



European Network on Religion & Belief

European Network on Religion and Belief

ANNUAL REPORT for ENORB Assemblée Générale May 27 2015.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

ENORB is a European Anti-Discrimination Network which covers the Religion and Belief (R&B) strand of EU Fundamental Rights and Equalities policies ENORB was formed in response to the increase in discrimination and hate crimes on religion/belief grounds in Europe, as an inter-convictional network. The organisation was developed by an Exploratory Group, including a wide diversity of religious, non-religious and humanist/atheist groups, over 2010-11, an Assemblée Constitutive for ENORB asbl was held in December 2011. ENORB was registered as an ASBL May 2012, and has been operating as a European Network, with regular meetings and seminars at European level over the past three years. With no access to funding until the 2015-20 EU funding cycle, ENORB has no paid staff, but its work is organised by several energetic members of its voluntary executive. And project funding has enabled ENORB to undertake a series of pilot seminars in member states over the past year

The Paris atrocities in January, followed by the Copenhagen attacks, along with others over the past year have brought Religion, Belief and Hate Crime – identified by the EU presidency as “the biggest challenge Europe has faced in this field since the Second World War” - to the top of the EU agenda. Religion/Belief has also become a proxy for racism and xenophobia in Europe, and over the past two years, attacks on EU fundamental rights such as Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Movement, Gender Equality, LGBT Rights, Freedom of Religion and Belief, have come both from extremist organisations of a fundamentalist origin, such as ISIS, and from the extreme right. Data from several countries on hate crime have shown significant increases over the past year, and there have been examples of hate speech from within R&B communities. ENORB’s core mission, to combat discrimination and to promote equal treatment and mutual understanding among R&B groups across Europe, focusing especially on minorities subject to exclusion, has become more urgent than ever. This has been recognised by the European Parliament, the European Commission Presidency and relevant directorates-general (especially DG Justice).

Our new Strategic Plan, presented to this AGM after work by the Board over the past 6 months, indicates the seriousness of our own response to hate crime and discrimination, not usually in direct, combative ways, but using ENORB’s dynamic models of change, which relate to the deeply held nature of religious and non-religious beliefs. These promote dialogue and discussion among R&B leaders, members and active groups in safe spaces. In such open and honest contexts, the positive values - of love, solidarity, care for the excluded - shared by all R&B traditions - can be emphasised, and the negative effects of (for example) hate speech - on R&B minorities or LGBT groups - can be deconstructed to stimulate long-term change. For 2015-16, ENORB will work at EU level, and increasingly directly in member states, to implement this strategy.

1.2 Summary of Progress

Over the past year we have carried out a full programme of work, undertaken a 5-year review of progress, and agreed aims and strategies for the future, which are summarised in the Strategic Plan (See Annex 2 to this report).

- **Coverage** - As a result of this year’s work programme at European level and in member states, we now have member or contact organisations in all member states
- **Targets More Than Achieved** – We have also managed again to over-perform on all the targets in our Annual Work Programme (See Section 3). This year, however our work

programme is presented in a different format, primarily relating to the new policy priorities set out below.

- **New Policy Priorities** – for 2016-17, the Board has decided on two new priorities: Interface between Equality for Women and Freedom of Religion and Belief; and Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion
- **European Election** – ENORB produced a ten point manifesto and flyer for the elections, and participated in a number of meetings and election sessions.
- **New European Commission** – ENORB wrote a letter of welcome, suggesting policy priorities, to the new president of the European Commission and to DG Justice. ENORB was invited to initial meetings at the Presidency: with the other EU Equalities Networks, to a meeting with the new Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, and, along with other EU religion and belief networks, with Vera Jourová, Commissioner for Justice. Our policy priorities – for the draft Equal Treatment Directive to be treated as a matter of urgency for the new Commission, and for equalities and anti-discrimination on grounds of religion and belief to be given a higher profile as part of the new Commission’s work - were both welcomed, and since then there has been considerable progress, including a revised draft of the directive which has been met with approval from nearly all member states.
- **Funding** – Small grants have been received for 2014 from the Open Society Foundation, and for 2015 from the Arcus Foundation. The issue of EU funding was raised at meetings with the new Presidency. It was agreed that if equal treatment, and freedom of religion and belief are high policy priorities, ENORB, and above all its member organisations and member state contacts, are important partners for the Commission and DG Justice. ENORB has now the necessary three years of registration and audited accounts, as an ASBL in Brussels, and will be qualified for the next round of funding (from 2017). For 2015, ENORB has again been encouraged to apply for a DGJ action grant, but that is subject to very high competition (20/500 success rate in 2013).
- **Member State Action** – Local ENORB and ENORB-supported activities have continued – especially UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France, Sweden, Italy – and including recent local actions in the wake of the Brussels and Paris atrocities in 2014 and 2015. The new joint ENORB/ILGA programme will allow seminars over the coming year in another dozen or more member states – including Romania, Malta, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Spain.
- **European Seminars** – The following seminars were held. 2014: January – National Seminar on Strategy for ENORB’s European Work on Religion and Belief; May – Workshop on Threat of Extremism from the Far Right, and AGM; September – internal Review Workshop, and Preparatory Workshop on Religion, Belief and LGBT Rights. 2015: March – ENORB/ILGA Seminar: Equality for All.

1.4 Funding and Future Plans

ENORB’s future plans are included in the first part of our Strategic Plan, which is set out below, and attached in full in Annex 3. ENORB will in 2016 apply for longer-term EU operational funding, to underpin a policy and professional office staff, and a full service to member state organisations and networks. This will include building capacity to develop the kind of action campaigning and support to implement EU Equality Directives, and national Anti-Discrimination Law which is available for the other five strands of European Equality and Non-Discrimination policy, (race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation), and if successful, will be operational for the 2017-2020 funding year. There is of course no guarantee that ENORB’s application would be successful, so the current methodology we have developed, to maximise ENORB’s impact without core funding would in this continue, using voluntary officers.

2. REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST 2014 WORK PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

This review is of ENORB's progress against the Work Programme for 2014. We are grateful to the Open Society Foundation's Small Grants Fund for a grant which funded part of our 2013-14 programme and which is again funding part of our 2014-15 programme.

3.1 Objective 1 - Membership Structure

- (i) To hold regular meetings of ENORB's Board/Executive Committee and encourage meetings in member-states and/or regional groups of member states.
- (ii) To increase coverage of European member-states through networking, more active membership activities in regions (eg Scandinavia, Eastern and SE Europe).

Targets:

- 3-4 member state or regional meetings
- Members/contact points in 25 EU member-states

Progress:

Targets achieved: four board meetings, 6 member state meetings, members/contact points now in 26 member state, 10 meetings in member states in 2015-16 through OSF and Arcus ENORB/ILGA programmes.

3.2 Objective 2 – Building on ENORB's partnerships with EU Equalities Networks

- (i) To develop the work of the Joint Task Group with ILGA to define common ground on EU Fundamental Rights, explore interface with LGBT Rights, undertake joint action
- (ii) To develop the partnership with ENAR to improve the European context for Freedom of Religion and Belief, especially relating to religious symbols and clothing

Targets:

- ILGA: initial document, joint seminar, roadmap for action
- ENAR: joint seminar, policy document, collaboration on Islamophobia

Progress: Targets achieved

- ENORB/ILGA: joint seminar for 60 held in Brussels, roadmap for action; completed, and initial local seminars held successfully
- ENORB/ENAR: joint seminar in European Parliament in Summer 2015; collaboration on two policy documents; continued collaboration on working group and joint activities

3.3 Objective 3 - Action for Mutual Understanding and against Discrimination and Hate Crime

- (i) support for action in member-states against discrimination and hate-crimes.
- (ii) increased participation in member state actions/meetings/seminars on inter-convictional dialogue against Religion/Belief discrimination and hate crime

Targets:

- ENORB support for 3-4 Anti-Discrimination actions at member state level
- ENORB participation in 4-5 events at member state level

Progress: Targets achieved:

- ENORB support for anti-discrimination/hate-crime actions in 6 member states
- ENORB participation in 7 member state events

3.4 Objective 4 - Seminars, Conferences

- (i) To hold regular European seminars on topics of current interest to Religion and Belief groups (including joint activities with other Equalities networks)
- (ii) To set up and maintain smaller working groups, or workshops on specific issues at European or member state levels

Target:

- 2-3 European seminars

Progress: Target Achieved:

- 2 European seminars held, one of which was a joint seminar with ILGA
- Joint working group set up with ILGA; participation in Islamophobic Working Group (ENAR); smaller workshops held on European strategy on LGBT rights; member state workshops planned for 2015

3.5 Objective 5 - Mapping Exercise on Religion and Belief Organisations (NB only feasible if DG Justice Action Grant application is successful)

Progress: No progress, as DGJ application for action grant unsuccessful. Could be restored for future grant application.

3.6 Objective 6 – Contributing to Policy-Related Discussions

(i) Contributing to EU policy discussions through ENORB Reports, meetings with EU officials and contributing to European Conferences, Seminars etc.

(ii) Assessing the impact of EU Policies – especially on Religion and Belief groups - through seminar papers, conference contributions from member organisations.

Targets:

- Continued distribution of reports on seminars widely, and to European Commission and Parliament contacts
- ENORB participation in 4-5 events at European level

Progress: Targets achieved

- 2 reports written and distributed, also three ENORB bulletins produced
- ENORB participated and/or spoke at the following: DG Justice annual seminar, Equinet annual seminar, in addition to regular participation in EU parliament and other EU institutions' events

4. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

4.1 (i) Religion and Belief Networks

ENORB has been represented at the major EU conferences and seminars in 2013-14, including events held by DG Justice, EEAS, Religare, FiE (Faith in Europe), EPRID, CEJI/Belieforama, European Parliament Article 19 Dialogue, plus EP groups on Secular Europe, and on Religion and Belief. ENORB has been represented at the SERIC Annual Seminars in 2013 in Rotterdam and held a Multi-Faith Europe event during the annual Inter-Faith week in London in November.

(ii) EU Equalities Networks – Our main partnerships have been with ILGA and ENAR, with whom we have joint programmes, seminars and ongoing activities. ENAR continues generously to provide office support and meeting space for ENORB. EWL (European Women's Lobby) will become an important partner in the coming year, with the exploration of a joint programme on the interface between religion and belief and women's rights.

4.2 Identifying existing activities and supporting actions in this field

A primary objective for ENORB is to contribute the expertise of Religion and Belief organisations to the Europe-wide struggle for equalities and against discrimination and hate-crimes, not necessarily through central action, but by supporting local action.

(i) Mechanisms to monitor equalities/discrimination. ENORB does not yet have the central capacity to monitor discrimination across Europe on grounds of religion or

belief, nor to record and respond to breaches of fundamental rights such as hate-crimes, except when these are major events in Europe (eg Paris in January 2015, Brussels May 2014). But many of our partner and member organisations are involved in this work at national or local levels in member-states, and ENORB officers have worked with several member organisations to develop capacity at member-state level. Further action on this area is a 2015 priority for ENORB, especially in relation to our joint programme with ILGA.

(i) Exploratory work with other Equalities Networks

In addition to joint collaborative work with ENAR and ILGA, in 2014-15 we have collaborated on joint meetings of Equalities Networks with the Presidency and DG Justice, and in the preparation of joint statements or working papers.

(iii) Exchanges of experience and Inter-Faith/Belief activities between organisations across Europe (in collaboration with SERIC and others)

As part of the ENORB AGM 2014, a Networking Exchange session was held, at which some 35 organisations came for networking and exchange of expertise. ENORB also participated in the SERIC annual exchange, held in January in Netherlands.

4.3 Conceptual Mapping Exercise

This is an important method by which the ‘mutual understanding’ component of ENORB’s primary aims could be addressed. Discussions and dialogue on several topics of current moral and political importance have been held with a view to helping to identify the values shared across religions and non-religious philosophies. In the early ENORB meetings, concepts such as secularism, laïcité, belief were discussed, sometimes on the basis of short written papers, (see website – documents section).

Recent topics included equality issues where there are distinctive views such as sexual orientation, gender identity, freedom to wear religious symbols, women’s rights. But the major debate in ENORB this year has been over the issue of freedom of speech, as acutely profiled in the Charlie Hebdo murders in Paris, which led to several lively debates at European level and in member states. There will be a workshop on the issue at the AGM, and a paper afterwards. .

5. EU BASIS for ENORB’s WORK and POLICY PRIORITIES

The emergence of ENORB over five years has been a response to the more urgent European context for religion and belief developing both at European level and in member-states.

5.1 What European Union basis?

The importance of matters of Religion and Belief in public life across Europe has been recognised in the treaties governing the European Union. New Articles in the Treaty of Lisbon 2008, and the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights treaty, have led to commitment across Europe work to combat discrimination and promote mutual understanding between Religion and Belief traditions of all kinds, on the basis of these texts, as set out below:

Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights guarantees:

“Freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right includes freedom to change religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.”

Article 13 of the Treaty of Lisbon:

“In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall aim to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.”

Article 17 of the Treaty of Lisbon which states that the European Union:

“Respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States; equally respects the status under national law of philosophical and non-confessional organisations; recognising their identity and their specific contribution, the Union shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches and organisations.”

5.2 Policy Priorities

From the issues raised above at ENORB’s AGM and meetings in member states, the two priorities identified for action during 2014-15 were:

- (i) Freedom to wear Religious Symbols and Clothing in Public Sector Premises and in public space
- (ii) Interface between Freedom of Religion and Belief and LGBT Rights and Freedoms

For 2015-16, these will include:

- i) Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion and Belief
 - ii) Interface between Equality for Women and Freedom of Religion and Belief;
- Provided that adequate funding can be attracted to support work on these new areas.

5.3 Future Development. ENORB remains a voluntary network, with no funds to support its core work (apart from small grants for project work). If our aim to become one of the funded EU Equalities networks under the 2017-2020 Funding Cycle is successful, ENORB will recruit a specialist team to carry out our programme and meet EU targets. If there is no funding, we will decide how these can best be realised in partnership with others, using as ever the generous voluntary time committed to ENORB’s work by its officers and board members.

APPENDIX 1

ENORB Strategic Plan

ENORB Vision

A Europe free from discrimination where we all take responsibility together to value the diversity of religions, beliefs and convictions.

ENORB Purpose

ENORB aims to provide a civil society platform of different religions, beliefs and convictions to facilitate dialogue and promote the rights and freedoms enshrined the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights and other in international human rights conventions.

ENORB Success Factors (Objectives)

1. To be a platform for exchange on matters of European concern and policy.
2. To advocate freedom of religions, beliefs and convictions in European institutions and with public opinion
3. To campaign against discrimination and hate crime, and for peace and equality
4. To support initiatives promoting a culture of non-discrimination in member states
5. To collaborate with other networks who share common values and concerns.
6. To provide open and safe spaces for engaging with difficult and controversial issues.
7. To foster learning and share insights into creating inclusive religious and convictional diversity

How we function

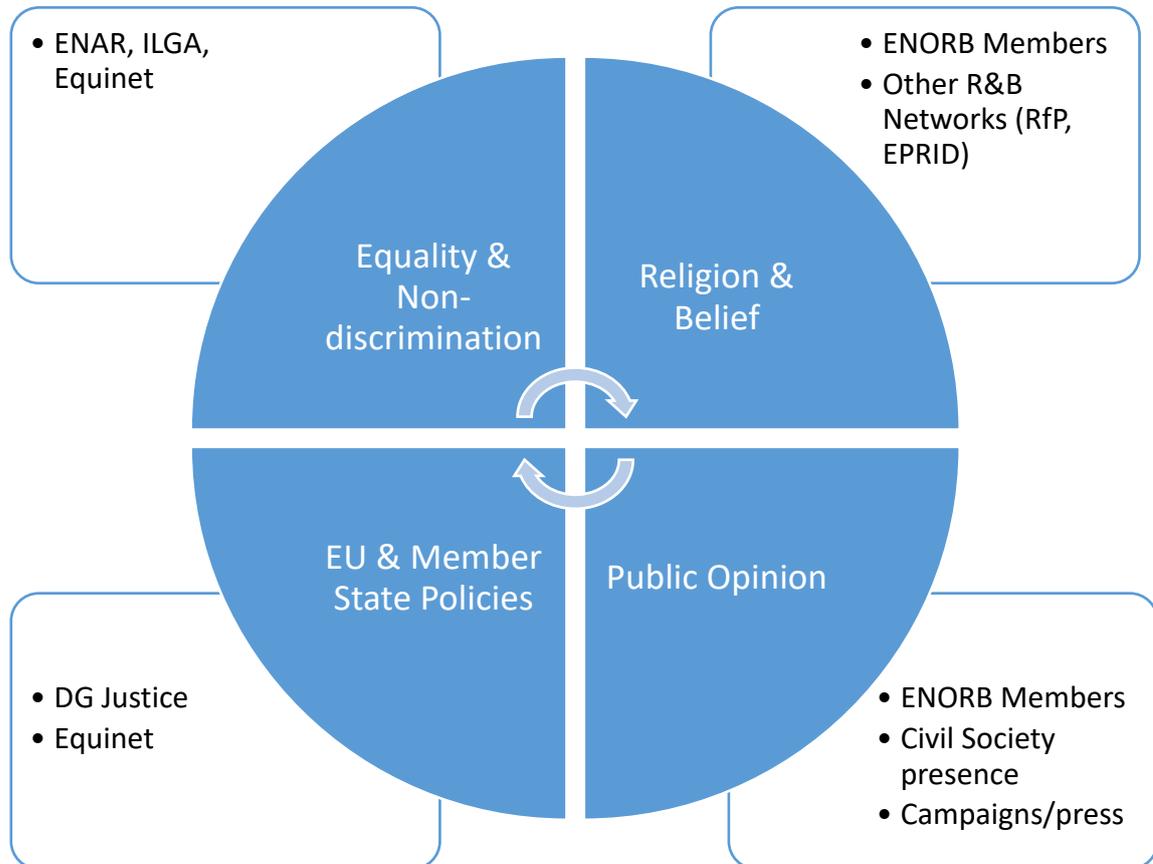
A participative, democratic, multilateral, inter-convictional network of individuals and organisations.

ENORB's Equal Opportunity Policy includes recognition that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal opportunity. No job applicant or employee, member, volunteer or organisation/individual to which we provide services will be discriminated against by us on the grounds of: gender (inc gender identity); race : disability; sexual orientation; religion or belief; or age. We aim to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and eliminate harassment in all our activities and processes:

No	Objectives	Activities 2014-2016	Goals
1.	To be a platform for exchange on matters of European policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and support new members in full and adherent categories • Regular online information exchange • Regular meetings and conferences 	<p>To be the recognized equality network on religion and belief (R&B) issues in the EU.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding by EU • Members from all member states, R/B/C groups • Contributions to EU policy discussions and consultations
2.	To be an advocate for freedom of religions, beliefs, convictions within European institutions with public opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to EU and civil society consultations, seminars etc • Effective media presence and plan • Public statements (Clear process -what, when, how) • Demonstrations on solidarity key R&B issues • Set priorities for and develop useful resources 	<p>To be a credible voice & resource on freedom, equality of R/B/C issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media presence with EU and public opinion • ENORB contributions to better implementation of existing R&B and Equalities legislation
3.	To campaign for peace & equality against discrimination and hate crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-planned campaigns, compatible with mission & resources • Publicity for local stories, facts and actions on non-discrimination • Policy recommendations based on local knowledge 	<p>To initiate and deliver successful ENORB-initiated campaigns influencing government, R&B hierarchies and the general public on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust and mutual understanding • Countering hate crime and discrimination
4.	To support initiatives promoting a culture of non-discrimination in member states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out examples of local member state initiatives through membership • Support, promote and increase visibility of actions online and in reports etc 	<p>To have close relationships with member and partner organizations in all member states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local initiatives identified and supported • ENORB gives European visibility to local initiatives
5.	To collaborate with other networks who share common values and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using expertise within ENORB's own network to maximum effect • Joint campaigns/projects with equalities networks - ILGA, ENAR, Equinet, etc 	<p>To ensure that R/B/C is a cross-strand with all equalities strands within a human rights framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing synergies, communication & mutual reinforcement with member and partner networks
6.	To provide open & safe spaces for engaging with difficult and controversial issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear Guidelines on principles and processes • Public seminars where people contribute experiences • Enclosed meetings to explore difficult or conflictual issues 	<p>To be the European provider of meetings, seminars and conferences of different types on R&B equalities and freedom issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good process modelled by ENORB

7.	To foster learning & share insights into creating inclusive religious and convictional diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in European research projects, networks • Capturing results from reports & articles • Circulating seminars, papers, reports from members and others 	<p>To be a European link between academic & community-based networks on R&B/equalities issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint projects initiated and delivered • ENORB findings and reports published • ENORB presence on university and research databanks
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ENORB Spheres of Influence



Competences Required

Knowledge

- Understanding of R&B issues and the constellation of the field
- EU legislation and policies
- Equality, anti-discrimination and interfaith networks constellation
- Academic developments, current research

Skills

- Partnership and coalition building
- Communications on and off-line
- Financial management
- Bookkeeping
- Grant-writing and reporting
- Facilitation and moderation
- Report writing and research
- Database management
- Media/Social Network Competence
- Campaigns and Publicity design/graphics

ENORB Roles and Responsibilities

Board/Executive Committee

- Makes Strategic decisions, discusses policy issues, and advises on operational matters where required,

- fundraising, retains organisational knowledge, reflects the values and mission of ENORB (Chairing and note-taking at Board meetings are carried out on a rotating basis)

- President - representative function towards politicians and media, partnerships, potential funders, record-keeping/meeting agendas (with Secretary),
- Vice-President - representative function as needed, support/replace president
- Secretary - supervision of website management, publicity and membership (including coordinating with Treasurer for collection of membership fees)
- Treasurer - Financial oversight, supervising bookkeeping and reporting, (inc. quarterly status reports and annual accounts), collection of membership fees

Support Team:

- Book-keeper:
 - To electronically record invoices, expenses and income for accounting purposes;
 - To provide electronic tri-monthly reports to the Executive Committee on current budget results;
 - To provide electronic end of year accounts with all supporting documents organised in hard copy folders in order to properly close the accounts
- Administrative support
 - To assist with database entry and management, event/bulletin mailings
 - To provide occasional logistical support as required

Membership

Includes the following categories:

- Effective Members: original signatories at Assemblée Constitutive
- Full Members: fee-paying, full members with voting rights
- Adhérents (Associates): non fee-paying with consultative participation at AGM, but without voting rights

Annual General Assembly

- is for Effective and Full Members, with Associate Members welcome to participate. The purpose is to approve annual report and accounts, elect Board members, and determine main policy directions going forward. Consensus is the goal, but if needed decisions are made by simple majority amongst full members.

Work Plan 2015

	admin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ongoing								
Participation in events & consultations (eg: Horizontal Directive)		x	x	x		x		
Getting reports on activities by all members	x	x						
Shared online calendar?	x	x						
Jan – March								
Executive Meeting	x	x						
Guidelines for seminars drafted	x	x					x	x
Joint seminar ILGA		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Religions for Peace event (March 20)					x	x		
National seminar UK				x	x	x	x	
Budget 2015 presented	x							
Database cleanup	x							
ENORB Bulletin mailing	x	x						x
April – June								
Executive Meeting	x							
National seminars planning (Romania, Slovenia, Berlin, Brussels, ?)				x	x	x		
Forgotten Women consultation roundtables						x		x
Communications Policy drafted	x	x						
July – September								
Executive Meeting	x							
Report OSF	x							
Membership strategy and fee scale defined	x							
National seminars				x	x	x		
October – December								
Executive Meeting	x							
Report Arcus	x							
EU Structural grant application	x							
National seminars					x	x		

Project Expenses

Personnel/Subcontracting		7,002	(7,002)
Local Seminars (8x500)		3,575	
Administration		275	
Travel and Accommodation		8,883	
Printing and Materials			
Other	-	19,735	(19,735)

Total Project Expenses

Total EXPENSES	-	21,055	(21,055)
NET INCOME	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!