



Association „EAPN-Latvia”

www.eapn.lv

NATIONAL REPORT 2022

Influencing National Governments for Better Policies: Advocacy, Lobbying and Policy-Making Linked to European Level Developments

1) Cooperation with government authorities and municipalities in Latvia:

In 2022 EAPN-Latvia continued to cooperate with the Ministry of Welfare of Latvia (this Association had its representatives at the Committee of Social Inclusion Policy Coordination and the Operational Programme of FEAD), with the Ministry of Finance of Latvia, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, with the Riga City Council (Advisory council on social integration issues). Since 2015 EAPN-Latvia has been a member of the Cooperation Memorandum of Latvian NGOs and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia. Since 2021, EAPN-Latvia cooperates with the State Education Development Agency.

2) Measures taken to implement EU policies in Latvia:

On May 6th EAPN-Latvia signed the implementation memorandum of the Latvian Silver Laboratory - Smart Silver Lab (organized by the association "CONNECT Latvija", an Erasmus+ project coordinator in Latvia).

3) Participation in monitoring the use of the funding from the European Union:

Since 2014 Laila Balga has been working as a member of the Monitoring Committee of the Planning period 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 of the European Structural and Investment Funds and the Cohesion Fund, the Subcommittee of Employment, Workforce Mobility and Social Inclusion.

4) Advocacy and lobbying:

On January 19th EAPN-Latvia's European Social Policy Working Group submitted proposals "On the responsibility of the State and local governments for poverty alleviation in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, inflation and energy crisis" to the members of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Prime Minister, the Minister for Welfare, the Minister for Finance, the Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the State Auditor and to the Chairman of the Board of the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments.

On April 1st in Riga EAPN-Latvia established a working group for the prevention of cardiovascular diseases under the leadership of Romualds Razuks, a former member of the Saeima, a doctor and an assistant professor at the University of Latvia.

On June 14th and September 28th EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposals to the Social and Employment Matters Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia and to the Ministry of Health. On December 9th EAPN-Latvia organized an extended meeting of NGOs and state institutions on the proposals of the working group and the decisions of the Saeima commission.

On May 9th EAPN-Latvia submitted its proposals on health issues to EAPN-Europe EUISG (prepared by Egils Rupeks and Dr. Iveta Mintale).

On August 18th and September 23rd EAPN-Latvia, in connection with the LR Saeima elections on October 1, submitted its proposals on improving the situation of socially disadvantaged groups of Latvian society to the political parties.

On December 2nd EAPN-Latvia working group (led by Egils Rupeks) submitted to the EAPN-Europe its guidelines regarding the use of funds from the Recovery and Resilience Facility for reducing poverty in Latvia.

On December 3rd EAPN-Latvia participated in the survey conducted by the Ministry of Finance on cooperation with NGOs and social partners.

Participation in the People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion programme as part of the Internal and External Workings of EAPN-Latvia

On January 18th Aigars Sveicers was confirmed as a national coordinator of EAPN PeP programme in 2022.

On May 27th, September 30th and November 23rd in Brussels EAPN-Latvia national coordinator Aigars Sveicers took part in EAPN PeP webinars.

On July 28th an EAPN-Latvia meeting on the implementation of the PeP program and preparation for the European PeP summit in Brussels took place in Riga; 11 representatives of EAPN-Latvia member organizations participated in this meeting.

On August 17th in Riga EAPN-Latvia Board approved the representatives from Latvia for the PeP European Summit: Aigars Sveicers, Ineta Stadgale and Roberts Karklins.

On October 7th in Riga PeP national coordinator Aigars Sveicers participated in the event of the Representation of the European Commission in Latvia on the Recovery and Resilience Plan and investments in Latvia.

On November 12th a meeting of the EAPN-Latvia Board and PeP representatives was held in Riga on the preparation for the European PeP summit in Brussels in November.

On November 29-30th in Brussels EAPN-Latvia representatives Aigars Sveicers, Ineta Stadgale and Roberts Karklins participated in the PeP European Summit.

On December 8th a meeting of EAPN-Latvia member organizations on the results of the PeP European Summit was held in the National Library of Latvia in Riga (chaired by Aigars Sveicers).

Development and Growth of the Network

EAPN-Latvia was founded on November 2013 by seven founding member organizations. At the end of 2022 EAPN-Latvia had 28 member organizations and 9 associated member organizations. EAPN-Latvia operates throughout the territory of Latvia and has over 50 partners abroad. Since June 2014 EAPN-Latvia is a full-fledged member organization of the EAPN-Europe. From September 2014 to December 2022 EAPN-Latvia had the status of a public benefit organization.

In 2022 three experts from EAPN-Latvia worked at the committees of the Parliament of Latvia (Saeima), 7 experts – at the working groups of the ministries of Latvia and Riga City Council.

EAPN-Latvia is a member organization of the Social Entrepreneurship Association of Latvia and the Latvian Child Welfare Network, and is also represented on the board of the Cooperation Network of Women's Non-Governmental Organizations of Latvia.

1) Activities:

On June 22nd EAPN-Latvia representatives and a nominee Kitija Bite (assistant professor at Riga Stradina University) took part in the presentation ceremony of the Woman-leader of the year award (LIESMA) of the Cooperation Network of Women's Non-Governmental Organizations of Latvia in Riga.

From September 5th in Dobele EAPN-Latvia implemented the State Employment Agency's "Measure for certain groups of people" (ESF project) with a contract for the involvement of an unemployed person with a disability in active employment at the centre of the Dobele Disabled Society.

On November 13th EAPN-Latvia board nominated former members of the parliament (Saeima) - Regina Locmele and Marija Golubeva for the Gender Equality Award. On December 15th at the Riga Technical University EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga and Aigars Sveicers participated in the Gender Equality Award presentation ceremony organized by the Cooperation Network of Women's Non-Governmental Organizations of Latvia.

2) International experience:

On January 24th EAPN-Latvia representative Ineta Ielite participated in the EAPN-Europe webinar "Right to Energy Forum".

On February 23rd, March 23rd and October 11-13th in Brussels the EAPN-Latvia representative Egils Rupeks participated in EUISG webinars and meetings.

On February 24th, April 28th, July 8th and November 24th in Brussels EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga took part in EXCO webinars and meetings.

On May 9th in Brussels EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga participated in an EAPN-Europe webinar on support programs for people who live in poverty (led by Philippe Lemmens).

On November 23rd in Brussels EAPN-Latvia Board members Laila Balga and Aigars Šveicers participated in the EXCO webinar (led by Juliana Wahlgren).

On December 2nd EAPN-Latvia, together with the national EAPN networks from the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, Germany and Malta, submitted a package of proposals for strengthening European-level activities to the EAPN-Europe management.

3) Projects:

I – From March 1st 2022 EAPN-Latvia started the implementation of the Erasmus+ Small Partnership project "Improving the competencies of NGO educators for social inclusion" in cooperation with partners from Estonia, Sweden, Italy and Greece.

II – From February 1st 2022 EAPN-Latvia started the implementation of the first adult mobility project of the Erasmus+ accreditation program (2021-2027): job shadowing at NGOs from other European countries and transferring the experience of NGO experts from other European countries to Latvia. 13 NGOs from the regions of Latvia were involved in the consortium established by EAPN-Latvia. In 2022 activities took place in cooperation with project partners from Romania, the Netherlands, Norway, Greece and Slovakia.

III – From February 1st 2022 EAPN-Latvia started a partnership with SMES-Europa (Belgium) in the project "PERSON FIRST: EMERGENCY SERVICES and REHABILITATION SUPPORTS promoting accessibility – improving e-quality – reinforcing net-working", co-financed by Erasmus+ and involving project partners from Belgium, Portugal, Slovenia, Denmark, Italy, Finland, Greece and Poland.

IV – From January 1st 2022 to December 31st 2022 EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with project partners from Cyprus, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Greece, France, Poland, Romania and Estonia, continued to implement the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project "Building a Network to Boost Social Secure Europe".

V – From June 1st 2019 to October 31st 2022 EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with project partners from Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania and Norway, implemented the project "Link between social rights and social entrepreneurship", co-financed by Nordplus (Denmark).

VI – From October 1st 2020 to April 30th 2022 EAPN-Latvia, in cooperation with project partners from Kaliningrad and Saint-Petersburg, Belarus, Estonia, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Denmark, implemented the project "Strengthening the NGO network – a tool for social security", co-financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

4) Resources:

Since 18th July 2016 EAPN-Latvia set up an office and has rented a meeting room in the centre of Riga, in the Free Trade Union Confederation building, which has the necessary technical equipment and Internet connection. Since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, EAPN-Latvia has also been using the private apartment and technical resources of the EAPN-Latvia chairperson of the board, Laila Balga, for administrative work.

Since 2018 in Riga EAPN-Latvia has cooperated with the Humanities and Social Sciences Reading Room of the Latvian National Library in the use of the meeting room.

Since 2014 in Riga EAPN-Latvia has access to the premises of the Riga NGO House and the meeting rooms in the European Union House, as well as the premises and resources of its member organizations.

In year 2022 EAPN-Latvia website www.eapn.lv was properly maintained, as well as the social network Facebook, which was used for sharing information.

In the year 2022 monthly newsletters (12) were prepared and spread within the non-governmental sector and to the state institutions.

5) Impediments to the activities:

In 2022 only a limited number of news items from EAPN-Latvia was disseminated via the press, TV and radio, which are usually paid services.

Governance and Internal Democracy

Since 2018 EAPN-Latvia (the general meeting) has been managed by a Board that consists of five members (volunteers): Laila Balga, Marite Rozentale, Aigars Sveicers, Andris Burtnieks and Janis Stjadja, as well as Natalija Kurnosova who was approved as an auditor. Laila Balga and Aigars Sveicers also coordinate the transnational projects of EAPN-Latvia.

The general meeting of NN members takes place once a year in March; once every five years the general meeting votes for the Board, Chairperson of the Board and Auditor of the NN. Chairperson of the Board submits the annual report to the State Revenue Service of Latvia each March.

The association's finances are managed by an accountant-consultant Inguna Lapsina. EAPN-Latvia website and Facebook pages are administered by Maris Kalejs (Sanne, Ltd.) and Laila Balga (a volunteer). Two project managers: Ilga Liepina and Elina Alere-Fogele are also involved.

In 2022, according to the decisions made by EAPN general meeting and the Board, the following staff members worked voluntarily at EAPN-Europe structures and participated in events: a representative to EXCO Laila Balga; a representative to EUISG Egils Rupeks; PeP national coordinator Aigars Sveicers and a representative to FEAD Network Baiba Svetlana Rozenberga.

Report drawn up in Riga, Latvia on April 17th 2024.

Laila Balga, Chairperson of the Board