

# DRAFT WORK PLAN



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## INTRODUCTION

**Bringing the network into a new decade.** 2020 is a year of turning points for Equinet and equality in Europe. A new European Parliament has been elected and a new Commission has been put together, bringing new opportunities, particularly in the nomination of a Commissioner solely focused on equality. During the year, Equinet will pursue its work on values-based messaging to promote the appreciation of equality and diversity as core values in Europe, and share the knowledge and learning from the work of equality bodies extensively with these new leaders and decision-makers to advance equality in Europe.

2020 sees the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Race Equality Directive 2000/43/EC. To feed into the evaluation of its implementation, Equinet will organize a conference to celebrate the stipulation of equality bodies in EU law in 2000 and discuss the potential, achievements and challenges of equality bodies over the past 20 years. The conference will also address the standards for equality bodies developed by the European Commission in its 2018 Recommendation, and those provided in the revised General Policy Recommendation No. 2 produced by the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe in 2017. These standards are one of the most positive developments for equality bodies in recent years. Equinet's project on standards for equality bodies will focus on how to support their implementation, in order to help national equality bodies reach their full potential as champions of equality in Europe.

2020 also marks the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Equinet. Equinet is working towards an increasingly resilient, engaged and innovative Network. With the introduction of a new membership and network development officer role, we will reinforce our engagement with members, improve internal communication and support, as well as provide more targeted information about the work of equality bodies to relevant audiences.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was set out in 2015. By 2020, five years have passed since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the UN General Assembly, and although some progresses have been noted, many of the targets are not set to be reached before the deadline. The work of equality bodies can have a substantive impact in accelerating the process, and as the SDGs are gaining more importance in Europe, Equinet and its members will seize this momentum to assert their potential in advancing the 2030 agenda. Equality bodies have, since their creation, actively contributed in reducing inequalities, and hold the tools to both support the implementation of the SDGs and monitor their progress in European countries. Equinet will work to assist equality bodies' work on SDGs and strengthen their capacity in leading European countries towards their achievement.

2020 evokes the perfect academic grade, 20/20. It is a score that Equinet hopes to see Europe acquire on equality issues. To work towards an equal Europe, we need to make sure discriminated groups are not considered mutually exclusive. Although equality bodies can have diverse mandates, covering different grounds, it is important to take into account the ways they intersect in order to support policy and legal improvements suited for the specific needs of groups victims of multiple, intersecting grounds of discrimination. Therefore, in 2020, although this Workplan has adopted a ground-based approach, Equinet will continue to apply the lens of intersectionality throughout its work.

As we enter into this new decade, with a new European Commission and a new European Parliament, we continue to make central, through strengthened cooperation, the values we hold dear as a Network – respect, equality and justice. Together we can achieve equality for all.

**Tena Šimonović Einwalter**

Chair of Equinet Board



**Anne Gaspard**

Equinet Executive Director



## OVERVIEW OF EQUINET ACTIVITIES 2020

| AREAS OF WORK                   | TOPICS   | OUTPUTS   |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| <b><u>Horizontal Issues</u></b> | <b>Implementing European Standards for Equality Bodies</b>                         | 2 meetings of <b>Project on Standards</b><br>1 conference<br>Indicators |
|                                 | <b>Promoting a strong and comprehensive legal framework for equality in Europe</b> | 1 roundtable discussion   |
|                                 | <b>European Equality Policies</b>  | Engagement and contribution   |
|                                 | <b>Equality Data</b>   | 2 meetings of <b>Working Group on Research and Data Collection</b>      |
|                                 | <b>Artificial Intelligence and Equality</b>  | 1 training event  |
|                                 | <b>Monitoring discrimination cases at the European Court of Human Rights</b>       | Monitoring carried out by <b>Working Group on Equality Law</b>          |
|                                 | <b>Policy contribution to relevant European developments</b>                       | 1 meeting of <b>Working Group on Policy Formation</b><br>1 publication  |
|                                 | <b>Supporting equality bodies' interaction with UN mechanisms</b>                  | 1 webinar   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b><u>Age</u></b>                                  | <b>Engaging young people on equality</b>   | 2 meetings of <b>Working Group on Communication Practices and Strategies</b><br><br>1 Communication Handbook |
| <b><u>Disability</u></b>                           | <b>Ensuring the implementation of existing rights of people with disabilities</b>                  | 2 meetings of <b>Working Group on Equality Law</b>   |
| <b><u>Gender</u></b>                               | <b>Engaging a reflection on women in poverty from an intersectional perspective</b>                | 1 roundtable discussion<br><br>1 publication<br><br>1 meeting of <b>Working Group on Gender Equality</b>     |
| <b><u>Race and Ethnic Origin</u></b>               | <b>Tackling antigypsyism and working for Roma equality</b>   | 1 meeting of <b>Working Group on Policy Formation</b><br><br>1 report  |
| <b><u>Religion and Belief</u></b>                  | <b>Tackling discrimination and intolerance against Muslims</b>                                     | 1 Workshop   |
| <b><u>Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity</u></b> | <b>Building capacities of equality bodies on rights and equality of trans and intersex persons</b> | 1 seminar<br><br>1 meeting of <b>Working Group on Gender Equality</b>  |
| <b><u>Other Grounds</u></b>                        | <b>Freedom of Movement of EU workers</b>   | 1 meeting of the <b>Cluster on Freedom of Movement of EU Workers</b>   |

## EQUINET STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2022

The Equinet Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022 builds upon our past achievements, and gives expression to our ambition during that period, considering the changing societal, political and policy environment in relation to the equality and equal treatment sector in Europe.

For the next years, Equinet has defined a set of action areas under the Strategic Plan objectives, as follows:

### **A. STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EQUALITY BODIES TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY FOR ALL**

1. Supporting the understanding, implementation and monitoring of European standards for equality bodies at European and Member State level;
2. Strengthening institutional capacity of equality bodies by offering guidance and opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer support systems;
3. Building the capacity of equality body staff by providing space for peer exchange, learning, information sharing and development of expertise;
4. Building the capacity of equality bodies to increase their visibility by raising awareness about their work, understanding of their role and functions, recognition and appreciation of their potential at European and Member State level.

### **B. ACT AS THE EXPERT VOICE OF EQUALITY BODIES TO ADVANCE EQUALITY IN EUROPE**

1. Identifying, researching and analysing emerging challenges and opportunities in the field of equality and non-discrimination;
2. Conveying the expert voice of equality bodies at European and international level;
3. Being a research and knowledge hub for the work and contribution of equality bodies, while further generating and disseminating knowledge on equality and non-discrimination;
4. Strengthening cooperation with all relevant stakeholders at European level and acting as a focal point for building shared perspectives and generating new thinking on equality and non-discrimination.

### **C. SUSTAIN A RESILIENT, ENGAGED AND INNOVATIVE NETWORK**

1. Remaining relevant to the diversity of our membership and their staff, across the different combinations of functions and/or mandates held by equality bodies;
2. Strengthening our governance through transparency, inclusion, and increased Board capacity;
3. Sustaining active membership communication and engagement through a variety of innovative communication tools;
4. Ensuring sustainability of funding through securing a core grant and seeking diversification;
5. Putting in practice better monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.



## OUR APPROACH



### Support

We provide capacity-building activities with and for equality body staff, as well as offer support to equality bodies in need of solidarity, including because of undue challenges to their independence or effectiveness.



### Networking

We encourage and facilitate knowledge exchange, sharing of good practices and peer-to-peer support among equality bodies, as well as with equality stakeholders at European and international level.



### Research & Knowledge Hub

We carry out legal and policy research to inform European policy and legislative developments, and provide relevant knowledge to those interested in equality and non-discrimination in Europe.



### Expert Advice

We contribute to the European equality agenda by offering expert advice on equality and non-discrimination policy and legislation, based on the experience of equality bodies.



### Promotion

We promote equality as a European value and seek to advance diversity and solidarity in Europe

## INDICATIVE CALENDAR 2020

| KEY ACTIVITY  | DATES       |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Annual General Meeting</b>                         | October?    |
| <b>Board meetings I</b>                               | Q1          |
| <b>Board meetings II</b>                              | Q2          |
| <b>Board meetings III</b>                             | Q3          |
| <b>Board meetings IV</b>                              | Q4          |
| Communication <b>Working Group I</b>                  | March/April |
| Communication <b>Working Group II</b>                 | Sept/Oct    |
| Equality Law <b>Working Group I</b>                   | Q1/2        |
| Equality Law <b>Working Group II</b>                  | Q3/4        |
| Policy Formation <b>Working Group I</b>               | Q1/2        |
| Policy Formation <b>Working Group II</b>              | Q3/4        |
| Gender Equality <b>Working Group I</b>                | April       |
| <b>Seminar: Capacity Building on LGBTI</b>            | November    |
| Gender Equality <b>Working Group II</b>               | Q3/4        |
| Roundtable Discussion on Women in Poverty             | April       |
| Research and Data Collection <b>Working Group I</b>   | Q1/2        |
| Research and Data Collection <b>Working Group II</b>  | Q3/4        |
| <b>Cluster</b> on freedom of movement I               |             |
| <b>Roundtable Discussion: EC Equality Legislation</b> | (with AGM)  |
| <b>Training: Artificial Intelligence and Equality</b> | June        |
| <b>Workshop: Combating Anti-Muslim hatred</b>         | March       |
| <b>Project: Standards for Equality Bodies I</b>       | Q1          |
| <b>Project: Standards for Equality Bodies II</b>      | Q3          |
| <b>Conference: Standards</b>                          | 30 June?    |

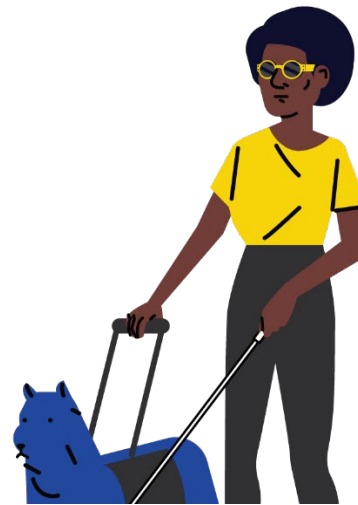
Q1 (January-March)

Q2 (April-June)

Q3 (July-September)

Q4 (October-December)

## DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES 2020



### *Area of Work: Horizontal Issues*



#### **Implementing European Standards for Equality Bodies**

Equinet will continue its project aiming to support the understanding, implementation and monitoring of European standards for equality bodies at European and Member State level. The project will rely on and discuss both the European Commission and the ECRI standards. Project participants will discuss:

- How standards can be used to guarantee independent, effective and accessible equality bodies;
- How equality bodies, together with European and international organisations, can support Member States in the implementation of standards;
- The best ways to monitor the implementation of standards, including the development of indicators for their different elements;
- The changes and safeguards equality bodies themselves need to put in place to ensure their operations are in compliance with standards;
- The best ways to provide peer support to equality bodies experiencing external challenges to their work or position

#### *Expected outputs:*

- One conference organised jointly with the European Commission around the topic of ‘20 years of equality bodies’, with the participation of 45 equality body representatives, EU institutions and other relevant stakeholders to celebrate the stipulation of equality bodies in EU law in 2000 and display equality bodies as ‘EU good practice’, discussing also their potential, achievements and challenges;
- Two project meetings in 2020, each bringing together 25 participants and lasting for 1.5 days, including a study visit to an equality body;

- Development of indicators for certain elements of the standards;
- Development of communication tools on equality bodies towards appropriate target audiences to enhance support for equality bodies and the need for implementing standards;
- Provision of peer support to equality bodies experiencing external challenges to their work or position, as necessary

*Expected outcomes:*

This project will contribute to strengthening the position and standing of equality bodies to advance and achieve equality for all.

### **Strategic Objective A**

### **Strategic Objective B**

## **Promoting a strong and comprehensive legal framework for equality in Europe**

Equality bodies, as specialised state institutions promoting equality and combatting discrimination, have built up a vast experience and expertise concerning the EU legal framework for equality that can help increasing the effectiveness of legislation and identifying gaps in protection, including supporting the equality work of the new European Commission and European Parliament.

Equinet will use this expertise to contribute to discussions concerning the EU legal framework for equality and its implementation as appropriate, including advancing the discussions on the adoption of the Horizontal Directive. In particular, Equinet will use and promote its report prepared in 2019 on the implementation of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) to call the attention of policy-makers and legislators to the potential areas of improving the implementation of these directives.

*Expected outputs:*

- One roundtable discussion for around 10 equality bodies with representatives of the EU institutions and civil society to assess the current state of the EU legal framework for equality and to identify ways of improving it. The roundtable discussion will also be used to identify possible actions and allies for work on this beyond 2020

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field is expected to increase the awareness of EU institutions about the gaps and issues of the EU legal framework for equality and to lead to the strengthening of this framework.

### **Strategic Objective A**

### **Strategic Objective B**

## **Equinet engagement and contribution to European Equality Policies**

As the expert voice of equality bodies to advance equality in Europe, Equinet will engage with all relevant European organisations and stakeholders throughout the year and continue to support the development of new policies and key initiatives in the field of equality, including the mainstreaming of equality. Equinet aims to bring a relevant contribution, drawn from evidence and learnings from national equality bodies' experience on the ground.

This engagement and contribution to policies will cover all equality grounds and fields, and their intersections, but especially those policies which are up for review by the new European Commission. In particular, Equinet will rely on promoting the network's contributions to future EU-level equality policies for all grounds developed in 2019.

### *Expected outputs:*

- Regular engagement with relevant EU-level policy-makers and promotion of the reports on the experience and expertise of equality bodies as a source of future policies

### *Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will help the design and implementation of effective policies in the field of equality (at national, European and international level), leading to more equal societies.

### **Strategic Objective A**

### **Strategic Objective B**

## **Equality data**

Equality bodies have a crucial and thus far insufficiently tapped potential in ensuring the availability of equality data, defined as any piece of information that is useful for the purposes of describing and analysing the state of equality. Equinet's Working Group on Research and Data Collection was set up to fill this void by discussing good practices and methods for collecting and analysing equality data.

### *Expected outputs:*

- Two meetings of the Equinet Working Group on Research and Data Collection, discussing the role of equality bodies in collecting equality data and conducting research that supports the design and implementation of equality policies
- Collection of good practice examples from equality bodies in collecting equality data and conducting research that supports the design and implementation of equality policies
- Promotion and follow-up of the Equinet report on complaints data collection by equality bodies

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will help the design and implementation of effective policy strategies in the field of equality (at national, European and international level), leading to more equal societies.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**

## **Artificial Intelligence and equality**

In the last few years, due to recent progress in technology, the topic of artificial intelligence (AI) has been at the forefront of public policy concern. The potential that technology brings to society becomes more evident and with it the possible negative impact it could have on equality and discrimination, first on at-risk groups but also on citizens more generally.

In 2019, Equinet commissioned a study on the impact of AI on equality and discrimination and the role equality bodies could or should play in this evolving picture.

The findings of the study, and notably its identification of the most pressing capacity-building needs among equality bodies, will serve as the basis for the design and implementation of a training session dedicated to national equality bodies staff who already are and might soon be assigned responsibility of AI-related matters within their organisation. The programme of the training session will address, in a practical manner, how to tackle the main potential equality and discriminatory aspects of the further development and percolation of AI solutions within European societies. Preliminary discussions about AI with Equinet Members have revealed a strong need for introductory level training. Therefore, it is expected that the training will be aimed at entry-level experts in AI among equality bodies staff. The training event will be financed by a dedicated grant from the Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI).

Should the format allow, and the demand be expressed, a module might be developed that would transpose the learning from the first training session into a transferable and user-friendly (digital) "package" for the use of other Members. The possibility to stream the training and/or to use it as a foundation for a webinar series will also be explored based on demand and budget possibilities.

*Expected outputs:*

- An entry-level training of 35 experts from equality bodies in AI and equality
- A webinar or module on AI and equality bodies

*Expected outcomes:*

We expect to create a momentum among equality bodies on monitoring and tackling potential issues arising at national level, as well as a common understanding of AI and Equality among the Equinet Membership.

**Strategic Objective A**

## **Monitoring discrimination cases at the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)**

The Working Group on Equality Law will continue its work on monitoring and analysing cases at the European Court of Human Rights to identify those that are directly relevant for equality and non-discrimination and the work of equality bodies. The Working Group will also seek to identify cases of high relevance relating to equality and non-discrimination and contribute to preparing any third-party interventions to the ECtHR as appropriate.

### *Expected outputs:*

- Paper analysing judgments in discrimination cases before the ECtHR between March 2017 and February 2019
- Internal database updated regularly with cases in front of the ECtHR relevant for equality and non-discrimination
- Contribution to third-party interventions as appropriate

### *Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will ensure that the expertise of equality bodies can be effectively mobilized in strategic cases in front of the ECtHR. This will lead to better outcomes in equality and non-discrimination cases and an enhanced status for equality bodies and Equinet.

## **Strategic Objective B**

### **Policy contribution to relevant European Development**

The Working Group Policy Formation will discuss relevant European developments in the field of equality and non-discrimination using the expertise and experience of equality bodies in the field.

### *Expected outputs:*

- One meeting of the Equinet Working Group on Policy Formation discussing the work and experience of equality bodies concerning a relevant European policy issue chosen in consultation with the Executive Board and taking into account relevant developments as a result of the new EU institutions
- A relevant and suitable output relating to the European policy issue discussed by the Working Group

### *Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will ensure that equality bodies can share their expertise and experience and use these to inform European policy making. This will lead to better outcomes in equality and non-discrimination cases and an enhanced status for equality bodies and Equinet.

## **Strategic Objective A**

## **Strategic Objective B**

## **Supporting equality bodies' interaction with UN mechanisms**

Equality bodies, through their various competences such as data collection, casework and research, possess a unique insight into the state of equality and discrimination, as well as the legal and policy gaps in their country. Their knowledge is particularly valuable to UN mechanisms such as Treaty Bodies and the Human Rights Council and many Equinet members have expressed a clear interest in such contributions. However, their diverse status might make it difficult for equality bodies to find the best way to contribute in the UN systems. Equinet will reach out to its partners in civil society that have experience and existing trainings on interactions with UN mechanisms and explore whether those trainings can be used effectively to respond to this specific need of equality bodies.

### *Expected outputs:*

- Capacity-building webinar on reporting to UN mechanisms organized in cooperation with relevant partners such as civil society organizations that have existing training experiences on the issue.

### *Expected outcomes:*

This capacity-building will enable equality bodies to more effectively engage with UN mechanisms where appropriate and increase their impact in the promotion of equality and non-discrimination in Europe and in their respective countries. This will also help bring more visibility to equality bodies in the United Nations system and foster better cooperation between equality bodies and UN experts and representatives.

### **Strategic Objective A**

### **Strategic Objective B**





## *Area of Work: Age*



### **Engaging young people on equality**

Young people experience inequality and individual and structural discrimination on the ground of their age as well as intersectional discrimination based on other characteristics such as gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability, as well as other experiences like body shaming. Young people are both responsible for and subject to hate speech (especially online).

In order to better reach young people, tackle the discrimination they face and work with them to understand and tackle hate speech, we wish to involve young people and their organisations more in the work of equality bodies and support equality bodies to reach out to young audiences in a more systematic and successful manner. Education about equality improves individuals' understanding of how they should be treated and how they should treat others, as part of an open, democratic society, and the legal protections that they can rely on to exercise their rights.

Learnings from our Perspective *Equality Bodies Combating Discrimination Against and Promoting Equality for Young People* (2016) and our seminar on tackling age discrimination against young people (2018) show that equality bodies could develop their work in relation to young people, including to:

- Trace out and agree what full equality in practice might mean for young people;
- Involve young people and their organisations to share good practice in this;
- Respond to issues of structural discrimination in key areas that enable transitions such as education, employment, and housing;

- Raise awareness of rights under equal treatment legislation with initiatives specifically designed for young people;
- Tackle hate speech online, by and against young people

*Expected outputs:*

**Two meetings** will take place in 2020, each bringing together 25 participants, one lasting 1 day and one lasting for 1.5 days. Other topical communication challenges will be discussed as necessary.

The Working Group on Communication Practices and Strategies will develop a **Communication Handbook for equality bodies on ways to reach young audiences**. The main topics could be on:

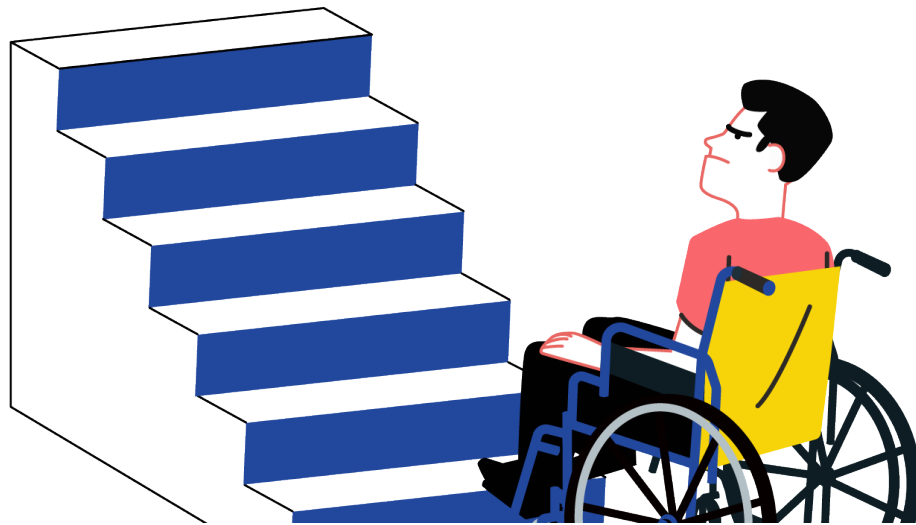
- Reaching young people and getting them to report discrimination, as well as informing them about discrimination and their rights,
- Engaging young people in schools and on social media to be more active and proactive in support of human rights and equality,
- Ensuring young people adopt the attitudes and behaviours of respecting, promoting and protecting equality and non-discrimination in their daily lives,
- Working with young people to tackle hate speech, from an intersectional perspective

*Expected outcomes:*

A key to successful work to improve the situation of young people is to cooperate with and involve young people and their organisations in the work of the equality bodies. We will strengthen our work with youth organisations during this exercise and build upon the communication aspects of the [Guidelines for cooperation between National Equality Bodies and Youth Organisations](#) that came from our Seminar in 2018.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**



## Area of Work: Disability



### Ensuring the implementation of existing rights of people with disabilities

The recent years have seen substantial improvements in legislation and policies protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. Unfortunately, victims of discrimination, lawyers and judges are often unaware of these rights leading to gaps in their application. As the experts on discrimination, equality bodies are best suited to address this issue and help fill the gaps. The Working Group on Equality Law will use their expertise to address the issue of implementing the rights of persons with disability, which could include work on positive action and reasonable accommodation in particular.

#### *Expected output:*

- 2 meetings of the Working Group on Equality Law
- 1 publication, content and format to be decided by the Working Group.

#### *Expected outcome:*

Equinet's work will facilitate the implementation of the rights of persons with disability at the national level, by providing material to build the capacity of equality body staff to potentially train judges, lawyers and other stakeholders if it fits in their strategy and national context.

### **Strategic Objective A**

### **Strategic Objective B**



## Area of Work: Gender



### Engaging in a reflection on women in poverty from an intersectional perspective

Equinet will continue its work on socio-economic rights and equality, from a gender perspective. While both men and women suffer in poverty, gender discrimination implies that women often have far fewer resources and are experiencing specific types of violence and discrimination. For instance, women in poverty are the ones less likely to access healthcare, and are routinely trapped in time-consuming, unpaid domestic tasks. Depending on various criteria (age, ethnic origin, disability, etc.) some women have higher risks to live in poverty, and are experiencing specific types of discrimination, violence and abuse. Equality bodies can help identifying the needs and injustices suffered by various groups of women in poverty and assist them when they are victims of unfair treatment.

#### Expected outputs:

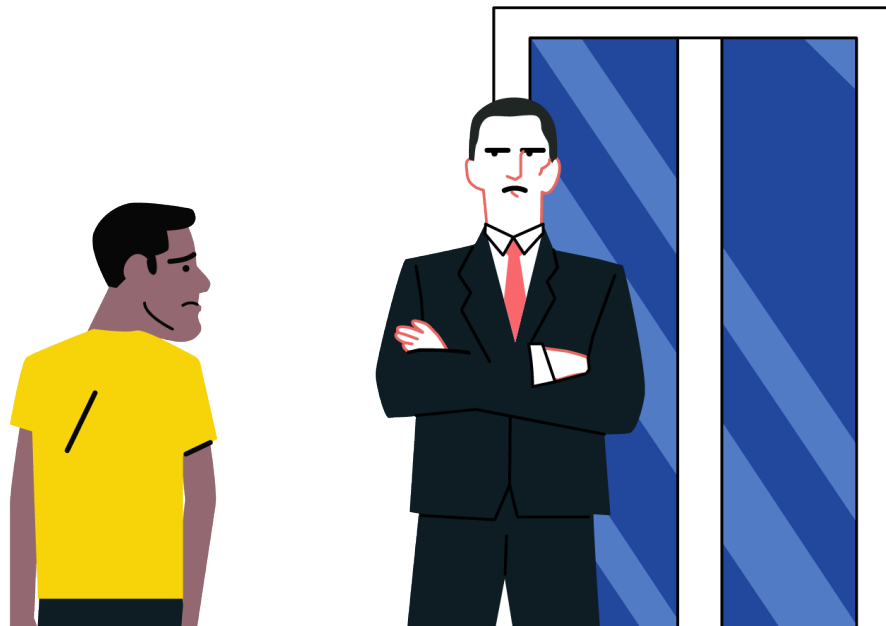
- One roundtable discussion with relevant civil society organizations (EWL, EDF, AGE Platform, ERIO, EAPN...) to assess the differences and similarities of needs and experiences lived by various groups of women in poverty, including Roma women, older women, women with disabilities and migrant women.
- Following the roundtable discussion, a publication will be issued. The format and content of the publication will depend on the conclusions and proposals made during the discussion, and guided by the Working Group on Gender Equality.
- Continued engagement and contributions in the framework of the Council of Europe-FRA-Equinet-ENNHRI joint Cooperation Platform on Economic and Social Rights.

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will contribute to a better understanding of how various women experience poverty in Europe and how female poverty is intertwined with inequalities and discrimination.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**



*Area of Work: Race and Ethnic Origin*



**Tackling Antigypsyism and working for Roma Equality**

The experience of equality bodies shows that in many European countries Roma remain one of the most discriminated, marginalised and persecuted groups in society, often finding themselves in particularly vulnerable situations even when compared to other groups at risk of discrimination. Multiple and intersectional discrimination, for instance targeting Roma women can further exacerbate this. Equality bodies can and do play a crucial role in promoting equality for and combating discrimination against Roma in an effort to leave no one behind.

*Expected outputs:*

- One meeting of the Equinet Working Group on Policy Formation discussing the work and experience of equality bodies concerning various forms of discrimination against Roma;

- One report collecting the experience of equality bodies on various forms of discrimination against Roma and relevant good practices, focusing in particular on the areas of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies;
- Continued engagement and contributions in the framework of the Council of Europe-FRA-Equinet-ENNHRI joint Operational Platform for Roma Equality (OPRE).

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet’s work in this field will contribute to a better understanding of the key issues and discrimination experiences affecting Roma, thereby enabling more effective and targeted policies for Roma equality at European level and tangible improvements in equality for Roma.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**



*Area of Work: Religion or Belief*



**Tackling discrimination and intolerance against Muslims**

Equinet published a report in early 2018 on ‘Faith in Equality: Religion and Belief in Europe’, bringing powerful evidence of the particularly grave discrimination experienced by Muslims in Europe. As a follow-up to this work, we will continue our regular engagement with the European Commission’s Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred and relevant civil society partners to identify effective remedies to this discrimination, taking an intersectional approach to allow addressing for instance the particular experiences of Muslim women.

*Expected outputs:*

- One workshop (1.5 days) co-organised with the European Commission's Coordinator on combating anti-Muslim hatred to discuss and share experiences and good practices by equality bodies in challenging discrimination against Muslims among others through case work, communication, and promoting good equality practices. The workshop will involve 25 equality bodies as well as representatives of civil society.

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field is expected to develop the capacity of equality bodies to respond to discrimination and intolerance against Muslims, including through increasing their cooperation with civil society organisations. Equinet's cooperation with the European Commission's coordinator will also contribute to strengthening the EU's response and stance on discrimination and intolerance against Muslims and firmly situate equality bodies as crucial actors in the field.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**



## Area of Work: Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity



### Building capacities of equality bodies on rights and equality of trans and intersex persons

Equality bodies have been increasingly assisting and promoting rights of trans and intersex people in Europe, in various sectors including employment, education and access to health. The experience on tackling inequalities faced by trans and intersex people has been compiled in a factsheet, developed by the Working Group on Gender Equality in 2019. This document was drafted with the support of trans and intersex communities, and focused on legal protection, cases and good practices of equality bodies. The factsheet also underlined that equality bodies would benefit from further training to handle cases and promote equality for trans and intersex people.

#### *Expected output:*

- One capacity-building seminar organized with the support of trans and intersex organisations to increase the knowledge and expertise of equality body staff members on issues faced by trans and intersex people.

#### *Expected outcome:*

Equinet's work in the field will contribute to an enhanced cooperation between trans and intersex communities and equality bodies across Europe, and to build capacities of equality bodies on promoting equality for trans and intersex persons.

#### **Strategic Objective A**

#### **Strategic Objective B**





## Area of Work: Other Grounds



### Freedom of movement of EU workers

Directive 2014/54/EU was adopted in order to facilitate the free movement of EU workers and members of their family through a series of measures such as the designation of bodies for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment of Union workers and members of their family without discrimination on grounds of nationality. When transposing the Directive, over half of the Member States have decided to designate national equality bodies as such institutions.

Given that freedom of movement has traditionally not been part of the mandate of most equality bodies, Equinet set up a thematic Cluster for capacity-building and as a platform for regular information exchange and updates in the field of free movement of EU workers, bringing together equality bodies vested with this new function.

#### *Expected outputs:*

- One meeting of the Cluster for exchanging information, sharing best practices and updates, particularly in the field of awareness-raising and case handling
- Establish stable channels of communication and exchange with existing information and assistance services such as Your Europe Advice, SOLVIT, or EURES
- Establish and promote good cooperation with the European Labour Authority

*Expected outcomes:*

Equinet's work in this field will increase the expertise and capacity of equality bodies to deal with free movement issues and complaints, leading to better protection of free movement rights of EU workers and their families.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**

## MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

In 2020, in line with the commitment laid out in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2019-2022 to serve its Members as best as it can, Equinet will reinforce its focus on *Membership engagement*.

Ensuring that Members remain concerned with the Network, interested in its activities and engaged with its internal and external debates as how best to push the common interests of all the Members forward guarantees that it remains true to the nature of the Members and their challenges and expectations. In order to maintain and further expand the links between Equinet and its Members, different initiatives will be pursued.

A Membership and Network development Officer will be recruited to help establish a clear and strong line of communication between Members and the Equinet Secretariat. The role of the Membership and Network development Officer will be to ensure that the health of the Network, the impact of the activities carried out and the needs arising at Members' level in perpetually evolving national and European contexts are communicated back to the Secretariat and the Board in order to inform and influence the implementation of the work and the future direction of the Network. The Officer will act as a main point of contact for all things related to the Membership, including supporting equality bodies in the context of calls for proposals on equality funding where possible.

As a result of the upcoming Equinet communication strategy, the quality of communication channels and points of contact between Equinet Members and the other Equinet institutions will be reinforced and specific care will be given to prioritise messages with the best content possible, in order to showcase the added-value that the Network brings.

### Strategic Objective A

### Strategic Objective C

## COMMUNICATING

Communicating is a crucial aspect in the functioning of an efficient network. It is our ambition to reinforce the communication capacities of the Network and the Secretariat. To this end, we have developed a new communication strategy with both an internal and an external communication focus. Values-based communication is a crucial factor for several of the core missions of the Network, in terms of **internal as well as external communication**. This means:

- Using techniques to make the content and knowledge that are created within the Network as easily transferable and “usable” as possible
- Ensuring that the flows of information within the Network are optimised, between the Secretariat and Members and also directly between Members themselves.
- Communicating the work done and the knowledge created by the Network in an efficient way to relevant audiences, building on our work around values-based communication and positive narratives.
- Ensure that the interests of the Members are defended, promoted in the right places and to the right people
- Identifying and communicating high-level information: we will reinforce the added-value of the messages that are circulating through the Network and share information with a clear **added-value** for its intended audiences

- This centrality of **added-value** will be extended to the products that are generated by the Network: Generating and disseminating knowledge about equality, developments and innovation in the field, equality legislation and policy, and highlighting in particular the work and contribution of equality bodies.
- Promoting positive narratives developed around values-based messages linked to equality and non-discrimination.

We will continue to prioritise and seek to continuously improve our **communication with members**. We will further work to sustain active membership communication and engagement as well as the sense of belonging to the Network through a variety of innovative communication tools.

*Expected outputs:*

- Equinet Website (including European Directory of Equality Bodies)
- Equality Blog with expert opinions on key developments in the field of equality
- Newsletters (will be reorganised to better serve their intended audiences)
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Linked In) : each channel will receive optimised content
- Publications (including Annual Report) : paper and electronic versions of the result of the work of the Network. Specific care will be given to making sure that these products are efficiently designed from conception phase to serve their purpose.
- Members' Forum on website: allow members to keep informed of all Equinet activities and European developments on equality and non-discrimination, as well as engage with each other in an accessible and interactive manner. We will consider how best to link the newsletters and the members' forum so that information (and work) is not doubled, but that members are as informed as possible.
- Webinars: Depending on our members' needs, we might develop ad hoc webinars to inform them about European developments.

*Expected outcomes:*

While we expect a direct impact of this reinforced communication focus, we also look past the short-term vision to embrace a longer-term approach in our objectives.

In the short term, we expect the "Equinet experience" to be of better quality for its Members, with positive impact on participation and on the knowledge produced.

In the long-run, we expect to reinforce cohesion of the network with members more engaged at all stages of operation, which will increase the impact of our outputs.

We also expect the message from equality bodies to come across better to other stakeholders, positively impacting the positioning of equality and equality bodies with them.

**Strategic Objective A**

**Strategic Objective B**

**Strategic Objective C**

## ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS

Equinet will continue to engage directly with the European Commission, specifically the Equality Directorate in DG Justice as well as other Directorates and DGs responsible for relevant equality and fundamental rights issues. Equinet will also engage with relevant high-level expert groups and networks of the European Commission. In particular, Equinet will sustain an engagement in its role as Observer to the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

Equinet will engage with the European Parliament (EP), in particular with the committees relevant for equality issues, as well as relevant EP thematic Intergroups and Members of the European Parliament interested in the work of equality bodies and in topics relating to equality, non-discrimination and gender equality.

Equinet will pursue and further strengthen its engagement and cooperation with relevant European Union agencies, in particular the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the newly established European Labour Authority (ELA).

Equinet will continue to support initiatives within the thematic Cooperation Platforms established with the FRA, the Council of Europe and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). These currently cover cooperation in the field of: advancing social and economic rights and socio-economic equality and Roma equality.

Equinet will pursue its ongoing engagement with the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) through continued close cooperation with its Members and Secretariat. This will include linking with ENNHRI's working group focusing on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as appropriate.

Equinet will also strengthen its engagement with other relevant organisations at European level such as the Council of Europe and its bodies, OSCE-ODIHR, UN OHCHR, European Ombudsman, as well as civil society and social partners.

Subject to the success of the proposal, Equinet will actively engage as partner in the EEA and Norway Grants funded project on Strengthening NHRIs and NEBs for greater national implementation of human rights and equality.

### **Strategic Objective B**

## ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Over the years, as the Network grew in membership along with the number of activities being carried out, the administrative burden placed on the Equinet Secretariat has increased substantially.

This had led to a number of administrative issues affecting Members and their experience of the Network, notably in terms of money flows management (reimbursements of expenses...) and event management.

In 2020, the Equinet Secretariat will continue to work on refining its internal procedures and acquiring adequate tools in order to alleviate administrative burden as much as possible while guaranteeing an improved experience for Members.

Based on preliminary information at the time of writing, there is a possibility that the budget in 2020 will allow for the staff of the Secretariat to grow up to 8 persons.

A special focus will also be put on fostering better **transparency** and a more efficient flow of information within the Network. For instance, by improved information to Members of the deliberations at Board level and more regular communication between Members and the other organs of management and administration of the Network, namely the **Equinet Board** and the **Equinet Secretariat**. This will allow informed Members to give their feedback on current and future developments in a more comfortable manner, so that, when comes the time of the **Annual General Meeting**, an informed and active membership can take a full part in the debates and have their opinion heard.

### Strategic Objective C

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There are a lot of activities carried out within the Equinet Network. All of them have the purpose of improving the knowledge, expertise, efficiency, profile and positioning of Equinet Members. But how do we know whether we are successful? Whether the change that we are trying to make is really happening?

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is a concept that was born in the field of development aid to help review and improve development programmes. It basically takes a hard look at the situation as it is, the change you are trying to implement and the actions you are taking in order to reach this change and it can tell you whether you are on a good track or not. A series of specific indicators is developed and data is collected as activities are implemented and fed into the framework to monitor progress.

In 2019, the Equinet Secretariat commissioned a consultancy to help it develop a fully-fledged Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. The Equinet Secretariat will use this M&E framework in order to better assess the quality and impact of the activities that are implemented by the Network. This is a continuous process that will need to be consistently upheld over the years in order to build comparability and learning. This process will mainly be applied to the work of the Equinet Secretariat at first but it is hoped that it will be possible to extend it to the whole Network in order to better assess

its health and the issues at stake. The data gathered will scrupulously comply with the requirements of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**Strategic Objective C**

**INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR 2020**

| EQUINET BUDGET 2020 |                  |  |                   |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|------------------|
| EXPENSES            |                  |  | REVENUES          |                  |
| TYPE OF COST        | AMOUNT           |  | SOURCE OF REVENUE | AMOUNT           |
| Activities          | 341,161          |  | EC Grant          | 1.200.000        |
| Salaries            | 695,159          |  | OSI Grant         | 50,000           |
| Experts             | 13,000           |  | Membership Fees   | 63.000           |
| Communication       | 13,000           |  |                   |                  |
| Website             | 13,000           |  |                   |                  |
| Secretariat travel  | 36,000           |  |                   |                  |
| Running costs       | 15,000           |  |                   |                  |
| Rent                | 94,680           |  |                   |                  |
| AGM                 | 25,000           |  |                   |                  |
| Board Meetings      | 17,000           |  |                   |                  |
| OSI AI Project      | 50,000           |  |                   |                  |
| <b>Grant Total</b>  | <b>1,313,000</b> |  |                   |                  |
|                     |                  |  |                   |                  |
|                     |                  |  |                   |                  |
|                     |                  |  | <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>1.313.000</b> |

# Equinet Member Equality Bodies



## ALBANIA

Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination  
[www.kmd.al](http://www.kmd.al)

## AUSTRIA

Disability Ombudsman  
[www.behindertenanwalt.gv.at](http://www.behindertenanwalt.gv.at)

Ombud for Equal Treatment  
[www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.at](http://www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.at)

## BELGIUM

Unia (Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities)  
[www.unia.be](http://www.unia.be)

Institute for the Equality of Women and Men  
<http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be>

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman  
[www.ombudsmen.gov.ba](http://www.ombudsmen.gov.ba)

## BULGARIA

Commission for Protection against Discrimination  
[www.kzd-nondiscrimination.com](http://www.kzd-nondiscrimination.com)

## CROATIA

Office of the Ombudsman  
[www.ombudsman.hr](http://www.ombudsman.hr)

Ombudsperson for Gender Equality  
[www.prs.hr](http://www.prs.hr)

Ombudswoman for persons with disabilities  
[www.posi.hr](http://www.posi.hr)

## CYPRUS

Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman)  
[www.ombudsman.gov.cy](http://www.ombudsman.gov.cy)

## CZECH REPUBLIC

Office of the Public Defender of Rights  
[www.ochrance.cz](http://www.ochrance.cz)

## DENMARK

Board of Equal Treatment  
[www.ast.dk](http://www.ast.dk)

Danish Institute for Human Rights  
[www.humanrights.dk](http://www.humanrights.dk)

## ESTONIA

Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner  
[www.volinik.ee](http://www.volinik.ee)

## FINLAND

Ombudsman for Equality  
[www.tasa-arvo.fi](http://www.tasa-arvo.fi)

Non-Discrimination Ombudsman  
[www.syrjinta.fi/en/](http://www.syrjinta.fi/en/)

## FRANCE

Defender of Rights  
[www.defenseurdesdroits.fr](http://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr)

## GEORGIA

Public Defender (Ombudsman)  
[www.ombudsman.ge](http://www.ombudsman.ge)

## GERMANY

Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency  
[www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de](http://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de)

## GREECE

Greek Ombudsman  
[www.synigoros.gr](http://www.synigoros.gr)

## HUNGARY

Equal Treatment Authority  
[www.egyenlobanasmod.hu](http://www.egyenlobanasmod.hu)

Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights  
[www.ajbh.hu](http://www.ajbh.hu)

## IRELAND

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission  
[www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie)

## ITALY

National Office against Racial Discrimination - UNAR  
[www.unar.it](http://www.unar.it)

## LATVIA

Office of the Ombudsman  
[www.tiesibsargs.lv](http://www.tiesibsargs.lv)

## LITHUANIA

Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson  
[www.lygybe.lt](http://www.lygybe.lt)

## LUXEMBOURG

Centre for Equal Treatment  
[www.cet.lu](http://www.cet.lu)

## MALTA

National Commission for the Promotion of Equality  
[www.equality.gov.mt](http://www.equality.gov.mt)

Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
[www.crpdp.org.mt](http://www.crpdp.org.mt)

## MOLDOVA

Council on Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality  
[www.egalitate.md](http://www.egalitate.md)

## MONTENEGRO

Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro (Ombudsman)  
<http://www.ombudsman.co.me/>

## NETHERLANDS

Netherlands Institute for Human Rights  
[www.mensenrechten.nl](http://www.mensenrechten.nl)

## NORTH MACEDONIA

Commission for the Protection against Discrimination  
[www.kzd.mk/mk/](http://www.kzd.mk/mk/)

## NORWAY

Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud  
[www.ldo.no](http://www.ldo.no)

## POLAND

Commissioner for Human Rights  
[www.rpo.gov.pl](http://www.rpo.gov.pl)

## PORTUGAL

Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality  
[www.cig.gov.pt](http://www.cig.gov.pt)

Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment  
[www.cite.gov.pt](http://www.cite.gov.pt)

High Commission for Migration  
[www.acm.gov.pt](http://www.acm.gov.pt)

## ROMANIA

National Council for Combating Discrimination  
[www.cncd.org.ro](http://www.cncd.org.ro)

## SERBIA

Commission for the Protection of Equality  
[www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs](http://www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs)

## SLOVAKIA

National Centre for Human Rights  
[www.snslp.sk](http://www.snslp.sk)

## SLOVENIA

Advocate of the Principle of Equality  
[www.zagovornik.gov.si](http://www.zagovornik.gov.si)

## SPAIN

Council for the Elimination of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination  
[www.igualdadynodiscriminacion.msssi.es](http://www.igualdadynodiscriminacion.msssi.es)

Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities  
[www.inmujer.es](http://www.inmujer.es)

## SWEDEN

Equality Ombudsman  
[www.do.se](http://www.do.se)

## UNITED KINGDOM - GREAT BRITAIN

Equality and Human Rights Commission  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

## UNITED KINGDOM - NORTHERN IRELAND

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland  
[www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)



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