



Association „EAPN-Latvia”

NATIONAL REPORT 2024

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 2024 EAPN-Latvia continued to cooperate with the Ministry of Welfare of Latvia (EAPN-Latvia had its representatives at the Social Inclusion Policy Coordination Committee and the Operational Program of FEAD), with the Ministry of the Interior (EAPN-Latvia had its representative at the Consultative Council), with the Riga City Council (at the Social welfare department). 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, as well as a member of the Cooperation Memorandum of Riga NGOs and the Riga City Council. Since 2020 EAPN-Latvia cooperates with the State Education Development Agency, and since 2023 – with the Ministry of Culture of Latvia for transnational project development.

2) Measures taken to implement EU policies in Latvia:

On May 27th EAPN-Latvia supported the Latvian Autism Association’s appeal to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia to support the harmonization of the rights of autistic people (EP resolution adopted on 04/10/2023).

On June 8th, the European Parliament elections were held in Latvia; two candidates from the EAPN-Latvia member organizations were included in the lists of political parties: Laila Balga and Eriks Flaumanis.

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

On December 12th EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board - Laila Balga - remotely participated in the evaluation of performance of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund from 2014 to 2020 in relation to poverty reduction in Latvia.

4) Advocacy and lobbying:

On January 12th EAPN-Latvia submitted information on homelessness reduction issues to the Social and Employment Matters Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Welfare, Riga City Council and Liepaja City Council.

On September 11th EAPN-Latvia representative Rihards Bunka participated in the meeting of the European Affairs Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia regarding legal issues.

On September 12th EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga and Latvian Association's for Consumer Protection Board Member Baiba Miltovica discussed matters of representation at the EPAH International Annual Conference in Barcelona, Spain, as well as cooperation measures for 2025.

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

EAPN-Latvia Board member Aigars Sveicers was confirmed as a national coordinator of EAPN PeP programme in year 2024.

On January 25th, March 6th, March 28th, April 9th, April 30th, June 6th, September 23rd, October 10th and November 14th EAPN-Latvia national coordinator Aigars Sveicers participated in EAPN PeP webinars.

On April 19th a meeting of PeP programme specialists was held in Riga in order to plan the 2024 activities and prepare for the PeP European meeting.

On April 19th in Riga EAPN-Latvia representative Dzintra Ziemele participated in the forum "Latvian children in the shadow of poverty", organized by the Latvian Child Welfare Network.

On June 14-15th in Brussels the EAPN-Latvia representatives Aigars Sveicers, Olga Borisova and Rihards Bunka participated in the PeP European Conference; on June 21st they submitted their proposals for the protection of the interests of poor people to EAPN.

On June 18th representatives of the EAPN-Latvia member organizations Aigars Sveicers, Egils Rupeks and Roberts Karklins participated in the conference "People in the shadow of social exclusion – how lifelong learning and financial literacy can improve their well-being", organized by the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Latvia.

On December 13th EAPN-Latvia representative Olga Borisova remotely participated in the EAPN meeting on the preparation of the EU Poverty Watch report 2024.

Development and Growth of the Network

EAPN-Latvia was founded on November 2013 by seven founding member organizations. At the end of 2024, EAPN-Latvia had 23 member organizations (NGOs) and 8 associated member organizations (NGOs). EAPN-Latvia operates throughout the territory of Latvia and has over 50 contact persons abroad. Since June 2014 EAPN-Latvia is a full-fledged member organization of the EAPN-Europe.

In 2024, 3 experts worked at the working groups of the ministries of Latvia: the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of the Interior.

EAPN-Latvia is a member organization of the Latvian Social Entrepreneurship Association (LSUA) and the Latvian Child Welfare Network (LBLT) (until July 31st 2024), and is also represented on the Board of the Women's Non-Governmental Organizations Cooperation Network of Latvia (LSOST).

1) Activities:

On February 24th in Riga EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga, Elina Alere-Fogele and Raja Eriksone participated in a rally in support of Ukraine.

On March 14th a meeting of the EAPN-Latvia consortium was held in Riga, at the National Library of Latvia, with the participation of 15 representatives from 10 NGOs.

On May 7th EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga and Egils Rupeks participated remotely in the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia and NGOs Forum.

On May 27th in Riga Laila Balga participated in a seminar on ESF+ and other foreign financial assistance programs, organized by the EaSI National Contact Point at the Ministry of Welfare.

On June 2nd in Riga Laila Balga participated in the opening of the Poetry Space, organized by the Kundzinsala Arts, Education and Technology Centre (managed by Dzintra Ziemele and Arnolds Ziemelis).

On September 19-21st a training seminar for EAPN-Latvia consortium employees and an Erasmus Day celebration was held in Jurmala, at Daina Jurmala Beach Hotel & SPA, which was attended by 19 people from 12 organizations.

On November 15th in Riga Laila Balga participated in a ceremonial meeting organized by LSOST, where EAPN-Latvia's nominated candidates for the woman leader award, Natalija Kurnosova (Dobele) and Ilga Liepina (Riga), received thank-you gifts.

On November 15th in Riga, at the European Union House, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga participated in the discussion "Be Safe! Cyberviolence against women

(in politics): experience, challenges and solutions”, organized by LSOST and the European Parliament Office in Latvia.

2) International experience:

On January 29th in Riga Laila Balga and Egils Rupeks participated in the Erasmus+ project "SMARTageCARE" meeting (lead partner - Portugal) in cooperation with the association "CONNECT Latvija".

On January 30th, EAPN-Latvia experts Laila Balga and Olga Borisova gave remote presentations at the seminar "Participation of people affected by poverty. Organisational cooperation at national and European level in combating poverty", organised by the Romanian partner "Novapolis Association - Center for Analysis and Development Initiatives" (president Iris Alexe).

On 7th February, 22nd February, 14th March, 26th March and 15th May, EAPN-Latvia's representative Egils Rupeks participated remotely in the EUISG meetings.

On 20th March and 4th June, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board Laila Balga participated remotely in EAPN EXCO meetings.

On 8th April, EAPN-Latvia representative Egils Rupeks participated remotely in the EAPN event "Poverty Watch Report 2023 Launch Event: unsustainable welfare states & risk of austerity".

On 28th May, Laila Balga participated remotely in the seminar "Call conditions and submission process for the CERV-2024-CHAR-LITI call" organized by EACEA, as well as in the Nordplus Green webinar on the same day.

On 5th July, EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga, Aigars Sveicers and Egils Rupeks participated remotely in the EAPN General Assembly.

On 20th September, EAPN-Latvia representatives Aigars Sveicers and Egils Rupeks participated remotely in the EAPN General Assembly.

On 23-24th September in Brussels EAPN-Latvia representative Laila Balga participated in the EAPN EXCO meeting and visited the European Parliament.

On October 25th, Laila Balga remotely participated in the SMES-Europa (Belgium) meeting on the impact of the results of the implemented Erasmus+ project PERSON FIRST on the activities of its partner organizations.

On November 28-30th in Brussels EAPN-Latvia representatives Laila Balga (EXCO) and Olga Borisova (EUISG) participated in EAPN meetings and the People's Summit.

On November 26th, Laila Balga remotely participated in the CERV Citizens' Forum regarding the opportunities for The Citizens, Equality, Rights & Values Programme (Networks of Towns) projects in 2025.

3) Projects:

I – From January 1st to May 31st 2024 EAPN-Latvia continued the implementation of the first adult mobility project of the Erasmus+ accreditation program (2021-2027), as well as continued the implementation of the second project from June 1st 2023: job shadowing at NGOs from other European countries and transferring the experience of NGO experts from other European countries to Latvia. 16 NGOs from the regions of Latvia have been involved in the consortium established by EAPN-Latvia. In 2024 project activities took place in cooperation with project partners from Spain, Romania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Norway, Hungary and Italy.

Results of the first project of the Erasmus+ accredited program (01/06/2022 - 31/05/2024) are the following: a total of 9 NGOs from 8 partner countries have participated in it; 24 participants have been involved in project training mobilities by 11 organizations of the Consortium, including 19 participants with fewer opportunities; a total of 39 mobilities have taken place, 8 foreign experts visited Latvian NGOs; EU funding of 57,232 euros has been invested in this project.

II – From January 1st to July 31st 2024 EAPN-Latvia continued its partnership in the SMES-Europa (Belgium) project "PERSON FIRST: EMERGENCY SERVICES and REHABILITATION SUPPORTS promoting accessibility – improving e-quality – reinforcing net-working", which was co-financed by Erasmus+ and involved project partners from Belgium, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia, Denmark, Italy, Finland, Greece and Poland. EU funding of 20,659 euros has been invested for EAPN-Latvia in this project.

On 21st June, EAPN-Latvia submitted an informative report to EAPN on the results of the PERSON FIRST project activities in Latvia.

III – From 1st July 2024, EAPN-Latvia launched a partnership with the German organisation Bildung für utopischen Wandel e.V. in the Erasmus+ programme's project "Climate Beyond Classism – Reloaded", which also involved organisations from the Netherlands, Poland, Austria and Greece. Four specialists from EAPN-Latvia participated in the training activities that took place in Coburg, Germany, on 11-17th November 2024. EU funding of 1,370 euros has been invested for EAPN-Latvia in this project.

IV – On 21st December, EAPN-Latvia signed an agreement with the Central Finance and Contracting Agency on the implementation of the project "The power of the rule of law in eliminating discrimination against people". This project will involve 204 participants from 10 NGOs that operate in five regions of Latvia. Project implementation period is from 1st January 2025 to 30th June 2026; ESF+ funding amounts to 23,598 euros.

4) Resources:

In 2024, EAPN-Latvia has rented a meeting room in the poorest area of the Riga city, without modern technical equipment and Internet. EAPN-Latvia has also used the private apartment, modern technical equipment and the Internet of its chairperson of the board Laila Balga for administrative work and project management.

In 2024, EAPN-Latvia has cooperated with the Humanities and Social Sciences Reading Room of the Latvian National Library in the use of the meeting room in Riga.

In 2024, 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, however, these premises were not used for administration in practice.

In year 2024 the EAPN-Latvia website www.eapn.lv was not maintained, because there was a lack of funding to hire an employee to do that. The social network pages on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/laila.balga/>, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61554147155317>, https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567445191023&locale=lv_LV, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61562815630459>, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61555497178988> were used for sharing information.

In the year 2024, monthly newsletters "News" (12) were prepared and distributed within the non-governmental sector and also sent out to various state institutions.

5) Impediments to the activities:

In 2024, a limited number of news items from EAPN-Latvia was disseminated via the press, TV and radio, which are usually paid services.

In 2024, due to the lack of employees, EAPN-Latvia did not develop working groups regularly and did not get involved sufficiently in anti-poverty policy activities and the dissemination of its policies in Latvia.

Governance and Internal Democracy

In 2024, 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 Kristaps Zarins, 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 EAPN-Latvia 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

EAPN-Latvia. Chairperson of the Board submits the annual report to the member organizations using e-mail and to the State Revenue Service of Latvia each March using EDS.

In 2024, the EAPN-Latvia's finances were managed by an accountant-consultant Inguna Lapsina (whose employment contract expired on December 31st). EAPN-Latvia Facebook pages are administered by Laila Balga (as a volunteer). Two project managers (volunteers): Ilga Liepina and Elina Alere-Fogele were also involved in EAPN-Latvia's activities.

In 2024, according to the decisions made by EAPN general meeting and the Board, the following staff members worked voluntary at EAPN-Europe structures and participated in events: a representative to EXCO Laila Balga; representatives to EUISG Egils Rupeks and Olga Borisova; PeP national coordinator Aigars Sveicers.

Report drawn up in Riga, Latvia on March 18th, 2025.

Laila Balga, Chairperson of the Board

