

firstesfepanewsletter

First ESF EPA Newsletter (written by mariangela Casalucci, December 2007)

First part: Updated document from the last EPAs (Lisbon, Stockholm, Istanbul)

This document summarise the work which started from Lisbon (1st and 2nd April 2007) and went on in Stockholm (15th to 17th September 2007) and Istanbul (1st and 2nd December 2007) and contains information, decisions taken and points to work on in the future.

It will be great to translate this newsletter in each country and circulate it.

ESF 2008

The next ESF is going to take place in Malmoe from the 18 to the 21 of September 2008. There is a Nordic Organizing Committee (in the document NOC) which involves people from Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland and is going to coordinate and implement the decisions of the EPA in order to organize the event in itself and involve groups, movements, networks, organization and individuals in the process.

We urge a **new enlargement involving more subjects (organizations and individuals)**.

It was suggested to form a mobilisation/ESF 2008 coordination group in each country.

There will be a **European Mobilization group** for the Malmö ESF.

Tord Björk from the NOC will be facilitating this group. tord.bjork@mjv.se

ESF 2008 Program

An European Working group was formed in Istanbul and is going to collect all the proposals from the Istanbul EPA's meeting, the ones on the website (www.esf2008.net) and on the list or any other they will receive in the main time and preparing proposals from the next EPA. So people who want to send their proposals can do it.

The group, which is open, is facilitated by Jens Ergon and Ola Nilsson from the NOC.

The first meeting in the program group will be in Paris 2nd and 3rd of February 2008.

People in their interventions in the EPA of Lisbon, Stockholm and Istanbul have underlined that

- We should focus on searching alternatives to competition, the base of neo-liberal economy, by promoting solidarity as a value.
- We should link together all the experiences of social struggles and actions (trade unions and movements) in response to the neo-liberal policies of the European Union in order to build real alternatives with particular emphasis to the networking and enlargement of the movements from both EU and non-EU parts of Eastern Europe in order to overcome the still dominant Western European culture in all the ESF process.
- We should focus on the responsibilities of Europe in the world, in order to change the neo-colonial policies towards the countries of the South, for example in Africa (referring to the campaign against EPA agreements). Opinion leaders and representatives of civil society from the South and from all over the world should be invited and be involved in the ESF 2008 in great number. The next ESF can be a world event linking with the contents of the WSF.
- We should put a particular emphasis on environmental questions. Green the ESF!
- We should focus also on all the wars include the unspoken ones and peace alternatives
- We have to build an experiment of seminars where transversality is the main focus
- We should focus on poverty

Two proposal for a ESF Program framework (one from Alexandra and one from the NOC) were presented and they are attached to this document in order to be discussed before the Paris meeting.

Seminars, assemblies, workshops at the ESF 2008

We should have more participation of activists, trade unionists from below in the panels. It was suggested to avoid big plenary but use more seminars, workshops and thematic assemblies (3-5 hours) and to start practical workshops to learn new skills.

Merging process

The merging process will be based on self merging. Only at the end of the process the programme group will facilitate the merging if necessary.

During the merging process, networks will be responsible for the areas they cover facilitating also proposals from groups not involved in the networks. This doesn't exclude direct organization for network not represented in the EPA's networks.

Women inclusion

has to be seen more during the ESF and the whole process maintaining the quota rule. Women have to be in the panels (at least 50%) of all the meetings including facilitating assemblies.. For the seminar the program group is going to give priority to proposal where the people commit themselves to balance women and men...(this commitment has to be part of the registration process form).

Diversities

In all seminars it will be important a special commitment by the organizers to include different point of views in the panel to increase the debate by genders, age, geographical and cultural backgrounds, different abilities and so on

Self organized spaces

At the ESF it will be important to create several self organised spaces dedicated to specific themes. These spaces will have the aim of increasing transversality amongst organisations referring to them but should also promote activities between each other in order to build links between different themes.

It will be also important to have rooms for self organized last minute meeting and find the way to announce them

Funding : Proposal for ESF 2008 participation and seminar costs presented in Istanbul

1. Participation fees for individuals

We propose to have three fee levels:

SEK 400 / 40 euros - ordinary fee

SEK 200 / 20 euros - youth (under 22), unemployed, retired and ordinary fee for CEE countries

SEK 100 / 10 euros - youth (under 22), unemployed, retired from CEE countries and locals who offer solidarity housing

FREE - volunteers (working a minimum number of hours) and those who are funded by the solidarity fund

The fees will increase with 10-25% if paid after August 17th.

2. Participation fees for organizations

Organizations that want to participate at the forum need to pay a participation fee. Two levels were proposed:

SEK 2 500 / 250 euros - rich organizations
SEK 500 / 50 euros - poor organizations

3. Seminar costs

A first indication of the seminar/workshop fee, depending on the size of the room was presented and it will be finalized later.

Seminar large - 1 000 + persons	SEK 20 000 / 2 000 euros
Meeting large - 400-600	SEK 12 000 / 1 200 euros
Meeting medium - 200-400	SEK 8 000 / 800 euros
Meeting small - 100-200	SEK 3 000 / 300 euros
Conversation - 50-100	SEK 1 500 / 150 euros
Conversation small - 30-50	SEK 500 / 50 euros

There may be a requirement on the minimum number of organizations per seminar. Also this will be finalized later.

Logistic:

Food and accommodation must be consistent with our messages: i.e. affordable, environmental friendly, use local farmer products...

Informations about the event

It was suggested to have a daily report during ESF 2008 about events of the day before.

Political parties

Should neither have a separate space in the ESF nor be among the organisers. This does not exclude the participation of party members for special sessions of political dialogue, which could be particularly attractive also for the public opinion.

Demonstration:

No one knows better than people from the host country the situation about security during demonstrations. We have to organize our own self defence better and we have to work together in this direction. We propose before any European Demonstration to have a special meeting to inform each other and prepare it sharing responsibilities.

The Turkish delegation proposed an ESF in Istanbul in 2010 which is going to be further discussed in the next EPA.

EPAs

Next EPA will be in Berlin Saturday Feb 23rd 09.00 h – 20.00 h and Sunday Feb 24th 09.00 h – 14.00 h. Network meetings Friday 22nd. Rooms can be booked on request until Jan 11th. If there will be the necessity for the program group to meet separately there will be facilities for Thursday Feb 21st.

The venue is an office building a few steps from the railway station Berlin-Ostbahnhof Franz-Mehring-Platz, 1D-10243 Berlin

In Istanbul the following was decided for the next EPA-agenda:

- Have at least one hour debate about enlargement of the ESF-process
- Have the Assembly of Social Movements Saturday evening, instead of Friday
- Have one whole day for network meetings, and facilitate a transversal meeting between the networks at the end of the day.
- Have a space for methodology discussion based on proposals collected by the methodology group (the methodology group will facilitate this session)

An open group is in charge of the preparation of the following EPA (rotating group for each EPA). The group will be formed (respecting political and other diversities) by people from the new EPA host country, the previous EPA host country and the ESF host country, and people from Eastern European movements, Babel and the website group.

This group has to

- Collect minutes, documents, decisions, open problems from the previous EPA and networks and publish them
- Formulate the draft agenda for the coming EPA. The draft will be circulated through the lists for remarks and objections and then the coordination group will publish the final agenda in advance in order to facilitate the participation. This could have a mobilizing effect on the local/country movements and increase the discussion.
- Collect proposal linked with the agenda in order to discuss / decide ASAP about the topics to put in frontline

There will be a newsletter with the decisions taken at the EPAs and summaries of network meetings, to be translated into all languages and distributed widely.

Mariangela Casalucci volunteered to do the first newsletter from the Istanbul EPA, and each country is responsible for their own translation and distribution.

The following EPA will be held in Kiev, in the end of May/beginning of June. The exact date will be decided in Berlin

Facilitators of debates

during the EPA should try to allow more people to express themselves. Nomination of moderators should respect differences (gender, countries, political orientation); the moderators have to come to work informed and prepared; at the beginning of the process they have to present the rules for consensus; the plenary debates should be structured according to the agreed agenda. Women have to be in the panels (at least 50%) of all the meetings including facilitating the Assembly, EPA plenaries and network meetings

Meetings guidelines

make a list of speakers

First and second speaker list (new speakers will be prioritised),

Gender balance of speakers,

Hand in a note to put yourself on the list,

Time limit for speakers – 3 minutes (2 minutes if time is running short)

Stick to the subject

Respectful behaviour – try not to interrupt the speaker

If someone has already said what you want to say – consider withdrawal

“L-sign” when translation doesn’t work

Try to speak slowly and don’t raise your voice when speaking in the microphone

No applause – out of respect for the translators – shaking hands in the air is much better to show the agreement

Moderators have to close the speaker list if time is running out asking if someone wants to sign up before unless the assembly decides to carry on the discussion and summon up the discussion when necessary.

Taking decisions

When a decision has to be taken facilitators of the meeting have to:

summon up the discussion and present the final proposals

ask if the assembly is ready to make a decision on this and if anyone disagree (before decision is taken)

If somebody disagree the assembly has to find the way of reaching consensus

The consensus about the proposals has to be shown in an open, transparent and clear way and has to be directly asked.

Website

All websites and tools need a permanent funding and the expenses must be prioritized by the Nordic OC. The web group will present a budget proposal at the next EPA in Berlin.