



European Network on Religion & Belief

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ANNUAL REPORT to ENORB Assemblée Générale June 28th, 2018, on the year 2017

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1. BACKGROUND

ENORB is the 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, and was developed over 2010-11, by an Exploratory Group, drawn from a wide diversity of religious and humanist/atheist groups. The Assemblée Constitutive for the network was held in December 2011, and ENORB was registered as an ASBL May 2012. With no access to EU funding, ENORB has operated until 2017 with no paid staff, its work and projects having been managed and delivered, primarily on a voluntary basis, by officers and members of the ENORB board. But a successful application for an operational grant to the Open Society Foundation (OSF) in late 2017 will enable the organisation to provide a better ongoing service to members and the European Institutions from 2018 onwards.

ENORB's original mission, to combat discrimination and hate crime, 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 with the rise in hate crimes against refugees, and governments taking extreme positions, sometimes in contravention of EU human rights law in some parts of Europe. ENORB now has 45 full member organisations (membres effectifs), from 16 EU member states and over 150 associate members (membres adhérents). ENORB's current operations are carried out in implementation of a three-year strategic plan developed in 2015, and approved at the 2016 Assemblée Générale.

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The latter part of the year 2017 was a period of transition in preparation for the EU (DG Justice) Call for applications for four-year operational grants to EU Equalities Networks. ENORB made an application which was unsuccessful by a very small margin, but the OSF operational grant 2018-19 grant has allowed a partial implementation of the aims by enabling ENORB to move to an office base at 323, Rue du Progres, 1030 – Brussels, and to appoint a director, Kahina Rabahi (part-time, 3 days per week), deputy director, Florian Buhuneascu (part-time - project-funded), and an administrative officer, Beth Kenyon (also part-time – variable).

Our programme in 2016, in addition to our Brussels-based seminars and activities, has included a programme of seminars and events in member states, including Slovenia, Portugal, Spain, Croatia, Germany, Finland and Lithuania, which has been due to the continuing support of our donors, especially the Arcus foundation. Ten events were organised, on topics such as: Religion, Belief and LGBT rights; 'Women's Rights and Religious Values'; 'Traditional' Values, European Values and Human Rights.

ENORB's more extensive coverage and expanded programme of work has been recognised by both the European Commission and the Parliament, in invitations to our officers to speak and contribute to EU-level events. These have included tributes to our officers' pioneering work, on sometimes highly controversial topics, which we have undertaken. They have drawn on the experience of all our member organisations, including those from specific minority communities which have been under threat, as well as those from some EU member states where EU values and fundamental rights have been challenged, by some political parties, and also some religious authorities.

In 2017, we have also begun work on a capacity-building programme, focusing on improving the effectiveness of our organisation, advocacy and communications capacity, as well as extending our activities to a wider range of EU countries. A fuller review of our progress against the targets set in our last year's Work Programme can be found in Section 2 of this report, and below is a summary of our main activities over the past year:

- **Member Organisations** - As a result of this year's work programme at European level and in member states, we now have over 45 full member organisations, drawn from 16 member states, and over 150 associate members drawn from 25 member states as well as 4 candidate countries.
- **Targets** – We have again exceeded the main targets in our Annual Work Programme (See Section 2), and we hope to make a further complete a more ambitious programme, covering more member states in the next year, in the light of coming operational funding.
- **New Policy Priorities** – for 2017, the Board decided on two priorities: Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion; Interface between Equality for Women and Freedom of Religion and Belief; we continue to work on our previous priority of religion and LGBT rights through a funded project.
- **European Campaigns** – As well as our continued work on the EU's campaign against hate crimes against the Jewish and Muslim populations, ENORB has also contributed to the EU Campaign against violence against women through the EU VAWG group, and to the European and international campaign to support refugees from the war in Syria.
- **European Commission** – ENORB has been invited, along with the other EU Equalities Networks, following our contribution to the first EU Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, to further sessions. Our joint paper for the restarted European Council work with other Equality Networks on policy priorities for the revised draft of the EU Equal Treatment Directive was well received, but recent events, notably major terrorist attacks and the refugee crisis have stalled progress on this process at present.
- **European Seminars** – The following European level seminars were held in Brussels in 2016:
 - March – ENORB/ILGA Seminar: Equality and LGBT Rights;
 - May – AGM and workshop on: Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion or Belief;
 - December – Seminar: Tackling Refugee 'Crisis': the Role of Religion/Belief organisations;
 The invitation to ENORB speakers contributed to the third EU Fundamental Rights Colloquium, on Women's Rights in Turbulent Times led to the interest of several NGOs and National Equality Bodies in our coming programme on this topic in member states.
- **Member State Seminars** – The Arcus Foundation funding for the joint ENORB/ILGA programme on religion, belief and LGBT rights has enabled seminars and campaigning activities in another ten member states – including Slovenia, Portugal, Spain, Croatia, Germany, Finland and Lithuania, with further seminars taking place over 2018. Support has also been given to several continuing campaigns in member states which ENORB supported in the previous project on this topic.

New Programmes

We held exploratory meetings with EWL – European Women's Lobby (the EU Equality Network on Gender Issues) - to implement the decision of the ENORB AGM to make Religion, Belief and Women's Rights a priority area for 2016-17. These led to agreement to develop a joint programme, starting with an initial closed seminar for key members of both networks in Spring 2017. It is hoped that this will be followed up by a series of regional seminars in member states on this issue over 2017-18.

1.2. FUNDING, STAFFING AND FUTURE PLANS

ENORB's funding during 2016 was the highest ever and has supported the member states' seminar programme in addition to our European-level work. Our main planning target is to set up and launch operational partnerships with R&B organisations in a much larger number of member states – potentially 15-20 by the end of 2017, including some candidate states. But such a programme is stretching our existing organisational capacity to the limit (ie using our current model of delivery by (primarily voluntary) board officers and members for management and delivery of projects, with some part-time administrative support. In our 2015-16 Annual Work Programme we included an objective to improve our management and communication capacity, and our funding for 2017

incorporates a small contribution towards planning an organisational development programme targeting these areas. We have also used part of our 2016-17 resources to fund our first long-term contracted staff member – a Development Officer with responsibility for project development and funding, thus taking a first step towards full operational capacity, if EU 4 year operational funding for 2018-21 is forthcoming.

If our EU application is not successful, our current practice of maximising ENORB's impact through voluntary officers and increased project funding, will continue, with improved service to member state organisations and networks as set out in our Strategic Plan, (see Annex 2 to this report). In addition to delivering the outputs for our funded projects, we will also support member state organisations to build more effective national structures for interfaith and inter-convictional dialogue. The aim is to develop in member states the same level of campaigning action to implement EU Equality directives and national anti-discrimination law on religion and belief, as is available for the other five strands of European Equality and Non-Discrimination policy (ie race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation).

2. REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST 2016 WORK PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

2.0 STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

For each year from 2012-2016 we have set annual objectives in Annual Work Programmes, revised each year on the basis of decisions taken at the ENORB AGM. With the introduction of our Three-Year Strategic Plan (2016-2018), we have a new set of strategic and operational objectives and outputs, designed to enable to meet the requirements of the application for EU Operational Funding. These are set out in the diagram in section 4.2 on pages 9-10.

2.1 OBJECTIVE 1 – ORGANISATION AND MEMBERSHIP

- (i)** To hold regular meetings of ENORB's Board/Executive Committee and increase active members and partnerships in member states through local/national events and Partnerships
- (ii)** To build ENORB's management and organisational capacity in order to manage larger projects, and improve its visibility, policy advice/impact at European and member state levels
- (iii)** To improve ENORB's capacity and skills in communications and advocacy in order to provide a better service to members and partners

Targets:

- 3-4 Board Meetings (including AGM)
- 10 member-state or regional meetings (if project funding is secured)
- Members/contact points in all EU member states and 3 candidate countries

Progress: Targets achieved:

- 4 board meetings,
 - 10 member state events.
- Full members, adherents or contact points now established in all member states, two non-EU states (Norway and Switzerland) and three candidate states Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia
- Strategic Review initiated.
- Organisational Development Programme planned under OSF grant.

2.2 OBJECTIVE 2 – BUILDING ENORB'S PARTNERSHIPS WITH EU EQUALITIES AND OTHER NETWORKS

- (i)** To develop the collaboration with ILGA to undertake joint action at EU and member state levels
- (ii)** To develop the partnership with ENAR and EWL to improve the European context for manifesting religion or belief, especially relating to religious symbols and clothing, and in relation to women and women's rights

Targets achieved:

- ILGA: report on ENORB/ILGA programme: seminar
- ENAR: inputs to seminars, collaboration on Forgotten Women programme and policy documents
- EWL: joint seminar held, framework for joint project activities developed, European seminar planned for June 2018

Progress:

- Equality Networks Group: ENORB participation in meetings of EU Equality Networks on the Draft Equal Treatment Directive and in DGJ Fundamental Rights Workshop
- EQUINET: speakers at Equinet Annual and specialist Conferences, Participation in EU Coalition on Violence Against Women (VAWG)
- ENORB/ILGA: joint seminar for 40 people held in Brussels; completed, and initial plans for local seminars held successfully
- ENORB/ENAR: collaborated on policy documents; continued collaboration on 'Forgotten Women' working group and other linked activities
- EWL: Joint seminar with EWL on Women's rights and Religion/Belief – ENORB contribution to VAWG

2.3 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, and against discrimination and hate crime on grounds of religion or belief.

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 has supported anti-discrimination/hate-crime actions in 7 member states: Italy, Germany, UK, Sweden, France, Greece, Slovenia
- ENORB has participated in 5 member state events: UK, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Belgium
- ENORB/ILGA seminars in 8 member states: Croatia, Bosnia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain, Lithuania, UK.

2.4 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 support the development of partnerships and hold seminars/events on locally relevant issues in member states.

Target:

- 2-3 European seminars
- 10 Member state partnerships and events (if funding is confirmed)

Progress: Target Achieved:

- European seminars held on the Refugee Crisis: Faith Communities Contribution to Integration Activities; Priorities for European Interfaith/Interconvictional Policy Action
- Joint working group set up with ILGA on religion and Women's Rights; participation in Forgotten Women Working Group (ENAR); workshops held on European strategy on R&B and LGBT rights;
- Member state seminars held in 8 member states (see above)

2.5 OBJECTIVE 5 – MAPPING EXERCISE ON RELIGION AND BELIEF ORGANISATIONS

- (i) To produce (or commission) brief reports on the R&B context in member states (NB only feasible if DG Justice Action Grant application is successful)

Progress: Partially achieved through information gathered as part of preparation for member state seminars

2.6 OBJECTIVE 6 – CONTRIBUTING TO POLICY-RELATED DISCUSSIONS

- (i)** To contribute to EU policy discussions through reports, responses, meetings 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:

- ENORB's reports on seminars to members on website and online; also supplied to European Commission and Parliament contacts
- ENORB participation in 4-5 events at European level

Progress: Targets achieved

- 2 reports written and distributed, also two ENORB bulletins produced
 - ENORB participated and/or spoke at DG Justice annual seminar, Equinet annual seminar, and at European seminars organised by ECRL, ENAR, ILGA, HRWF, IARF, ECF and OSF in addition to regular participation in EU parliament and other EU institutions' events.

3. ENORB's BROADER ACTIVITIES

3.1 IDENTIFYING EXISTING INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORTING ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

Unlike the other five key EU human rights priorities, religion/belief does not have the pre-existing base of member organisations, either interfaith or human rights activists in this field. So a primary objective for ENORB is to contribute to the development of national Religion and Belief organisations. This will assist both the Europe-wide struggle for equalities and against discrimination and hate-crime, and local action in key issue, including through ENORB's role in facilitating exchanges of expertise between different countries. Through the ENORB/ILGA programme and ENORB's own member state seminars it has been possible to involve experts from many countries, notably Lithuania, Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, France and UK, in supporting activities and campaigns in other member states with less developed experience in interfaith or inter-convictional activities.

3.2 MECHANISMS TO MONITOR EQUALITIES/DISCRIMINATION

ENORB does not yet have the central capacity to monitor and record discrimination across all EU member states on grounds of religion or belief, nor to respond to all local breaches of fundamental rights or hate-crimes, except by offering support when we are approached by local groups major events in European cities (eg Paris, Brussels, London). But ENORB's capacity to offer such support will be increased with our new Strategic Plan and Organisational Development Programme.

Many of our partner and member organisations are involved in this work in member-states, and ENORB officers have worked with several member organisations to develop capacity at member-state level. The member state seminars have enabled ENORB to support local efforts to set up interfaith or inter-convictional structures in several member states in 2017.

3.3 EXPLORATORY WORK WITH OTHER EQUALITIES NETWORKS

In addition to joint collaborative work with ENAR and ILGA, in 2016 we have participated in joint meetings of Equalities Networks with the European Commission and DG Justice, and in the preparation of joint statements and working papers with Equality Networks and other partners (eg VAWG Coalition), as well as reports of our joint activities.

3.4 EXCHANGES OF EXPERIENCE AND INTER-FAITH/BELIEF ACTIVITIES BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS ACROSS EUROPE

As part of ENORB Seminars and though the AGM 2017, networking and exchange sessions were held at which some 30 organisations came together to exchange experience in tackling hate crime and discrimination. ENORB also contributed a workshop to the URI European Assembly in April, and facilitated an exchange programme between the Swedish Interfaith Council and UK Interfaith Networks. Further exchanges have taken place for seminars in Spain and Slovenia.

3.5 CONCEPTUAL MAPPING

This is an important method by which the ‘mutual understanding’ component of ENORB’s primary aims is being addressed. Discussions and dialogue on several topics of current moral and political concern have been held in ENORB’s seminars and in less formal settings, with a view to helping to identify the values shared across religions and non-religious philosophies. Concepts such as Anti-semiticism and Islamophobia, European and ‘traditional values’, gender and identity have been discussed, sometimes on the basis of written papers, but usually less formally.

Recent topics have included equality issues where there are a variety of views such as hate speech, sexual orientation, family values, freedom to wear religious symbols, women’s rights. The seminars in member states have promised opportunities for local priority issues to be identified and preliminary discussions to be held, which will form the basis for future discussions

4. ENORB'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Key actions have been:

- ENORB Board meetings to plan the implementation of the operational funding grant 2018-19 from OSF, and to firm up on strategic and operational priorities for the, and to set in motion the transition process towards ENORB’s future status, hopefully as a fully operational member of the EU Equality Networks.
- ENORB officers started in 2017 the processes:
 - Finding an office base for ENORB’s future operations
 - Setting up and initiating a transparent recruitment process for the staff members: Director, Deputy Director, Administration and Finance Officer
- ENORB officers to make contact with EU/DG Justice officers to ensure we meet their criteria for an EU Equalities Network.

4.1 PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR ENORB’S 4 YEAR OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

The diagram below gives a summary of our strategic and operational objectives, expected outputs, and deliverables for the programme. It was prepared for our application for EU operational funding, and will be subject to annual refining and updating in accordance with the resources available, and the changing European context in this vitally important field. If EU operational funding is not available, the programme will be modified in line with the annual budgets available for each year.

4.2 NEW 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FROM 2018

This will be undertaken by the board and staff towards the end of 2018 when the new director has been in post a sufficient length of time to contribute fully to this process. The summary of the current strategic plan is set out below in diagrammatic form.

Objectives	Main Activities	Expected Results	Outputs
To be a platform for exchange on matters of European policy on freedom of religion, belief and non-discrimination	<p>Management of human resources, logistics, finance, fundraising and ongoing strategic planning process.</p> <p>Network development programme to increase the network's coverage and impact across Europe by recruiting new members and giving European visibility to their initiatives and campaigns</p> <p>Organisational development programme to strengthen the network's capacity, coverage and impact through more effective increased and membership organisations</p> <p>Ongoing contributions to EU Commission and Parliamentary consultations, intergroups, events and EU civil society seminars to support better implementation of EU Equality Law.</p>	<p>Improved operational effectiveness of ENORB and member organisations' leading to greater impact across Europe.</p> <p>Increased awareness and better implementation of EU Equality law on discrimination etc across Europe.</p> <p>Increased knowledge of local R&B contexts and priorities across Europe by EU Parliament and institutions.</p>	<p>1 Office running with professional staff in place</p> <p>Members in all 28 member states</p> <p>4 Annual Reports</p> <p>16 Country reports from member states</p> <p>8 European seminars on key R&B topics</p> <p>8 reports from ENORB seminars</p> <p>4 analytical papers on current major issues providing policy recommendations</p>
To be an advocate for freedom of religions, beliefs, convictions within European institutions, and with public opinion	<p>Training trainers programme to build advocacy capacity of ENORB and members on EU law on discrimination, hate crime, freedom of religion/belief etc, in workplaces and the public space.</p> <p>Advocacy actions across Europe on religion and belief issues, especially for R&B minorities, victims and potential victims of hate crime.</p>	<p>Improved awareness of EU law at European and member state levels, leading to improved implementation by governments, religious organisations, and employers.</p> <p>Better support (including legal advice) available to victims, minorities.</p>	<p>12 ENORB contributions to EU-level activities in EU institutions</p> <p>20 advocacy meetings/ actions by member organisations with ENORB support where required</p>
To campaign for peace & equality against discrimination and hate crime	<p>Europe-wide campaigns on thematic annual priorities decided by ENORB Assemblée Générale, eg anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred.</p> <p>Media strategy and dissemination programme to deliver ongoing public communications through press, printed and social media.</p>	<p>Greater public awareness of key R&B issues leading improved mutual understanding and social peace.</p> <p>Increased press, printed and social media input on religion and belief issues.</p>	<p>4 ENORB European campaigns on annual priority themes</p>
To support initiatives promoting a culture of non-discrimination in member states	<p>Support for members' campaigns on key R&B issues to implement anti-discrimination policy and practice in public, private and religion/belief organisations</p> <p>Support to development of interfaith/inter-convictional structures in all member states to promote mutual understanding and public appreciation of Europe's religion and belief diversity</p>	<p>Increased mutual understanding among religion/belief groups, through more and effective member state interfaith/ interconvictional structures organising regular events/campaigns</p>	<p>Preliminary visits and launch meetings in 28 member states</p> <p>40 projects by member organisations with ENORB support</p> <p>20 Seminars/events in member states on key R&B issues</p> <p>20 Local campaigns in member states on key R&B issues</p>
To collaborate with other networks who share common values and	<p>Joint campaigns/projects on intersectional issues, eg Women's and LGBT rights, with Equalities and other networks</p>	<p>Greater public understanding of key intersectional issues leading to reductions in homophobia, violence against women</p>	<p>Page 9 of 10 European campaigns on key intersectional themes</p>

