

EQUINET Legal Seminar

LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS AND CONCEPTS IN THE FIELD OF EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN EUROPE

Monday 28 March 2011, Brussels

SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES



Opening Address

Mandana Zarrehparvar, Chair of EQUINET Board, Danish Institute for Human Rights (Denmark)

Mandana Zarrehparvar is Chief Advisor and team leader of the Equality and Monitoring Department at the Danish Institute for Human Rights. Ms Zarrehparvar has trained as a social worker and holds a master's degree in globalization and integration, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science. She was elected as the Equinet Chair in November 2009.

Session 1 – The appropriateness of using insurance risks linked to discrimination grounds in the calculation of insurance premiums



Chair

Ingrid Nikolay-Leitner, Equal Treatment Ombud (Austria) and EQUINET Executive Board Member

Ingrid Nikolay-Leitner is a co-founder of Equinet and has been an executive board member since 2006.

Ms Nikolay-Leitner was the first Gender Equality Ombud for the private sector in Austria in 1991 and became the director of the Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment in 2005 when the Austrian Ombud for Gender Equality at work was transformed into a multiground body for all grounds of discrimination mentioned in the EU-directives except disability. Since 2009 she has been also member of the Expert Forum of EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality.



“Is sex an appropriate determining factor in the calculation of insurance premiums”

Kristina Koldinská Ph.D. Charles University, Prague

Kristina Koldinská is a Senior Lecturer at the Charles University Faculty of Law. Since 1997 she works at the Department of labour law and social law, where she teaches social security law and labour law and she guarantees and teaches courses on coordination of social security in the EU and on EU social law. She publishes extensively in Czech Republic (especially with the publishing house C.H.Beck) as well with various foreign publishing houses (Ashgate, Routledge) and legal reviews. Her research interests include gender equality, EU social law, coordination of social security, social assistance. She is a member of Commission's Network of legal experts in the fields of employment, social affairs and equality between men and women and TRESS (Training and Reporting on European Social Security), where she was a member of think tank in 2009, currently a member of network's steering group. Both long-lasting projects run by prestigious European universities and financed by the EU Commission.





“The use of insurance risks linked to sex and other discrimination grounds in the calculation of insurance premiums – an NGO perspective”

Jean-Paul Coteur, Association Belge des Consommateurs Test-Achats Asbl

Jean-Paul Coteur holds a Masters in Economic Sciences (ICHEC) and has worked at Test-Achats since 1973.

Mr Coteur acted as a part-time consultant between 1988 and 1997 for the Service Consumer of the European Commission (Later DG SANCO) where he contributed to, amongst other work, two reports about car and home insurance in the European Community and two reports relating to banking problems: the one about payments (made by the consumers) abroad, the other one about safety of bank (and credits) cards, more specifically in case of theft or loss.

Today Mr Coteur is the coordinator for insurances matters for Test-Achats and other associations (Altro Consumo in Italy, Edideco/Pro Teste in Portugal and OCU in Spain) which have a cooperation agreement under the name of Conseur.

Test Achats is a Belgian not for profit consumer watchdog association founded in 1957. Test Achats seeks to promote and defend the interests of consumers, research the solutions to consumer problems and aids consumers in the accession of their rights. It also actively participates in the improvement of goods and services available to consumers by means of carrying out comparative tests and highlighting the products with display the best quality and/or value for money.



“The use of insurance risks linked to sex and other discrimination grounds in the calculation of insurance premiums – an insurer’s perspective”

William Vidonja, Head of Single Market & Social Affairs, CEA-Insurers of Europe Aisbl

William Vidonja is the head of single market and social affairs at the CEA, the European insurance and reinsurance federation. Vidonja joined the CEA in 2002 as a trainee before becoming deputy manager insurance of persons department. In 2008 he became the head of the CEA’s single market and social affairs department. In this position he has been involved in the debates on the new Insurance Block Exemption Regulation (BER) and Insurance Guarantee Schemes (IGS), as well as Directives such as the Insurance Mediation Directive. Vidonja is also involved in the work of the Insurance Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (ISSDC), the only forum in which insurance employers’ representatives and trade unions discuss topics of common interest with the European Commission. Vidonja is a French national and holds a law degree from the University Paris XII.

CEA Insurers is the pan-European federation for insurance and reinsurance. The CEA represents insurers and reinsurers, positions the European Insurance industry within the European and Global regulatory frameworks and provides a platform form information exchange to its members.



Session 2 – Defining the boundaries of the EU anti-discrimination legislation



Chair

Domenica Ghidei, Commissioner for the Equal Treatment Commission - Netherlands, Equinet Board Member

Since April 2005 Domenica Ghidei has been a Commissioner for the Equal Treatment Commission in the Netherlands (Commissie Gelijke Behandeling, CGB) and a member of the Equinet Executive Board since November 2009.

Between November 1999 and 2001 Ms Ghidei was a Substitute Judge for the section administrative law of the District Court of Amsterdam. Since 2003 she has been a member of The Club of the Hague, an International network of experts and prominent persons on the field of Refugees and Migration Policy. Since 2006 she has been the chairperson of the African Diaspora Policy Centre. Since 1985 she has setup and is member of a number of (grass root) organisations and networks in the field of (women) refugees and on African Diaspora.

She is author of the book 'Through the Eye of the Needle, a commentary on the practice of the Asylum eligibility processes, Greber publisher, Utrecht 1995. In 1995 she was awarded the Clara Meijer-Wichmann medal, a Human Rights price awarded by the League of Human Rights.

“Study on the use of age, disability, sex, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin and sexual orientation in financial services, in particular in the insurance sector”

Dr. Frank Alleweldt, Civic Consulting

Dr Frank Alleweldt is Managing Director and one of the founders of Civic Consulting, a Berlin based economic and public policy consultancy with special expertise in consumer policy and financial services. He has longstanding experience in leading economic studies, evaluations, and impact assessments for the European Commission, European Parliament, and other national and international bodies. Recent EU-wide studies led by Frank include a study on the provision of general financial advice to consumers and a study on the use of age, disability, sex, religion or belief, race or ethnic origin, and sexual orientation in financial services, in particular in the insurance and banking sectors. Other studies conducted include the analysis of the economic impact of the distance marketing directive concerning the cross-border provision of consumer financial services, an economic analysis of the Consumer Credit Directive and several studies concerning collective redress and alternative dispute resolution.



“Comments from the European Commission on the study, the role of equality bodies and other stakeholders”

Tobias Müllensiefen, Legal Officer, Equal Treatment Legislation Unit, European Commission

Tobias Müllensiefen was born in Germany in 1977 and works as an official for the European Commission. He studied German and French law in Cologne and Paris (Panthéon-Sorbonne) and he also holds a Master's degree in European Political and Administrative Sciences from the College of Europe in Bruges, Belgium. Having joined the European Commission in 2004, he worked for four years in the social dialogue unit. Since 2008 he is a member of the unit dealing with equal treatment legislation, which recently joined DG Justice.





“The protection of volunteers under the Employment Framework Directive” 2000/78/EC

Peter Reading, Equality and Human Rights Commission – Great Britain

Peter Reading is currently the Director of Legal Policy at the Equality and Human Rights Commission and moderator of the Equinet Equality Law in Practice Working Group. Previously he has worked as a Senior Lawyer in the Legal Policy Team and was Head of European and International Legal Policy at the Commission for Racial Equality.

Session 3 – New tools of studying the non-discrimination landscape and the recent developments



Chair

Tamás Kádár, Policy Officer, Equinet

Tamás Kádár holds a Master of law from the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest, Hungary and in 2008 received a Masters in European Economic and Public Affairs from University College Dublin, Ireland.

After his graduation he joined the Hungarian Equal Treatment Authority in 2006. Between 2006 and 2010 he worked at this quasi-judicial equality body as a legal rapporteur investigating discrimination complaints on all grounds and dealing with press and international relations of the equality body.

He has worked in the position of Policy Officer for Equinet – European Network of Equality Bodies in Brussels since February 2010. In his position he is responsible for organizing the professional activities of the network as well as for following policy developments in the field of equality in Europe.

“The new ECtHR-FRA Handbook on European case-law on non-discrimination”

Aida Grgić, Lawyer, European Court of Human Rights

Aida Grgić graduated from Zagreb University in 2001 and holds a Master's degree in European Integration law from TU Dresden. Since 2004 she has been employed as a Croatian lawyer at the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights. For the first four years she was involved in preparing drafts of decisions and judgments in cases against Croatia and Serbia. Currently she is a member of the Court's Case-law Information and Publications Division and participates in the Jurisconsult's group following the Court's case-law, EU and comparative law. She also works on and co-manages joint projects with the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights, the first one of which resulted in the production of the Handbook on European non-discrimination law.





“Data collection on discrimination complaints”

Developing an Equinet data collection template on complaints to quasi-judicial equality bodies

Barbara Liegl, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights

Barbara Liegl is a political scientist specialised on anti-discrimination. Currently she participates in a project called “Access to Justice – A sociological study on cases of discrimination in the EU” on behalf of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). She was one of the senior experts in the “Study on Equality Bodies set up under Directives 2000/43/EC, 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC” drafted in 2010. She has been working for the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights (BIM) since 2006 and is the head of the RAXEN National Focal Point for Austria, a project by the FRA. Furthermore, she is the executive director of the Austrian anti-racism NGO ZARA – Zivilcourage und Anti-Rassismus-Arbeit. She is involved in various other projects of the BIM and has been a short term expert in EU-Twinning anti-discrimination projects in Poland, Hungary and Slovenia.



Néphéli Yatropoulos, Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l'Égalité – France

Néphéli Yatropoulos is the Advisor on European and International Affairs, High Commission Against Discrimination and for Equality (HALDE), France. Ms Yatropoulos has been an executive member of the Equinet Board since 2009.

Ms Yatropoulos is in charge of every issue related to EU and international policy in the field, for the institution. A graduate of Sciences-Po, Ms. Yatropoulos holds a post-Master’s degree (DEA) in Political Science and has finalized a research on “Minority representation and relationships with local and national authorities in Greek Western Thrace since 1980” and published an article in the European Journal on Turkish Studies on this issue (January 2008).



Closing of the seminar

Anne Gaspard, Executive Director EQUINET Secretariat

Anne Gaspard is the Executive Director of the Secretariat of *EQUINET – European Network of Equality Bodies* since her appointment as part of the establishment of Equinet Secretariat in 2008.

Anne had been active and involved in the field of equality and non-discrimination at a European level in the past decade preceding this appointment ever since her graduation in European studies and political science from University College London and Berlin Humboldt University.

Starting with the campaign of the European Year against Racism in 1997 for the European Parliament and a subsequent stage experience within the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) at the Council of Europe, Anne then joined and managed the UK-based secretariat of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) to support its Chair from 1998 to 2000. In recent years, Anne has been responsible for the implementation of various European anti-discrimination and equality projects for a European diversity management consultancy leading the European office of Focus Consultancy in Brussels, until taking up the position of executive director of Equinet secretariat in February 2008.

Originally from France, Anne has also lived for many years in the UK, Germany and Belgium, and speaks French, English, German and Dutch.

