

SOCIAL CONVERGENCE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 19-20 November 2015

EAPN-Latvia Report on EAPN PeP Activities 01/02/2015–10/12/2015

On February 1, EAPN-Latvia became a member of the EAPN PeP Programme (European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty).

On February 20–21, representative of EAPN-Latvia Edīte Kalniņa took part in the meeting of PeP National Coordinators organized by EAPN in Vienna, Austria.

On February 20, Board of EAPN-Latvia launched a call for application to identify the National Coordinator of the 2015 European Meeting of PeP.

On April 2, Board of EAPN-Latvia confirmed Edīte Kalniņa, Chair of the Gender Equality Association of Latvia, as the National Coordinator of the 2015 European Meeting of PeP.

On July 20, as part of the European PeP Programme, EAPN-Latvia confirmed the Latvian Programme “People Experiencing Poverty Speak for Themselves” to be implemented until December 31 in Riga and in the municipalities of Varaklani and Rucava.

The plan of activities implemented during the Latvian Programme is as follows:

- 1) September – meetings and discussions at the local NGOs in the municipalities of Varaklani and Rucava with people experiencing poverty; survey of participants.
- 2) October – an eye-to-eye meeting and round-table discussion of people experiencing poverty and the MPs of the Parliament of Latvia in Riga.
- 3) October – National PeP Meeting in Riga, attended by people experiencing poverty and social exclusion; survey of participants.
- 4) November – Latvian delegates to the 2015 European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty confirmed.
- 5) December – results of the survey of participants collected; results of the activities assessed; recommendations for future activities and action plans put forth.
- 6) September – December – booklet of the Programme printed and handed out; press releases and information for the media submitted; preparation for the survey of participants, survey of participants conducted and its results collected.

On September 1, EAPN-Latvia began preparations for the annual European Meeting of PeP on November 19–20 in Brussels, Belgium.

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EAPN-Latvia has carried out the following activities:

On September 25 at the Rucava Town Hall, a meeting and debate took place between people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and experts representing the local authorities of the Rucava municipality and the State Employment Agency of Latvia. Survey of participants was conducted. Valda Stadgale of the Association "Jumītis" of Rucava was Coordinator of the meeting.

On September 25 at the local Varaklani Help Center for People Experiencing Poverty, a meeting and debate took place between people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and experts representing government institutions and the local authorities of the Varaklani municipality. Survey of participants was conducted. Staņislava Poče of the Association "Adult Development Project" was Coordinator of the meeting.

On October 1, EAPN-Latvia launched a call for application for Latvian delegates to the 2015 European Meeting of PeP in Brussels. Coordinator – Laila Balga.

On October 6 in Riga, a dinner for 19 people experiencing poverty and social exclusion took place at the restaurant "Apšeron". During the debate, Edīte Kalniņa, PeP National Coordinator, and Laila Balga, Chair of the Board of EAPN-Latvia, helped the participants to prepare for the session at the Committee of Social and Employment Affairs of the Parliament of Latvia. Coordinator – Lelde Cālīte.

On October 7 in Riga, a meeting of a delegation of 13 people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and MPs of the Parliament of Latvia took place at the Committee of Social and Employment Affairs. Edīte Kalniņa, National Coordinator of PeP, led the delegation. A photographer and a representative from the media was present.

On October 23, Board of EAPN-Latvia confirmed four Latvian delegates to the 2015 European Meeting of PeP in Brussels. Until November 18, members of the Latvian delegation were trained for participation in the meeting "Social Convergence in the EU"; among other things, a representational poster was designed. Coordinators – Edīte Kalniņa and Laila Balga.

On October 28, a meeting of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion and experts representing EAPN and leaders of NGOs took place at a cafe "Vanaga ligzda" in Riga. Chaired by Laila Balga, EAPN-Latvia Leader of the Board, the meeting hosted presentations on Europe 2020 by experts Aivars Lasmanis and Norberts Snarskis. 40 members of 20 NGOs from Latvia attended the meeting, along with experts representing SVEFI Swedish-Finnish folk high school – Raija Hiivala and Marjatta Morin. Coordinator – Lelde Cālīte.

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On November 12, a meeting of 37 people from 30 NGOs and six municipality social services took place at the House of the European Union in Riga. Chaired by Laila Balga, Leader of the Board of EAPN-Latvia, the meeting hosted presentations by Silvija Šimfa, Latvian MP; Norberts Snarskis, expert representing EAPN-Latvia; Elīna Ālere-Fogele, Member of the Board of EAPN-Latvia; Edīte Kalniņa, National Coordinator of PeP; Baiba Giptere, Head of the Association for the Development of the Latgale District of Riga; Ināra Hedviga Pūpola, representative of the Association for Diabetes in Liepāja; and Valda Stadgale, Head of the Association “Jumītis” of Rucava. Survey of participants was conducted. Coordinator – Lelde Cālīte.

The participants of the National Meeting of PeP adopted a Resolution aimed at fighting poverty in Latvia that was submitted to President of the Republic of Latvia, State Chancellery of Latvia, Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament of the Republic of Latvia, Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia, local governments, NGOs, and the media. In addition, the said institutions received a summary of the results of the survey of people experiencing poverty “People Experiencing Poverty Speak for Themselves” conducted by EAPN-Latvia in Riga, Rucava, and Varaklani. Translations of these documents have been prepared for submission to the European Commission and EAPN in Brussels. Coordinator – Laila Balga.

On November 16, Board of EAPN-Latvia confirmed Elīna Ālere-Fogele as the National Coordinator of the Meeting of PeP, revoking the responsibilities of Edīte Kalniņa.

On November 19–20, the Latvian delegation took part in the 2015 European Meeting of PeP “Social Convergence in the EU” in Brussels. Members of the delegation: National Coordinator of PeP **Elīna Ālere-Fogele**, Association “Skalbes”; **Dzintra Žilde**, Latvian Pensioners' Federation; **Baiba Giptere**, Association for the Development of the Latgale District of Riga, and **Ināra Hedviga Pūpola**, Association for Diabetes in Liepāja. Coordinators – Elīna Ālere-Fogele and Laila Balga.

On December 9, the Beautiful Charity Day was organized in Riga, at which 62 families experiencing poverty attended a children’s concert and received packages of food and presents for their children. Coordinators – Valentīna Volodjko, Lelde Cālīte, Terēzija Mackare, and Laila Balga.


September – December: EAPN-Latvia poster and the PeP booklet printed; the booklet handed out and information to the media provided; results of the survey of participants of PeP meetings summarized; recommendations to the authorities composed. Coordinator – Laila Balga.

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During the programme “People Experiencing Poverty Speak for Themselves”, EAPN-Latvia has hosted eight events and gathered together over 200 people in Riga, Rucava, and Varaklani from September 1 to December 10. An enlarged EAPN-Latvia board meeting is planned for January 2016. Schedule of the meeting: evaluation of the results of the PeP activities of 2015, recommendations for the future.

For more information see <http://www.eapn.lv/latvija/#socialo> and <http://www.eapn.lv/arvalstis/#pep>

Laila Balga 
EAPN-Latvia Leader of Board

Riga, December 15, 2015