

Evaluation from the Questionnaires of Working Groups (WG) and Networks for the 5th EL Congress

The working groups and networks are essential to produce consensus and to concretize a lot of our ideas, bring together the EL member parties on the basis of a common activity and give substance to our relations with friendly organizations from other countries. These are pooling and sharing spaces.

Better knowledge of their activities and facilitating the exchange between these groups can enrich our experience. A WG has its value if we give files to the parties and specific action, coherent with the subjects and the general strategy of PGE, but also if we have links with the MEPs.

1. How the EL WGs and networks work

The working methods are different:

Annual Work Plan, consultations by email, division of tasks, updates and alerts on current issues; Collective work directly related to the officials who organize most of the work for meetings; The more "modern" groups communicate via mobile telegram, Facebook groups, mailing list and Messenger, Dropbox to share photos, videos and Flickr.

Some WG activities are directly linked to the decisions taken by the Executive Board, especially regarding specific events to increase the participation and to allow the diffusion of these activities through the most important channels, and to connect it to campaigns already launched. Others organize conferences or meetings themselves.

The **networks** are coordinated by the coordination group. Different from the Trade Unionists network, EL FEM and Culture have people that connect with the Executive Board.

2. Evaluation

A modification of the current configuration of WGs and networks is taken into account while estimating the major problem as the lack of interest of the EL member parties for some questions, which leads to a lack of parties' representatives to take part in the WG. The aim of the WG is precisely to increase this interest and to solicit a more serious commitment on the part of several parties.

Written or digital materials that have been produced are:

Documents and motions for the Congress; Communication to the Executive Board and press releases; Stance and support for actions of the parties in their countries; Questionnaire to the parties and texts and publications after lectures; Argument for the Citizens' Initiative; European Manifesto, information or communication materials (flyers, brochures); Newsletter and insertions in the Website page; Photos and posters; Media coverage of events.

The active geographical WGs organized, in partnership with the political forces of the areas concerned, seminars and round-tables. Our partners also participated in information tours and public meetings at the invitation of the WG. International WGs have relationships with parties or regional forums, bilateral relations, regular participation in initiatives organized by partners, etc.

The EL Secretariat, regarding the WGs, undertakes an important administrative work with a commitment that is visible. The experience of always having the same person who works in Brussels and handles WGs is regarded positively: this facilitates communication and the relationship with the responsible bodies of the Secretariat. WGs and networks have the political, material and financial EL support for activities. The support received by the EL, in practice, comes primarily from the Brussels Office. Through the parties there is also a provision of venues, and a more political support.

3. Evolution

Establishing a form of connection between WG working on international topics, on public services, migration, etc. is very interesting and desirable, even indispensable. Some ideas of connection may be: Migration-Middle East - Africa; Education – Public Services - Culture - migration. Some fundamental

subjects such as women, the TTIP, the environment and migration should be revived through groups; stronger links between Western and Eastern Europe are desired.

An undeniable potential for improvement exists: parties shall deliver efforts so as they could all be represented in the working groups, allow the extension of the WGs and networks to include more activists outside of parties and to countries where the EL is not represented. For example, for groups linked to international politics, we have to have guest(s) from other countries depending on the political situation. It would be very important to have a reference contact with other WGs through their coordinators.

On the side of the Secretariat, a procedure for cooperation among WGs would be expected, as a more responsive and appropriate support of the organizational and logistical aspects for the event organization for example. It should also be a clear and transparent procedure: the WGs should be able to know reliably, about what they can decide on their own and those for where the secretariat is making decisions.

It would be necessary to initiate a discussion on the shape of EL “network”. Existing networks are not sufficiently effective to produce political convergence and undertake common campaigns.

4. Communication

To facilitate the EL communication, all WGs should get used to communicate their views, positions based on European political issues so we can distribute it widely.

The documents and the WGs' and networks' activities should always be accessible on the EL web page.

It would be interesting to get regular information by members of the European Parliament, EL members, on developments concerning the interested subjects.

It could be very productive to have a meeting between the Communication WG and other WG Coordinators.