUISG online meetings: 1) meeting on the preparation of Poverty Watch report 2020 in the context of Covid-19; 2) meeting on the contribution of national networks to the European Semester.
- 4) On July 28th the EAPN-Latvia representative Laila Balga participated in the EAPN Executive Committee (EXCO) online meeting.
- 5) In September 2020 the EAPN-Latvia representative Egils Rupeks participated online in the EAPN General Assembly and in three EUISG online meetings: 1) meeting on the action plan for EPSR; 2) meeting on the Poverty Watch reports from European member states in the context of Covid-19; 3) meeting on the objectives of the European Semester 2021 for progress in poverty reduction, as well as ensuring social rights and equality.
- 6) On October 1st EAPN-Latvia members participated in the EAPN-Europe survey on the respect for gender equality within EAPN national networks.
- 7) On November 13th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga and Egils Rupeks participated in the EAPN-Europe webinar “Mainstreaming gender equality in EAPN and antipoverty work”.
- 8) On November 19th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Dace Paegle and Egils Rupeks participated in the EAPN-Europe webinar “Capacity Building - European Semester”.
- 9) On November 20th the EAPN-Latvia representative Laila Balga participated in the EAPN-Europe EXCO online meeting.

10) On November 27th the EAPN-Latvia representative Baiba Svetlana Rozenberga participated in the FEAD network online meeting, which was organized by the European Commission in cooperation with Latvian Ministry of Welfare.

Founders / members of the organization and other persons

The number of founders / members: 38

The number of people involved: 3000

The number of public beneficiaries: 400 000

The use of donations received during the calendar year

The total amount of donations received in the calendar year: 0 euros

The total amount of donations used in the calendar year: 0 euros

Factors that contribute to the activities of the organization

Advocacy is a factor that contributes to the activities of EAPN-Latvia:

- 1) On January 15th the EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga was reaffirmed as a member of the Monitoring Committee of the EU Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund (with voting rights) for 2014-2020 planning period.
- 2) On January 6th the European Social Policy working group (headed by Andris Burtnieks, Doctor of Economics) submitted to Latvian Ministry of Welfare their recommendations regarding the development of a new methodology for determining the subsistence minimum basket.
- 3) On February 10th European Social Policy working group (under the leadership of Andris Burtnieks) submitted to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia EAPN-Latvia's position regarding the amount of the guaranteed minimum income in Latvia contested by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia. The European Commission, the EC Representation in Latvia, the State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Welfare were also informed about this EAPN-Latvia's position.

- 4) On February 13th Laila Balga, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board, participated in the public consultation organized by the European Commission on the European Social Fund's support for education.
- 5) On February 26th and June 10th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Andris Burtņieks and Egils Rutkovskis participated in the meeting of the Social Inclusion Policy Coordination Committee of the Ministry of Welfare.
- 6) On March 2nd nine EAPN-Latvia representatives met with Tatjana Zdanoka, Member of the European Parliament, at the event organized by the EP Information Office in Riga.
- 7) On March 6th Elina Alere-Fogele, Representative of the European Social Policy working group, participated in the meeting of the European Affairs Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia.
- 8) On March 18th Andris Burtņieks, Head of the European Social Policy working group, submitted to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia the EAPN-Latvia's position regarding the amount of the state social security benefit and the funeral allowance in Latvia (which was contested by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia). The European Commission, the EC Representation in Latvia, State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Welfare were also informed about this EAPN-Latvia's position.
- 9) On March 24th the EAPN-Latvia sent a letter to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia regarding the measures to protect low-income groups of the population in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 10) On April 27th the European Social Policy working group (headed by Andris Burtņieks) submitted to the State Chancellery of the Republic of Latvia, the State Audit Office and the Ministry of Welfare their recommendations on the usefulness of research conducted by the Ministry of Welfare for poverty reduction.
- 11) On May 8th EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with EAPN-Europe, submitted proposals to the European Commission and the Government of Latvia regarding the responsible assessment of the inclusion of social rights and the strengthening of poverty eradication in the National Reports for 2020.
- 12) On May 11th EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with Latvian Free Trade Union Confederation, submitted a resolution to the European Commission on promoting the implementation of the EU Pay Transparency Directive.

- 13) On May 13th EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with EAPN-Europe, submitted proposals to the European Commission and the Government of Latvia regarding the prevention of social exclusion of the population during an emergency situation (due to the Covid-19 pandemic).
- 14) On May 20th EAPN-Latvia submitted to the European Commission its proposal on reducing restrictions for non-governmental organizations in the EC project competitions.
- 15) On May 26th the EAPN-Latvia expert Andris Burtnieks addressed online the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia in connection with the claim of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia regarding the compliance of the guaranteed subsistence minimum with the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia (Satversme).
- 16) On June 15th the EAPN-Latvia representative Ilga Liepina participated in the online discussion of the Welfare Department of the Riga City Council "People in the shadows. Poverty in the 21st Century".
- 17) On July 29th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Iveta Valeine and Egils Rupeks participated in the discussion of the Welfare Department of the Riga City Council "People in the shadows. Quo vadis, Riga?"
- 18) On August 29th 10 candidates from 10 member organizations of the EAPN-Latvia network participated in the early elections of the Riga City Council.
- 19) On September 3rd and 4th Laila Balga, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board, participated in the discussion "A more social Europe through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights", organized by the Ministry of Finance and the CEE Bankwatch Network.
- 20) On September 24th the EAPN-Latvia submitted its Poverty Watch report 2020 in the context of Covid-19 to the EC Representation in Latvia, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia, the State Audit Office, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Economics, Riga City Council, University of Latvia, Riga Stradins University, the Union of Local Governments of Latvia, the Cooperation Council of Agricultural Organizations and its partner organizations.
- 21) On September 24th EAPN-Latvia sent a letter entitled "EAPN calls your government to support the Council Conclusions on Minimum Income Protection" to Latvian Ministry of Welfare.

- 22) On October 12th EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposals regarding the implementation of the EPSR Action Plan to the European Commission, the EC Representation in Latvia, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Latvian Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Economics, the Ombudsman, Latvian Free Trade Union Confederation and Latvian Employers' Confederation.
- 23) On November 3rd Aigars Sveicers, the EAPN-Latvia member of the Board participated in the online meeting of the Defense, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Commission of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia.
- 24) On November 3rd EAPN-Latvia participated in the Survey for the employers, conducted by the State Employment Agency.
- 25) On November 5th EAPN-Latvia submitted its objections to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Welfare, as well as informed the EAPN-Europe about its objections in relation to the execution of the judgment of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia in the case concerning the determination of the guaranteed minimum income level.
- 26) On November 6th EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposal regarding the allocation of funds for heart failure medications to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Welfare.
- 27) On November 11th the EAPN-Latvia representative Rihards Bunka participated in the meeting of the European Affairs Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia on the informative report for the informal videoconference of the EU Home Affairs Ministers.
- 28) On November 13th EAPN-Latvia participated in the survey of Latvian NGO fund project applicants, which was conducted by the Scientific Research Center of Latvian Academy of Culture.
- 29) On November 20th representatives of three member organizations of the EAPN-Latvia network (Laila Balga, Ineta Ielite and Terezija Mackare) participated in the online discussion of the Recovery and Sustainability Mechanism Plan project, which was organized by the Ministry of Finance.
- 30) On November 20th EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposals for the draft Public Health Guidelines for 2021-2027 to the Ministry of Health.

- 31) On November 26th the EAPN-Latvia representative Laila Balga participated in the meeting of the EU Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund subcommittee on the investments planned within the framework of the Fair Reorganization Instrument, which were presented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.
- 32) On December 1st EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposals on providing access to basic services to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Welfare and the Riga City Council.
- 33) On December 2nd Janis Stjadja, the EAPN-Latvia member of the Board, participated in the online meeting of the National Council for Disability Affairs of the Ministry of Welfare.
- 34) On December 9th the EAPN-Latvia representatives Andris Burtnieks and Egils Rutkovskis participated in the online meeting of the Social Inclusion Policy Coordination Committee of the Ministry of Welfare.
- 35) On December 9th Aigars Sveicers, the EAPN-Latvia member of the Board, participated in the online meeting of the Defense, Internal Affairs and Corruption Prevention Commission of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia.
- 36) On December 10th the EAPN-Latvia representative Laila Balga participated in the online meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the EU Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund for the 2014-2020 planning period, which was organized by the Ministry of Finance.
- 37) On December 14th Laila Balga, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board, participated in the online discussion meeting of the Subcommittee on the Component of the recovery and sustainability mechanism: reducing inequalities, which was organized by the Ministry of Finance.
- 38) On December 16th Laila Balga (representative of the Women's Rights Institute) participated in the online meeting of the Gender Equality Committee of the Ministry of Welfare.

Factors that hinder the activities of the organization

Factors that hinder the activities of the Association “EAPN-Latvia” (NGO network that consists of 38 member organizations in Latvia and has 15 partner organizations from the European Union member states) are the following:

- 1) Latvian NGO networks have insufficient access to the funding from Latvian NGO Fund and from the international funds, which could finance the development of social projects;
- 2) In the last five years, EAPN-Latvia is regularly excluded from access to funding from the Latvian NGO Fund, because the projects of this fund are administered by the Society Integration Fund that has low-quality project evaluation experts;
- 3) In 2020, EAPN-Latvia was excluded from access to the Active Citizens Fund funding from the Norwegian FI grant, which is intended for Latvian NGOs, because this fund is coordinated by the Latvian Civic Alliance and by those NGOs that are close to it;
- 4) EAPN-Latvia is not a member organization of the Latvian Civic Alliance, because it sees the Latvian Civic Alliance’s negative impact on the development of the activities of those NGOs that represent vulnerable population in the non-governmental sector and on the distribution of funding from the Latvian NGO Fund, the Ministry of Culture Foundation and the Active Population Fund to these NGOs;
- 5) EAPN-Latvia has received a refusal from the State Chancellery and the Ministry of Welfare regarding its proposal to establish an independent Social Security Fund to support NGOs;
- 6) EAPN-Latvia does not want to get closer to the narrow circle of organizations of the NGO Memorandum Council and the Cabinet of Ministers, which are under the influence of the state decision-making institutions, hold positions in these institutions and distribute funding contrary to the needs of those NGOs that represent vulnerable population;

- 7) EAPN-Latvia (due to being located in Latvia) has a long-term lack of capacity needed to compete in project tenders (competitions) with non-governmental organizations from other European countries and with European-level NGO networks;
- 8) EAPN-Latvia is able to prepare too few project applications every year due to its lack of capacity;
- 9) EAPN-Latvia doesn't have plenty of qualified employees for planning Latvian and international projects and preparing project applications, as well as for ensuring the project management;
- 10) EAPN-Latvia lacks the capacity (administrators and financial resources) for the comprehensive training of the EAPN-Latvia network's employees in advocacy, foreign languages, computer skills and project preparation;
- 11) EAPN-Latvia doesn't have enough financial resources for employees' salaries, compensations for volunteers, rent of premises, communication services, purchasing new technologies, reproduction and distribution of the prepared brochures on social issues, as well as for the publicity measures (especially on TV, radio, in press, etc.);
- 12) The productivity of the EAPN-Latvia network's working groups is negatively affected by its employees' lack of knowledge and skills, their lack of foreign language skills, working without pay and compensation, being employed in other workplaces, low income level of network's employees in general, their aging and health condition, as well as psychological stress;
- 13) In 2020 no funding was allocated to the following EAPN-Latvia network's project applications (which has prevented the provision of support to a significant number of vulnerable Latvian residents):
 - The project application "NGO support for social integration in Riga", which was submitted to the Riga City Council on January 14th; project's budget - 8010 euros;
 - The project application "Let's give the floor to the NGOs that represent socially vulnerable people!", which was submitted to the Society Integration Fund on February 6th; project's budget – 26 151 euros;
 - The project application "Supporting the Inclusion of Poor in Green Growth", which was submitted to the Nordic Council of Ministers on February 29th; project's budget – 13 480 euros;

- The project application "Accessibility and congruency between users' needs and services provision", which was submitted to the European Commission's Erasmus+ KA202 program on April 23rd in partnership with SMES-Europa; split project's budget – 194 680 euros;
- The project application "Democracy instruments for the sustainability of a socially responsible society", which was submitted to the Active Citizens Fund on July 25th; project's budget – 117 740 euros;
- The project application "The effect of civil society in strengthening social responsibility", which was submitted to the European Commission's program "Europe for Citizens" on August 29th; project's budget – 148 680 euros;
- The project application "Support program for NGOs that represent socially vulnerable people", which was submitted to the Society Integration Fund on November 2nd; project's budget – 25 985 euros.

Prepared by Laila Balga, Chairperson of the Board of EAPN-Latvia

Riga, 21/05/2021