



To: European Anti Poverty Network

CONTRACT 2020

Annex 2

1. Short report on the activities/work on People Experiencing Poverty (please refer to the original plan of activities)

Strengthening the engagement of experts with experience of poverty in key areas of work

Activity 1.1

Riga. From 15 to 30 January we established the EAPN-Latvia group of poverty experts (12 participants), chaired by PeP National Coordinator Baiba Giptere.

The experts' discussion on the results of the 2019 European meeting "THE TIME IS NOW to make Europe Poverty Free" took place on February 6th.

Activity 1.2

Riga. From 27 February to 31 March we developed the EAPN-Latvia PeP program 2020 and attracted poverty experts to this program. These 9 people came from the Latvian Lawyers' association, Latvian Myopathy Association "Sartorius", People's Aid Fund, Latvian Society of Large Families, Sigulda Society "Invitation to You", Garkalne Women's Society "Our Home", Dobeles Society for people with disabilities and Riga Kundzinsala Creative School.

Activity 1.3

Riga. From April 2nd Aigars Sveicers took over the duties of the national coordinator. From 5 May to 26 May webinars were held on the planning of PeP national coordinator's activities for 2020.

The meeting of the EAPN PeP National Coordinators (which was scheduled to take place in April in Lund, Sweden) was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Activity 1.4

Riga. From 2 June to 14 October, webinars and meetings were held to prepare the EAPN-Latvia poverty experts Aigars Sveicers, Santa Survila, Aleksandrs Nikolins, Diana Jasinska, Ilga Liepina, Iveta Valeine, Iveta Salve, Arnolds Ziemelis and Janis Stjadja for participation in the PeP European meeting 2020.

Due to the pandemic, the Board of EAPN-Latvia decided against the participation of PeP National Coordinator and three poverty experts in PeP European meeting.

Activity 1.5

The European meeting of PeP experts (which was scheduled to take place in November in Brussels, Belgium) was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Riga. From April to December PeP National Coordinator Aigars Sveicers participated *online* in EAPN PeP webinars.

Riga. From 16 July to 31 August the EAPN brochure “Delivering Agenda 2030 for people and planet. EAPN proposals for a post-Europe 2020 strategy. Position paper. 2019.” was translated into Russian (by Inna Sumanska, IWO International Women’s Organisation).

Riga. In September PeP Program Overview of EAPN-Latvia to EAPN Europe was translated into English (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women’s Organisation).

Riga. In October, translation of the Poverty Watch Report into Russian was provided (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women’s Organisation).

Riga. In November, 2 documents – “PeP Tasks (ToR) for the role of national coordinators” and “Participation of people living in poverty (PeP) in the EAPN network” were translated into Latvian (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women’s Organisation).

Riga. From 20 November to 29 December the PeP program’s 2020 evaluation meetings were held, coordinated by the EAPN-Latvia Chairperson Laila Balga and National Coordinator Aigars Sveicers.

Bringing together members and experts with experience of poverty to make the voices of experts more visible in EAPN’s communications work at the national and European level

Activity 1.6

Aloja. On 16 July, EAPN-Latvia’s experts Ilga Liepina (Latvian Society of Large Families), Vija Ahunzjanova (Large Family Center "Family Support"), Valentina Olsevskaja (Society "Olivzars-Vedi") and Janis Stjadja (Dobele Society for people with disabilities) organized a co-operation meeting with local NGOs, secondary school, municipality’s social service and entrepreneurs, and introduced them – 5 professionals – to the objectives of the PeP program 2020. This meeting was coordinated by Ilga Liepina, PeP Manager.

Aloja. On 14 August, EAPN-Latvia’s Chairperson Laila Balga and experts Ilga Liepina (Latvian Society of Large Families), Marite Rozentale (Sigulda Society "Invitation to You") and Janis Stjadja (Dobele Society for people with disabilities) organized the discussion seminar “How to increase motivation?” with participation of 20 families experiencing poverty on the impact they can have on decision-makers. This seminar was led by a psychologist Inga Dreimane. Discussion was coordinated by Ilga Liepina, PeP Manager.

Activity 1.7

Riga. In September-October, a discussion meeting with participation of NGO experts, decision-makers and citizens in connection with the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was organized by PeP National Coordinator Aigars Sveicers and PeP Manager Dace Paegle.

On 15 October at the European Union House in Riga the discussion meeting “Targeted support services for the low-income population” was held with participation of 17 professionals and citizens: three representatives of the Ministry of Welfare, one – from the Social Service of Tukums regional municipality, 11 NGO experts and participants (from EAPN-Latvia, Samaritan Association of Latvia, Latvian Society of Social Reforms, Riga Active Seniors Alliance, People's Aid Fund, Latvian Society of Large Families, Latvian Children’s Forum, Garkalne Women's Society "Our Home", Dobele Society for people with disabilities). The discussion was led by PeP National Coordinator Aigars Sveicers. It was coordinated by Dace Paegle and Ilga Liepina, PeP managers.

Brief assessment of results and impact:

- 1) the PeP expert group (12 persons), which was established within the EAPN-Latvia network, has raised its awareness of the results of the EAPN PeP program 2019;
- 2) the EAPN-Latvia PeP program for 2020 has been developed; 9 poverty experts have been involved in PeP program;
- 3) the action plan for the EAPN-Latvia PeP national coordinator for 2020/2021 has been developed in accordance with the recommendations approved by the EAPN network;
- 4) the knowledge of PeP national coordinator and 8 poverty experts has been increased for their participation in the EAPN PeP European meeting;
- 5) one meeting with 9 participants was organized to promote the PeP program and to establish cooperation with NGOs, schools, social services and companies in the local region (Aloja);
- 6) one discussion seminar was organized in the local region (Aloja) with participation of 20 families who have experienced poverty; we raised their awareness of psychological readiness and their right to participate in decision-making processes;
- 7) was organized one discussion with participation of 17 specialists from state institutions and non-governmental organizations; its participants increased their knowledge of the opportunities for the people experiencing poverty to access basic services; as a result of this discussion, the proposals from NGO members were summarized and the letters were submitted to the Social and Labour Affairs Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, to the Ministry of Welfare and Riga Municipality ;
- 8) a significant number of EAPN documents was translated into Latvian and Russian; the translated documents were published on the EAPN-Latvia website: www.eapn.lv
- 9) the publicity of EAPN-Latvia PeP program was provided in the following mass media: the EAPN network's website www.eapn.lv, EAPN-Latvia Facebook page, Laila Balga's Facebook page, EAPN-Latvia monthly newsletter "News", Aloja municipality website www.aloja.lv, Riga City Council website www.riga.lv, Ministry of Welfare website www.lm.lv, LMSA "Sartorius" Facebook page, newspaper "Latvijas Avize" and 39 addresses of the Latvian media.

2. On-going Europe 2020 and European Semester, European Pillar of Social Rights (please refer to the original plan of activities)

Europe 2020, European Semester

Activity 2.1

Riga. In January the EAPN-Latvia European Social Policy Working Group (with 18 participants) was established, chaired by Andris Burtnieks, Dr.econ. EUISG representative Egils Rupeks was also involved in this Working Group.

From 6 January to 9 March we developed the EAPN-Latvia program of measures for the implementation of European social policy in Latvia in 2020. The part of this program was planned in cooperation with the Social Sciences and Humanities Reading Room of the National Library of Latvia.

Activity 2.2

Riga. From 6 January to 30 September, we developed the EAPN-Latvia proposals on National Strategies for combating poverty and social exclusion and submitted them to the decision-makers: to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Constitutional Court, the Ombudsman, the State Audit Office, the State Chancellery, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and the Representation of the European Commission in Latvia.

Activity 2.3

Riga. From 1 August to 30 December we developed the EAPN-Latvia proposals on Country Specific Recommendations, Country Reports and National Reform Programs and submitted them to the decision-makers: to the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the State Audit Office, the State Chancellery, the Ministry of Welfare, the Representation of the European Commission in Latvia, a MEP Tatjana Zdanoka, the European Commission (Valdis Dombrovskis and Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion), the Norwegian Embassy in Riga, the Norwegian Financial Instrument in Brussels, and to the EAPN Europe.

From July to December, the EUISG representative Egils Rupeks participated *online* in the EAPN EUISG and other political meetings.

Riga. In July, the translation of the document on the EAPN Strategic Goals into Latvian was provided (by Laila Balga).

Activity 2.4

Riga. From 1 June to 30 September, the analysis of the EAPN-Latvia advocacy results in connection with the national Poverty Watch was carried out by the Working Group, led by the Board Member Andris Burtņieks, Dr.econ.

Activity 2.5

Riga. In July, translation of the document "EAPN-Latvia's activities to ensure the legislative changes related to the GMI value in Latvia" into Russian and English was provided to EAPN (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women's Organisation).

Riga. In November, translation of the document "On execution of the judgment of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia in the case regarding the setting of the guaranteed minimum income level" into English was provided to EAPN (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women's Organisation).

European Pillar of Social Rights

Activity 2.6

Riga. In August-September, a seminar with participation of NGO experts and citizens in connection with the European Pillar of Social Rights was organized by the NGO Expert Ivars Redisons (Latvian Society of Social Reforms) and Ilga Liepina, Manager.

On 23 September at the European Union House in Riga the seminar "European Pillar of Social Rights: Principle #20 – Access to essential services" was held with participation of 23 experts and citizens (from the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Pārvaldnieks 24, Ltd., EAPN-Latvia, Latvian Association of Prosecutors, Latvian Society of Social Reforms, Latvian Lawyers' association, Latvian Society of Large Families, Latvian Children's Forum, Latvian Association of Reserve Officers, Latvian-Swiss Chamber of Industry, People's Aid Fund, Large Family Center "Family Support", Garkalne Women's Society "Our Home", Dobele Society for people with disabilities, Voter Association "We are Latvia",

Foundation "Rays of Light", Pavilosta Baptist Church and Jurmala NGO). This seminar was led by Aigars Sveicers, EAPN-Latvia Member of the Board and Ivars Redisons, Expert. It was coordinated by Ilga Liepina, Manager.

Brief assessment of results and impact:

- 1) the NGO expert group, which was established within the framework of EAPN-Latvia network (18 people) has developed a program of measures for the implementation of the European social policy in Latvia in 2020;
- 2) the NGO experts' working group of the EAPN-Latvia has developed proposals on National Strategies for combating poverty and social exclusion and submitted them to the decision-makers at the Latvian level;
- 3) the NGO experts' working group of the EAPN-Latvia has developed proposals on Country Specific Recommendations, Country Reports and National Reform Programs and submitted them to the decision-makers at the European and Latvian level;
- 4) was carried out the analysis of the EAPN-Latvia's advocacy results in connection with the national Poverty Watch;
- 5) the Poverty Watch Report has been translated into Russian and English;
- 6) was organized one seminar with participation of 23 specialists from state institutions and non-governmental organizations; its participants increased their knowledge of Principle #20 of the European Pillar of Social Rights, of the rights of people experiencing poverty and opportunities for them to access basic services; as a result of this discussion seminar, the proposals of NGO members were summarized and the letters were submitted to the Social and Labour Affairs Committee of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Welfare and Riga Municipality;
- 7) a significant number of EAPN-Latvia documents was translated into English and Russian; the translated documents were published on the EAPN-Latvia website: www.eapn.lv
- 8) the publicity regarding the measures to reduce poverty and social exclusion (implemented by EAPN-Latvia) was provided in the following media: the EAPN network's website www.eapn.lv, EAPN-Latvia Facebook page, Laila Balga's Facebook page, EAPN-Latvia monthly newsletter "News", Rundale County Council website www.rundale.lv, internet portals www.delfi.lv, <https://nra.lv>, www.dzivei.lv, <https://medicine.lv>, www.reitingi.lv, News agency LETA website and 39 addresses of the Latvian media.

3. Poverty Watch

National Poverty Watch and PeP

Activity 3.1

Riga. From 7 February to 31 July, the discussion meetings and webinars with participation of the EAPN-Latvia Working Group and people experiencing poverty in the content of the national Poverty Watch took place, coordinated by Aigars Sveicers and Andris Burtņieks, EAPN-Latvia Board Members.

Activity 3.2

Riga. From 1 July to 30 September, the preparation of the EAPN-Latvia Poverty Watch Report (in Latvian) and material translation into Latvian and English was organized by Andris Burtnieks, the Board Member, in contract with IWO-International Women's Organisation.

Riga. In September, translation of the Poverty Watch Report into English was provided (by Inna Sumanska, IWO-International Women's Organisation).

4. Translations

EAPN brochures in Latvian

Activity 4.1

Riga. From 1 June to 15 July the EAPN brochure "Delivering Agenda 2030 for people and planet. EAPN proposals for a post-Europe 2020 strategy. Position paper. 2019." was translated into Latvian (by Inna Sumanska, IWO International Women's Organisation).

Activity 4.2

Riga. From 1 September to 30 September the EAPN brochure "EAPN Key Messages on the European Green Deal and Just Transition. Reflection paper. June 2020." was translated into Latvian (by Inna Sumanska, IWO International Women's Organisation).

Activity 4.3

Riga. From 1 October to 30 November the EAPN brochure "EAPN Position Paper on Adequate Income. May 2020." was translated into Latvian (by Inna Sumanska, IWO International Women's Organisation).

Brief assessment of results and impact:

- 1) were organized a significant number of discussion meetings and webinars with participation of the EAPN-Latvia Working Group and people experiencing poverty in the content of the national Poverty Watch;
 - 2) was developed the Poverty Watch Report of EAPN-Latvia;
 - 3) three EAPN Europe brochures were translated into Latvian; the translated EAPN documents were published on the EAPN-Latvia website: <http://www.eapn.lv/latvija/>
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Lessons learned in 2020:

1. Due to the pandemic, in 2020 the management of EAPN-Latvia and the participants of our meetings and discussions had to learn to communicate *online*.
2. Senior citizens and people with disabilities require training to be able to work *online*.

3. Many EAPN-Latvia employees lack the advanced technology to be able to work online.
4. Members of the EAPN-Latvia working groups would still prefer to meet and discuss various issues in person.
5. Coordination of working groups and the course of activities has been successful; during the pandemic, the high responsibility of the organizers and participants of our activities became apparent.
6. Working remotely has contributed to the preparation of a significant number of policy documents.
7. There has been good online communication with EAPN Europe, but there also have been too many tasks for the national networks to carry out, especially when this work has to be done on a voluntary basis.
8. The decision of EAPN Europe to support the national networks with additional funding for the preparation and translation of the Poverty Watch Report has been significant.
9. Working remotely has facilitated the planning and developing of new programs and projects, incl. at the international level.
10. Because of the limited communication during the pandemic, we have not been able to provide sufficient feedback to the decision-makers and to analyze the information received from them.
11. The EAPN-Latvia's experience in 2020 once again confirms that in Latvia the understanding of state and local government officials, as well as a significant part of the society about the social policy (the introduction of GMI, the fact that poverty is a violation of human rights, development of the consumer basket, compliance with the principles of EPSR, etc.) is low and does not comply with the recommendations of the EAPN / European Union documents.
12. The EAPN-Latvia's experience in 2020 confirms that in Latvia (in connection with the Latvian NGO Fund and the Norwegian financial instrument) social spheres and vulnerable non-governmental organizations (incl. members of the EAPN-Latvia network, that, for the most part, are unable to develop projects and compete with independent projects) are deliberately excluded from receiving funding; the state's attitude towards EAPN-Latvia's proposal to establish an NGO support fund (on the basis of EC funding) for social security in the next five years has been negative.
13. The pandemic has severely restricted the implementation of projects funded in 2019/2020 in Europe, as well as the exchange of experience between partner organizations from different countries.
14. The pandemic has restricted the activities of the EAPN-Latvia leaders abroad, incl. in Brussels.
15. EAPN-Latvia has had too few opportunities to have discussions with its cooperation partners in Latvia, to jointly influence the decision-making processes, to organize joint activities and to attract new members to the EAPN-Latvia network.

16. EAPN-Latvia lacks financial resources for the maintenance of its office (rent of premises, office supplies, etc.) and for the employees' salaries; Latvian NGOs do not have an opportunity to receive the compensation payments from the State, so they have to get a loan, which actually jeopardizes the very existence of the national network.
17. There is a lack of resources (both financial resources and employees) for the preparation of the EAPN-Latvia informative materials and for providing regular publicity in the media.

Please find attached the relevant lists of participants, materials from the meetings, press releases, printouts from websites and Facebook pages, photos and links to the social media.

Report prepared by

Laila Balga, EAPN-Latvia Chairperson of the Board

Riga, 29/01/2020