

President introduction

Dear all,

It is a pleasure to present to you the 2015 annual report of EFIN. Some specific means have given to EFIN this years the opportunity to increase significantly its visibility. This one has concretely took the form of participation to different EU Conferences dedicated to financial inclusion. Thanks to this investment, EFIN, as a Brussels based institution, has consolidated and increased the capital acquired from the 2014 December conference.

Unfortunately, the supports received this year won't be available in 2016, reason why a strategic brainstorming meeting for EFIN future took place on 7 December to bring ideas for the management committee (MC). In January 2016, the MC will be able to propose to the members to support a rather ambitious plan... but all this is about 2016.....

When going back to 2015 and based on the one hand on various activities and contacts with stakeholders active in Brussels, who are dealing with the EU Commission, and, on the second hand, based on the 7 December brainstorming meeting with a set of EFIN members... my current understanding and vision is the following:

- **Financial inclusion is Not a Top list topic on the priorities of the current EU Commission**
 - From this statement, we are considering essential to build a large coalition at EU level with the various EU Networks that are dealing with financial inclusion as a transversal matter (social exclusion, over-indebtedness, consumers, migrants, ...): To achieve this, EFIN will maintain and develop such contacts and collaboration to consolidate this strategy (Finance Watch, Social Platform, COFACE,...);
- **To become or not to become a pure lobby group?**
 - This open question will have to find an answer in the following months, years. Indeed, EFIN as such is not a simple federation, its members are from different types, and often are already represented at EU level by their own federation;
 - EFIN is therefore a coalition where these different type of members are able to meet and exchange knowledge and views to design consensual approach to solve identified issues. This activity is not a "lobby" one, but can contribute to consolidate and reinforce members' lobby at EU and national levels;
 - EFIN added value in EU lobbying is to identify and promote the shared positions of its members, to bring light on the specificities and positive impacts on financial inclusion such positions integrate, to underline the systemic positive impact of them;
 - To do so, EFIN has to consolidate and professionalise its EU Commission activities reporting for its members, and support them to digest the information and to elaborate strategies and facilitate contacts with EU representative;

- To do so, EFIN has to consolidate its internal dynamic via the identification of "strategic topics" from members and animation of working groups between interested ones;
- To do so, EFIN should keep what has originated its creation: the will of better understanding, to share research and knowledge on financial inclusion: this is not, as such, a pure lobby activity, but it is part of its genes.
- These elements translate the strong belief in EFIN specificity and originality in the Brussels environment. Then, in order to support and look for a development that will protect this research side represent the most exciting challenge for the coming months. This is definitely the way EFIN will be able to develop its activities and to keep its independence. This is clearly not an easy way, but it is the only one to reconcile the origin and the future of the network.

EFIN Working groups' activities

In order to complete the work started during the December 2014 EFIN Conference, the following working groups have been created to contribute to papers from which an EFIN position will be proposed to the General assembly. The contribution from the WG participants have been collected and the final 3 papers (2 have been merged) can be considered as completed. The remaining task is to build up the conclusions / recommendations and to make them circulate for an institutional validation. It was not possible for the WG participants to achieve this second phase during 2015, so this one will be finalised ideally during the first semester of 2016.

- **Unfair lending practices and toxic loans** : coordination by A. Fily
 - contributors : Farid Aliyev (BEUC), N. Lilienthal (ESBG), I. Balkanska (professor-BG)
- **Early financial difficulties detection (merge with) Best practices for solution oriented treatment of financial difficulties** : coordination by O. Jérusalmy
 - contributors : I. Balkanska (professor-BG), D. Gillet (Parcours Confiance-FR), O. Jérusalmy (EFIN-EU) N. Lilienthal (ESBG-EU), N. Sasnouskaya (EFIN-BE), J. Siebolds (City of Amsterdam-NL), T. Tedd (Local Authority representative-UK), F. Tocqué (UNAF-FR)
- **EU based indicators** : coordination by J. Pitkowska
 - **contributors** : O. Jérusalmy, J. Pitkowska, Beata Świecka, Sarah Carpentier

Mission :

Each working group is based on voluntary involvement of members and some potential external stakeholders. The work achieved will be based on every members capacity to invest some time in documenting the topic. Meetings will be fixed via doodle agenda, and held on skype, to limit costs and mobility). The output of each WGs is to finalise a short article to present the main learnings/ knowledge used, and to summarized on a bullet point format sound recommendations. This paper should address the relevant authorities and or stakeholders (EU, National, Regional level - Private, Public authorities, NGO,...).

EFIN up-dated and completed members repertoire

Nadia, EFIN intern from September to December 2015 has finalised an up-dated and detailed members list presentation

EFIN's participations on EU events

« Accessible and Fair Financial services : alternatives to mainstream banking » 11-12 May, Madrid

COFACE in partnership with EFIN



EFIN has presented the main results of the CAPIC program (Personal Micro-credit actions).

« Shaping the consumer policy of the future » : 1-2 June 2015, Brussels

EU Commission, DG Justice and Consumers

EFIN participates as speaker in the Seminar 4 « Over-indebtedness – the role of debt advice » and presented a systemic approach to identify the bases to build a collaborative approach between stakeholders

« Marginalisation and exclusion network meeting »

Organised by EURODIACONIA, 15th September, London

EFIN has presented a global view on debt counselling and the potential role of credit restructuring

« What role can microfinance play in Europe in the era of austerity ? »



Co-organised by UCD Geary Institute for Public Policy, COMPTRESEC, University of Bordeaux, EFIN,... 28th & 29th October, Bordeaux

EFIN presented the « Impact of European Micro-Saving :: results from the SIMS project » in the plenary session 1 : « Microfinance in Europe : what results for households ? » and chaired the plenary session 4 : « Implementing a programme which delivers »

European Microfinance Week 2015 - Financial Inclusion for Sustainable Development

Organised by the European Microfinance Platform and the European Microfinance Network, 19th November, Luxembourg

EFIN took part to the workshop « Does financial inclusion foster financial stability ? ». The presentation underlined the role of the quality of the credit portfolio and the stability of the financial institution, on the one hand, and on the stability of the consumers situation, on the second hand.

Other participations to meetings,...

- 9 March : The EU Money Week, organised by the European Bank Federation
The main topic was the financial education of the young people.
- 12 March : Invited by EUROFINAS (EU network of non banking credit providers), to present EFIN views on over-indebtedness and toxic products.
- 17 March : EU stakeholders platform, organised by the Network Building Coordinator for the EU reference budgets project.
- 16 April : EU Parliament : Credit Union interest group meeting

- *21-22 April : Seminar on Abusive lending practices organised by the Open Society Foundation, Barcelona (represented by Anne Fily)*
- *24 June : European banking Federation meeting on EFIN working groups activities*
- *16 October : Preventing housing evictions in the European Union – data and best practices, an European seminar presenting results of the EU study on "Promoting protection of the right to housing – Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions"*
- *19 October : official opening of the First European Microfinance Day ; « What if could turn job seekers into job creators ? », organised by the EESC, EMN, MFC.*
- *23 October : « World savings day 2015 - Converting savings into jobs and growth», organised by ESBG*
- *November & December : various informal meetings with Finance Watch team to brainstorm on potential collaboration on advocacy and funding activities.*

EFIN Newsletters

EFIN has published **4 newsletters during the 2015**, available on the website.

EFIN's Management Agenda 2015

Management Committee meetings

Participants : R. Alström (Malmö Univ.- SE), A. Fall (ACAF-SP), A. Fily (BEUC - EU), M. Iwanicz-D (Prof. Warsaw School of Economics), O. Jérusalmy (Réseau Financité - BE), F. Tocqué (UNAF - FR)

8 meetings – 26 Feb, 26 Mar, 29 Apr, 20 May, 2 Jul, 25 Aug, 30 Sep, 3 Nov

General Assembly (written procedure) : during June 2015

EFIN brainstorming meeting : 7 December (report sent to members on 14 December)

Participants list : A. Fall (ACAF - SP), A. Fily (BEUC - EU), M. Pekkip (Crésus - FR), S. Carpentier (researcher - BE), O. Jérusalmy (Réseau Financité - BE) - G. Wilmink (NIBUD - NL) + J. Murray (EU Commission expert)

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