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**13th BOARD MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Brussels, 27 February 2016**

**Participants:** Sarah, Nicoletta, Andreas, Jamie, Marcell, Vilana, Peter

**Apologies**: Jallow, Laurentia, Amel, Intissar

**Participants ENAR Secretariat:** Michael, Claire, Myriam, Joël

**Venue:** ENAR Office, 67, rue Ducale, 1000 Brussels

**Accommodations:** Aloft Brussels

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| Saturday, 12 September 2015 9:00-17:00 | |
| **No** | Matter | |
| **09:00-09:30** | **DECISIONS**   1. **The agenda is adopted.** 2. **The minutes are adopted.** 3. **Follow up of the minutes of the previous meeting:**  * **MP: start developing the toolkit on soundbites on narratives (on migration in particular). Andreas Hieronymus can still be consulted informally**. | |
| **09:30-10:30** | Update on finances, staff and office  **Issues for 2016:**   * Some members feel a lack of connection with ENAR Europe: e.g. the fact that we are no longer organising national campaigns such as round tables. * The GA could be used as a forum to explore what members would like to do in line with ENAR’s work programme. That could be the basis of ENAR’s work at national level. * Could we organise a cycle of conversations on this issue in the run-up to the GA? * There is a further issue: the EC has an issue with the contracts for national level activities: it looks too much like re-granting, which it is not. They have already asked us to reframe this activity as a call for tender rather than a call for projects for 2015. The total amount for 2016 is 35,000€. Do we want to take the risk to transform the call into a call for tender for 2016 too? * There are a few options:   Option 1: keep co-funding and explore tendering  Option 2: outside of co-funding, as a “separate project”, but we need to discuss with OSIFE if they agree to this and check that OSIFE is not interventionist in the way we select the countries where projects will be implemented. It will require searching for further co-funding to compensate for this gap.   * Option 3: no more calls for projects at national level and ENAR Europe pilots everything from Brussels.   **DECISIONS:**   * **The Board declines option 3.** * **MP/CF/MDF: explore options 1 and 2 and inform the Board of the final decision.**   **Loss & membership fees**   * It’s the first time we don’t need to inject money from the membership fees and the companies to match our co-funding needs => a part will be used to reimburse the loss. * Given the intensity of auditing, we need to forecast a 10K€ loss per operating year => membership fees and company money will go to yearly loss compensation and reimbursement of the existing loss.   **DECISION:**   * **MDF/MP: prepare a forecasting plan of reimbursement of loss for OSIFE and ENAR** * **MDF: send invoices or debit notes directly to members**   **Staff**   * Anti-migrant racism should be made visible in the distribution of portfolios (Juliana is in charge of this portfolio). * The workload of the staff has not really changed, despite prioritising. This remains a massive concern to be tackled. * Replacement of Julie during her maternity leave: we are considering different options, but we will be in a position to make a decision when we know more about Julie’s health status. | |
| **10:30-12:45** | **General Assembly 2016**   * Positive points from 2015 to build upon in 2016  1. Involvement of members throughout the process 2. Member-led workshops 3. EP visit 4. Market place for more details on ENAR’s activity and financial reports 2015 5. Presentation of the activity report in plenary  * Potential topics for 2016 – points of attention  1. Explore and bring to the fore the Black experience of migration and refugee status (Black people are constructed purely as economic migrants to be sent back – as opposed to Syrians who are presented as “real” refugees). 2. Migration: get members to support the network in agreeing on **a specific objective to strategise at the intersection of race and migration** => we need to develop our baseline. 3. Take one topic and look into the different perspectives from different minority groups and the ways they are affected by it + look at empowerment strategies for action (e.g. in the areas of hate crime or anti-migrant racism?). 4. Build on portfolios where we are already stronger to bring more nuance (gender, sexual orientation) and look into the intersectionalities (e.g. in the areas of Afrophobia and Islamophobia). 5. We could agree on an overarching theme for the GA and have more specific workshops. 6. Find good facilitators to get members engaged. We have some great facilitators in the network. 7. Explore the connections between migration / Islamophobia / Afrophobia. 8. Explore the hierarchisation of those who are worthy of protection or not among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; explore the issue of violence against women on the routes to Europe.   **DECISIONS:**   * **Nicoletta: rework the initial paper on migration to provide a good basis for the GA discussions** * **The Board agrees on an overarching theme, which will be explored through a variety of workshops, with the possibility to agree/propose actions and objectives (short & long term)** * **MP: prepare an initial canvas of the GA to be shared with the Board**   **Elections**   * There will be a call for nominations for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chairs and Treasurer. * We need to know in advance if current Board members will run for these positions as we might have to elect more Board members if mandates are left vacant. * This might imply some statutory changes as the current model lacks some flexibility (are 2 mandates enough in case of a first mandate that is shortened to be elected in another position on the Board)?   **DECISIONS:**   * **Proposal for statutory changes: 2 full mandates and/or maximum of 6 years on the Board** * **Unless one steps down to fill in another position on the Board, all mandates will be for 3 years directly, even if the new Board member is elected to replace a shortened mandate.** * **Sarah: send an email to all current Board members to ask if anyone wants to apply for another position in order to know in advance how many positions might be opened for election.** * **MP: draft statutory change and circulate to the Board and Nicoletta before consulting the membership.** | |
| **13:30-16:45** | **Membership**   * MP proposes that we review the statutory classification of members to stay as close to our reality as possible: the paying membership is shrinking from year to year. It’s important on the other hand that we are seen as representative of a broad range of organisations => we could modify the category of “associate members” so that it applies not only to members outside of the EU, but also to members which, after one or more years of payment of fees, are no longer able to pay but wish to remain close to ENAR, or which ENAR considers have an added value as members.   This would allow us to keep counting these organisations as members as long as they wish to remain ENAR members (to be confirmed every year). They would not benefit from the same services and definitely not have voting rights at the GA.   * The Board does not wish to make a decision on this issue without more detailed information. The Board needs to decide if we go for quality over quantity or not? What is important in our membership? * Would it be possible to explore other schemes such as solidarity between members (e.g. one organisation paying the membership fee of another?), or twinning members?   **DECISIONS:**   * **Secretariat: schedule a call in March/April to have an online conversation on this issue before the next Board Meeting.** * **Juliana: prepare statistics on the membership (who’s paying or not, profile of the NGOs), a list of reasons why members don’t pay and what could be incentives to pay or alternative models (twinning of members).**   **Membership and content issues**  **A) Update on migration:**   * See the policy update for background information. * The Steering Committee has suggested that ENAR repositions itself on the issue of integration as there’s no European network working on this issue. * ENAR could look at discrimination of asylum seekers and migrants in the regularisation process, as well as in the legislation more broadly (nationality discrimination; police violence against migrants; discrimination in asylum procedures). * Claire met with EC Vice-President Timmermans early February: the EC wants to discuss integration to get away from the current prevailing narrative around the fear of terrorism. There is a willingness to address the issue of hate crime.   The dominant narrative is: we’re losing the European project if we cannot solve the migration issue => the EC is calling for the mobilisation of progressive voters, as currently only the right/far-right are framing the debate and imposing their solutions. There is a strong expectation that civil society has a key role to play in this respect.   * UK: the recent migration bill is turning many service providers (health…) into controllers of migration status =>there is an increased risk of ethnic profiling of minority communities in the UK. * Hungary and other Eastern European countries: national governments are accusing one another of not taking responsibilities, which is dividing people and bringing nationalist narratives to the fore => how can we react collectively to this trend? * Germany: Pegida is marginal, and a large part of civil society is mobilised, trying to get resources at local/individual levels, notably by unearthing many family histories which are rooted in migration/fleeing past. It provides lots of symbolic resources and potential for great narratives, with the view to “rebuild Europe from below”. On the other hand there is also the “white saviour complex”: refugees should be happy to have been fed, but should not expect more. * Nicoletta: we need to fully recognise the specificity of “anti-migrant racism” (including refugees and asylum seekers). It impacts on the closing of borders, violation of EU rules, freedom to air hate speech and get away with it. * Nicoletta reminds that she requested a petition against Hungarian measures to be supported by ENAR (see link) and ENAR did not pick it up as a priority (no push for signing). Claire and Michael explained that there was a conversation at EU level with partner organisations to improve the text, but it was put online while we were still working on it. We couldn’t find consensus among partners to support this approach (activating Art 7 of the EU Treaty). There was a communication gap between the Secretariat and Nicoletta in this short time frame. * Mainstreaming “migration” in our different areas of work has failed => we need to prioritise and strategise our work to ensure that this happens. * Attention to the specificities of local settings: narratives and specific construction of racism can be about long time settled (whatever their ethnic background) and newcomers. * Claire: migration is a complex field: NGOs are not coming together to work and adopt common positions. We have decided to work closely with EPAM and have a lead on anti-discrimination in the area of migration among EU NGOs (also in the meeting with Timmermans - ENAR was very visible). The Secretariat plays this role, but we have not yet formulated relevant objectives for ENAR in this area.   **B) Confronting sexism in our structures**   * Jamie provides an introduction to the issue: how can ENAR be more conscious of sexism within its own structures and implement a balanced approach? How to broaden this approach to other intersectionalities? * ENAR already looks at its participation in panels (are they balanced?), how we do compose panels in our events… * We have established portfolios, so we can go into more details on intersectionalities.   E.g.: ethnic profiling is too broad: what about the queer experience of it => we need to create the space for the expression of this experience (including through steering groups) and then look for people who can bring the evidence.   * We need to look at the relations between all identity markers: look at gender (male/female as well as power relations), but also at class and age to broaden the picture => Andreas: we need to think about how to discuss the topic while including everybody, and not alienating with regard to colour, gender… * Suggestion for the GA: deconstruct gender issues, look at the mechanisms of oppression.   **DECISIONS:**   * **Jamie: prepare a note on issues linked to intersectionality within ENAR and propose a number of tools to improve the situation and ideas of indicators of progress.** * **Amel and Secretariat agree to support Jamie.**   **C) Governance issues**  Michael McEchrane:   * Summary of issue by Michael (see Michael McEchrane’s mail to the Board) * Members are entitled to have their activities mentioned in the Weekly Mail even if they might contradict the positions of other ENAR members or the position of ENAR itself. * MP should have felt comfortable to bring the issue directly to the whole Board when it was brought to his attention, rather than trying to solve it on a person to person basis. * Andreas: it’s about the exercise of power => there is probably no other solution than restrict oneself to use the power one might have. * The Board prefers to postpone its decision to the next meeting when Jallow will be present.   Tell-Mama/MEND:   * Summary of the situation by Claire on the polarising opposition between the two organisations and the impact on our work (separate communications, impossibility to have everyone in the same room…). * When such issues happen (i.e. one organisation threatening to withdraw from the membership if we keep collaborating with another), the Secretariat needs to inform the Board immediately if the situation matches a number of criteria:  1. Is it a matter of content that will jeopardise ENAR’s position? 2. Is it a matter of personal issues among the two NGOs and their leadership? 3. Is it about members or not (in which case the priority goes to the member)? 4. Will this have an impact on ENAR?  * BUT, in any case, ENAR can’t work under threat and blackmail. We have criteria to discuss (if an organisation starts blackmailing, then it’s a red line and we don’t discuss further). * Pay attention to power relations: some organisations know that they can blackmail us and have some leverage (image of the organisation…). We need to know who we are working with and why and stick to that. * Pay attention to a tendency to delegitimise Muslim organisations in the context of counter-terrorism => we need to be careful not to work with “radioactive” organisations (unless we are totally ok about who they are) if we want to remain legitimate in our advocacy work (or we become an activist organisation which does not care about its immediate impact on policy development). All these elements need to be factored in our decisions.   CEJI:   * Summary by Sarah (see letter of CEJI to the Board) on the fact that ENAR supported, together with other Belgian anti-racism and human rights NGOs, a conference where a “known Antisemite” was to take the floor among other panellists. * The Board confirmed that Sarah’s decision was the right one in that context. * There was a feeling that the victim’s perspective was not heard. * When we invite people we are of course extremely conscious of such bias, but we were not the primary organisers of this event. * When one criticises Israeli policies, one needs to make it very clear what is legitimate or not to avoid crossing the red line of Antisemitism. * What about those considering that any denial of the right of Israel to exist is considered antisemitic because it amounts to denial of the Holocaust as one of the key causes leading to the creation of Israel? * To avoid competition of victimhood, we need to draft guidelines on how to work with this issue. * In any case, we need to collectively try to stay clear of actions that might intensify the frustration. * We could organise a training session at the GA that will start by exploring power relations around this issue, victimhood,…   **DECISIONS:**   * **The Board wishes to be informed if any of such or similar cases happens in the future** * **MP: improve the OM where necessary to ensure that in case of veto on an activity by one Board Member, the Secretariat has to bring the issue to the Board; in case of (emotional) blackmailing by Board Members, the Secretariat has to bring the issue to the Board.** * **Georgina: insert a disclaimer in the Weekly Mail (views expressed in the Weekly Mail are not necessarily those of ENAR).** * **Secretariat (Georgina): propose a process to manage disagreements between members about communication.** * **The Board agrees to keep working on the issue of Antisemitism even if it is a complex question and to be the organisation that manages to create a safe space for controversial discussions – we keep building our credibility by ensuring that conversations can happen.** * **Board & staff: training on Antisemitism on the Friday before the next Board meeting.** * **MP: check if we can slot a training on Antisemitism in the canvas of the next GA.**   **RECOMMENDATIONS:**   * **Secretariat: propose an early warning system to avoid cases as above, involving Secretariat, Board Members (and members?).**   **NPCs – national projects 2015**   * The communication between the Secretariat, the NPCs and the organisations which applied for funding has been very patchy and not transparent (KISA has still not received an information letter for 2015). * The role of the NPCs is increasingly unclear: what is expected from them? The Secretariat should communicate better in this regard.   **DECISIONS:**   * **Secretariat: improve the communication about national projects in the new round for 2016.** * **Juliana: communicate the list of NPCs to all members + a clarification of their role.** | |
|  | **Board composition**   * Andreas Hieronymus is stepping down from his position of Treasurer to avoid any conflict of interest with his new position of Senior Officer in a grant making foundation. * The Chair and the rest of the Board praise Andreas for his relentless dedication to ENAR and the struggle toward a more equal society.   **DECISIONS:**   * **The Board accepts the decision of Andreas Hieronymus to step down from the Board of ENAR and his position of Treasurer** * **The Board appoints from among themselves Amel Yacef as Treasurer ad interim until the upcoming elections at the GA in June 2016 (consensus)** * **The Board also co-opts Amel Yacef as Treasurer ad interim to the Board of the ENAR Foundation.** | |
| **16:45-17:00** | **AOB:**  **DECISIONS:**   * **The Board agrees to support the Turkish HR organisation AMER and to use the fact that the EC will open the fundamental rights chapter in its negotiation with Turkey to put the pressure on with regard to racism and fundamental rights abuses in the South-East.** * **The Board agrees to ENAR becoming a member of Civil Society Europe.** | |