



**2011 WORK PLAN AND BUDGET**

**EQUINET**  
**European Network of Equality Bodies**

NOVEMBER 2010



*With the support of the European Commission*

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## INTRODUCTION

Equinet is entering 2011 with a sense of confidence. 2010 has been a very fruitful year full of challenges and activities. It was also the last year addressed in the first Equinet Strategic Plan (2007-2010). In the course of this first Strategic Plan, Equinet evolved from a rather informal collaboration initiative between national equality bodies into a fully-fledged European network with 33 members from 28 European countries, supported by an efficient professional Secretariat under the careful management of the Executive Board. The network has been able to bring relevant information to its members in order to support the building of new capacities within its members and to contribute to both policy formation at the European level and to the reinforcement of the standing of equality bodies on the European scene. This has been achieved through a range of activities including seminars, training events, conferences/roundtables, publications and exchanges of information.

The new Strategic Plan was devised in 2010 and covers the 2011-2014 period. It builds on the success of the previous plan. It was developed in consultation with Equinet members and takes into account the input of external stakeholders. This consultation process resulted in the identification of four transversal strategies to enable the Equinet to fulfill its mission. A full description of the four strategies can be found in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014.

In the first year of this new Strategic Plan, Equinet will launch a new working group focusing on strengthening the communication capacities of national equality bodies. The three other working groups will continue to work on equality law in practice; strategy development and policy formation. Equinet will work on reinforcing its own communication capacity within the network; it will hold two training events - one training event on communication strategies and practices and one event on legal issues. It will also host a legal seminar. Equinet will implement new initiatives to provide guidance to equality bodies on the work of supporting good practice by policy makers, employers and service providers. All this work will draw upon the valuable experience and expertise of its members. At the Annual General Meeting of 2011, members will elect a new Board of Directors. Equinet will also participate in the Equality Summit 2011 and continue to be a player in the field of anti-discrimination at European level.

The Work Plan mirrors the structure of the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014.

Each **specific** action in the Work Plan 2011 directly emanates from activities defined in the Strategic Plan 2011-2014. To clarify this relationship, each specific Work Plan action has been numbered in the following format:

SPx.y

Where **SPx** is the strategy number as referenced in the Strategic Plan and **y** is the number of the activity among those foreseen under that strategy.

**Activities for 2011**

<b>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</b>	<b>OUTPUTS</b>
<b>STRATEGY 1</b>	
Working group - <i>Equality Law in Practice</i>	2 Meetings
Working group - <i>Equality Law in Practice</i>	1 Report
Training events for members	2 Events
Legal seminar	1 Seminar
Internal/external communication	8 E-newsletters (at least)
Internal communication	1 Membership Information Guide
Internal communication	1 Membership Handbook
Internal/external communication	1 Annual Report
Supporting good practice	1 Guide
<b>STRATEGY 2</b>	
Working group - <i>Strategy Development</i>	2 Meetings
Working group - <i>Strategy Development</i>	1 Report
Working group - <i>Communication Strategies and Practices</i>	1 Meeting
Working group - <i>Communication Strategies and Practices</i>	1 Factsheet
<b>STRATEGY 3</b>	
Working group - <i>Policy Formation</i>	1 Meeting
Working group - <i>Policy Formation</i>	2 Perspectives
Data collection	1 Compendium
<b>STRATEGY 4</b>	
Mapping of equality bodies	1 Database
Participation in other stakeholders' events	Regular*
<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	
AGM	1 meeting
Board meetings	4 meetings (at least)

\* Throughout the year, Equinet will be invited to participate in relevant meetings and events organised by external stakeholders. At the time of writing, it is not possible to ascertain the actual number of meetings.

## THE EQUINET WORK PLAN 2011 UNDER THE FOUR STRATEGIES

### STRATEGY 1: PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE STAFF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EQUALITY BODIES

Based on the rationale and the objectives set out for this strategy in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014, the following activities will be implemented:

#### **SP1.1 Working group - *Equality Law in Practice***

The working group *Equality Law in Practice* (previously known as *Dynamic Interpretation*) is Equinet's permanent platform for legal staff of equality bodies to exchange experience, share expertise and work to improve the level of legal protection from discrimination across the EU. The working group focuses on the interpretation of complex legal concepts and a comparative analysis of EU and national legislation and jurisprudence in the field of equality and anti-discrimination law. The working group will continue to undertake several streams of work in 2011 as it did in 2010.

Firstly, the working group will continue to pursue a practical approach by using real-life cases as a basis for a comparative analysis of EU and national anti-discrimination laws. The discussion of the case studies provides opportunities for analysing general legal questions and concepts in the field of equality law. The analysis of the cases and general legal questions and concepts will demonstrate the similarities as well as the differences among Equinet members in interpreting the EU equal treatment directives. It will also identify any possible gaps in the implementation of EU anti-discrimination legislation into national legal systems and where they may be changes required in the EU anti-discrimination legislation. The process of joint analysis helps members of the working group in their daily work and the publication produced is valuable for all legal staff of all equality bodies, as well as EU institutions such as the European Commission.

The working group will analyse two to three cases in 2011, each provided by members of the group. The cases will be selected from a variety of countries and with a view to represent diversity in terms of discrimination fields and grounds. The cases will also be chosen to coincide with the major themes that Equinet is working on or where there is evidence that there is widespread or serious discrimination in that sector. The working group will meet twice during the year to discuss and analyse the cases. The working group will publish its analysis of the case studies and general legal questions and concepts in an external report that will be made available on the Equinet website.

Secondly, the working group will continue to focus on strategic litigation, building on the experiences gained in previous years - in particular the report on the litigation powers of equality bodies published by Equinet in 2010. The working group will further explore the possibility of cooperation between Equinet members when conducting strategic litigation at either national or international level. The working group will link with the Equinet working group *Strategy Development* on this issue as appropriate.

Thirdly, members of the working group will continue to contribute to or co-operate with

the work of other Equinet working groups and to the organization of the Equinet High Level Legal Seminar and the Equinet Legal Training as appropriate.

### **SP1.2 Internal and external communication**

In 2011, Equinet will build on its communications capacities and improve cross-network communication by using modern, efficient and user-friendly communication tools to provide its members with up-to-date information. Major improvement work on the website is foreseen to ensure that the *Equinet website* is user-friendly and complete, notably with the migration of a new Content Management System and Host and the implementation of an efficient online forum.

Equinet will continue to issue an *e-newsletter* on a regular basis to publicize the latest developments in the field of anti-discrimination in Europe and the latest news from Equinet, its members, the European Institutions and other stakeholders.

*Email alerts* will continue to be circulated on an ad-hoc basis to notify members of important and topical issues and requests originating from members and external stakeholders.

Following an in-depth review of existing Equinet publications usage, *reports* resulting from the work of the working groups published in English will include an executive summary in French. Equinet *perspectives* will however continue to be printed and published in both French and English.

An Equinet *annual report* will be published in April 2011. This publication will cover the general activities undertaken by Equinet 2010 and introduce the strategic plan for the period of 2011-2014.

A *membership information guide* will be produced to provide accurate and up-to-date information on how to become a member of Equinet and on membership contributions and administrative requirements. This informative brochure will target existing and potential member organizations.

### **SP1.3 Training on communication strategies and practices (Copenhagen, end May 2011)**

In the second quarter of 2011, Equinet will organise a training workshop on communication strategies and practices. The workshop will explore effective approaches to communication by equality bodies, taking into account the wide range of mandates, functions and resources of member organizations. It will also provide a platform for the equality bodies to share their experiences in the domain of communication.

The content of the training will be developed and finalized based on the input of the *Communication Strategies and Practices* working group and the Equinet Secretariat.

All equality bodies will be encouraged to send individuals and a target of 45 participants has been set. The event will represent a valuable learning opportunity for equality

bodies' staff members who have an interest and/or role in communication strategies and activities.

**SP1. 3 Training on supporting, taking and hearing of complaints and legal cases**  
(Vienna, September 2011)

Equinet will organise a training event for legal staff of equality bodies focusing on specific legal issues in the field of anti-discrimination legislation. The training will be aimed at legal staff within member equality bodies and will provide an opportunity for mutual learning and exchange of information and experience. The main goal of this training will be to deepen participants' knowledge of case law and to further develop their skills in interpreting and using anti-discrimination legislation. Whereas the High-Level Legal Seminar takes a more theoretical approach, the legal training puts the emphasis on levelling up participants' practical knowledge by offering ample opportunities for interactive and open discussions and debates in the workshops.

Proposed study topics for the legal training in 2011 include positive action measures, mediation in discrimination cases and discrimination on the ground of disability / reasonable accommodation. The final topic of the training will be decided by the Executive Board based also on feedback and suggestions by participants of previous years' trainings. The content of the legal training will be developed and finalized based on the input of the working group *Equality Law in Practice*.

All equality bodies will be encouraged to send individuals and a target of 45 participants has been set. The event will represent a valuable learning opportunity for equality bodies' staff members who deal with casework and/or legal policy matters.

**SP1.4 Legal seminar**  
(Brussels, March 2011)

Equinet received very positive feedback from the Equinet High Level Legal Seminars held in 2009 and 2010. Participants underlined the need for, and the added value of, training events involving a higher level of legal expertise. The participation of a wider group of stakeholders active in the field of equality in this event was also deemed to be valuable. Based on these experiences Equinet will organise a one day legal seminar for members and other stakeholders. This expert seminar will focus on key concepts and developments in anti-discrimination legislation and jurisprudence.

All equality bodies will be encouraged to send representatives with a high level of legal expertise and a target of 60 participants has been set, which will include representatives from external stakeholders.

The seminar will involve keynote lectures and presentations from high-profile legal practitioners and academics specializing in equality and non-discrimination law. The seminar will address a range of important legal developments and concepts from different fields and grounds of discrimination as well as cross-cutting issues. A detailed concept and proposal for the seminar will be developed on the basis of discussions with the Equinet Executive Board and taking into account suggestions and requests by the participants of the legal seminars of the previous two years. The proposed approach may include a focus on recent developments in the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), the European Court of Human Rights and national courts' judiciary in the

area of non-discrimination. The expert legal seminar will also provide a highly effective platform to present the data collection template developed by Equinet for the complaints received by quasi-judicial equality bodies.

The seminar is planned to take place in Brussels at the end of the first quarter or in the beginning of the second quarter 2011.

**SP1.5 Guidance for equality bodies in supporting good practice in the field of anti-discrimination and equality**

Equinet will produce a guide on effective approaches by equality bodies in supporting the development and implementation of equality/diversity policies in the workplace.

The guide will set out the key elements of good practice of employers in developing and implementing equality/diversity policies based on work done in this area by equality bodies. It will set out effective approaches being taken by a small number of equality bodies in stimulating and supporting employers to pursue this good practice.

This position will ensure that the approaches developed by the equality bodies reported on can be usefully adapted to other national contexts and used by all equality bodies in supporting good practice by employers. The guide will be published and available to all members on the Equinet website.



## **STRATEGY 2: PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EQUALITY BODIES**

Based on the rationale and the objectives set out for this strategy in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014, the following activities will be implemented:

### **SP2.1 Working group - *Strategy Development***

The working group *Strategy Development* is Equinet's permanent platform for staff members of equality bodies that are concerned with strategic issues and planning to exchange experience and share expertise. It aims to contribute to the effective implementation of equality bodies' mandates through analysing and evaluating the most strategic use of the diverse powers available to equality bodies.

The working group will concentrate on the strategic approach by equality bodies to provide independent assistance to victims. The working group will link with the *Equality Law in Practice* working group on this issue as appropriate. In its work on this issue the working group will consider *inter alia* the ability of equality bodies to contribute to the effective implementation of EU anti-discrimination Directives and to reach a more equal society; the need to apply a strategic approach and its advantages and the interaction of equality bodies with key stakeholders, including civil society.

The working group will meet twice during the year. It will prepare a report resulting from its work on this theme that will be published in the fourth quarter of 2011.

### **SP2.2 Working group - *Communication Strategies and Practices***

The working group *Communication Strategies and Practices*, as foreseen in the Strategic Plan 2011-2014, was established by a decision of the Equinet Board and Annual General Meeting 2010 in response to requests from members for more support and guidance on communication issues.

The working group is mandated to explore how national equality bodies can share information on and enhance their strategic approach to communication activities and build capacity in this area. This working group will serve as a platform for discussion, reflection and action on the effective development of communication strategies and activities by equality bodies. It will focus on the work of members in raising awareness of equality, rights and obligations among the general public and the groups experiencing discrimination.

The *Communication Strategies and Practices* working group will provide a meeting place and exchange opportunity for equality bodies' staff members who are working on communications strategies and activities or have a strong interest in this area.

The first meeting of this working group will take place in the beginning of 2011. Its primary focus will be to determine the objectives and content of the planned training on communication strategies and practices that will take place in the second quarter of 2011 in Copenhagen (see SP1.3). It will also set up activities and priorities for this working group and consider the production of a library of communication resources and one factsheet on a specific communications issue that will be disseminated to all members in the fourth quarter of 2011.

### **SP2.3 Follow-Up of the two ad-hoc initiatives of 2010 focusing on making legislation work for Roma/Traveller people and for trans people**

Equinet will build on the work realized in 2009 and 2010 to further support the work of equality bodies on issues relating to the discrimination of Roma/Traveller and trans people. The two ad-hoc networking initiatives focusing on these issues will involve relevant expert staff of selected equality bodies.

The Roma/Traveller ad-hoc networking initiative in 2011 will focus on the task of supporting equality bodies in making their organisations a safe space for victims of discrimination and organizations that Roma and Traveller people trust and regularly communicate with. The group will collect and discuss good practice initiatives primarily in the areas of capacity building for the staff of equality bodies on Roma/Traveller questions, building knowledge of the current state of affairs of Roma/Traveller issues and engaging effectively with Roma and Traveller people. The good practice examples will be presented and made available on the Equinet website.

The ad-hoc networking initiative on the rights of trans people in 2011 will further discuss and follow-up the conclusions of the Equinet publication 'Making equality legislation work for trans people' taking into account the results of the discussions with and comments from external stakeholders at the 2010 Equinet round table on equality for trans people.

### **SP2.4 Under-reporting**

Equinet will continue its consultations with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to further explore under-reporting issues.

### **SP2.5 Development of standards**

Equinet will explore the development of standards for the establishment and operation of equality bodies and the role the European Commission could play in this area.

### **SP2.6 Linkage between equality and human rights**

Equinet will seek to establish contact with the European Group of National Human Rights Institutions to explore potential areas of cooperation.

*See below SP3.1 (Working group Policy Formation)*

### **STRATEGY 3: CONTRIBUTING TO POLICY FORMATION AT EUROPEAN UNION LEVEL**

Based on the rationale and the objectives set out in this strategy in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014, the following activities will be implemented:

#### **SP3.1 Working group - *Policy Formation***

The working group *Policy Formation* is Equinet's primary platform enabling a constructive dialogue with EU institutions; a dialogue that supports policy formation at EU level to effectively promote equality, value diversity and tackle discrimination. The working group supports the dialogue between Equinet and the EU institutions through the preparation of Equinet *perspectives*. These *perspectives* seek to inform current policy development within the EU institutions in the area of equality and non-discrimination and to contribute an equality dimension to policy being developed on other issues. Equinet perspectives are fact-based, developed from the work and experience of national equality bodies at Member State level. The Equinet working group *Policy Formation* will meet at the end of the first quarter 2011 or in the beginning of the second quarter.

Firstly, the working group will focus on the links between equality work and human rights work. This is of particular importance as a number of Equinet members already hold or are expected to receive a human rights mandate. The anti-discrimination work and the human rights work are naturally linked and mutually complementary. It is important to guarantee that in countries where the human rights mandate and the equality mandate is with different bodies, these bodies find a way to link in order to secure optimal impact. In countries where the same organization is responsible for both areas, it is important to ensure both of these areas receive adequate attention and resources. The working group will publish a perspective on the relationship between equality work and work on human rights and the role of bodies with responsibilities in both areas.

Secondly, the working group will continue to take the lead in the ad-hoc networking initiative on equality for trans people. The background and aims of this work are further detailed under SP2.3.

Thirdly, the working group will prepare a second perspective related to a current European policy/practice issue to be identified during the year.

#### **SP3.2 Data collection using the Equinet template**

Equinet, as a network of national equality bodies, shall provide the decision-makers with crucial fact-based information and input also by way of collecting comparable data on complaints and procedures. A regular collection of comparable complaints data from European equality bodies will enable a monitoring of trends and patterns of discrimination.

Equinet is currently developing a data collection template for complaints data of quasi-judicial equality bodies. The template will cover all fields and grounds of discrimination named in the EU equal treatment Directives. The template, using comprehensive definitions will overcome the obstacles arising from different procedural rules and enable the collection of basic comparable data from all countries.

In 2011 Equinet will put this template into practice by collecting the relevant complaints data concerning 2010 from all its members that have a quasi-judicial / tribunal mandate. This data will be processed and the main results will be displayed on the Equinet website for reference as a single user-friendly document.

**SP3.3 Dissemination of Equinet perspectives to national authorities at Member State Level**

Equinet will encourage its member organizations to raise the attention of their national authorities to the perspectives produced by its Policy Formation working group, notably to the two perspectives that the working group will produce in 2011.

**SP3.4 Commissioning and conducting studies**

Equinet will not commission any studies in 2011.

## **STRATEGY 4: GROWTH AND POSITIONING AS A NETWORK**

Based on the rationale and the objectives set out for this strategy in the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014, the following activities will be implemented:

### **SP4.1 Mapping of national equality bodies in the European Union and candidate countries**

Equinet will maintain an up to date map of equality bodies across Member States, candidate countries and other relevant jurisdictions. This will have a particular focus on their diversity of functions, structures, and mandates. This constantly updated database of national equality bodies will also allow Equinet to identify potential new members.

### **SP4.2 Facilitate communication and networking between the members**

Equinet will continue to work on creating and facilitating cooperation between its members. A particular focus will be placed on encouraging networking possibilities between equality bodies that share specific functions or focus and on bilateral networking or staff exchange processes between equality bodies to share experience and mutually reinforce their capacities.

### **SP4.3 Communication and relationships with European stakeholders**

Equinet will participate in, and contribute to as appropriate, the Equality Summit organized by the European Commission and the Polish Presidency of the EU. It will engage with and contribute to, as appropriate, the Governmental Expert Group of the European Commission.

Equinet will convene an annual meeting with stakeholders from civil society and the social partner organisations at European Union level.

### **SP4.4 Recognition of equality bodies and their work at European Union and Member State level**

Whenever needed and relevant, Equinet will take steps to support equality bodies that find their independence or effectiveness threatened.

### **SP4.5 Financial stability and development of the network**

Conscious that ensuring new and diversified funding is a condition for the long-term stability of the network and its development; Equinet will explore in 2011 new or additional possible sources of funding and take steps aimed at securing them.

## **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

The sustainability and the efficiency of the network and its management will be maintained and further enhanced whenever possible.

Board Members will hold four Board Meetings throughout the year (with a possibility of more if deemed necessary by the Board) to ensure the implementation of this Work Programme. One or more meetings could take the form of a video conference to reduce costs and environmental impact.

The Secretariat will ensure that Equinet meets all its accountability duties towards the European Commission by producing one interim (middle of the year) and one final (beginning of 2012) activity and financial report and by regularly informing its representatives of Equinet activities.

The Secretariat will hold regular internal team meeting to coordinate its actions. Its staff members will receive formal appraisals of their work and will be given the possibility to develop skills (via internships in one of the Equinet members, via external trainings...), depending on available funds.

The Secretariat and the Board will organize the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Equinet Members in the month of November, where the election of the Members of the new Board for a mandate of two years will be held.

The Secretariat and the Board will closely monitor the quality of the work of Equinet by collecting quantitative and qualitative indicators from members throughout the year and interpreting them. This will ensure that the work being done is accurately matching the needs of Equinet members.

The Board and Secretariat will also monitor that gender equality and diversity are mainstreamed within all activities and that Equinet operations respect the commitment to environmental sustainability.

## ANNEX I

## CALENDAR OF PLANNED EQUINET ACTIVITIES FOR 2011

ACTIVITY	PERIOD OF THE YEAR
Mapping of equality bodies	Ongoing
Promote networking between equality bodies	Ongoing
Maintain relationships with stakeholders and participation in relevant events	Ongoing
Promote recognition and independence of EB at European level	Ongoing
Implementation of Equinet communication plan and activities	Ongoing
Dissemination of Equinet reports and information	Ongoing
<b>Board meeting 1</b>	<b>17 January 2011</b>
Meeting of working group <i>Communications Strategies and Practices</i>	First quarter
Launch of the project on the identification of good practices	First quarter
<b>Equinet high-level legal seminar</b>	<b>24 or 29 March 2011</b>
<b>Board meeting 2 (around the legal seminar)</b>	<b>23/25 March or 28/30 March 2011</b>
First meeting working group <i>Equality Law in Practice</i>	End first quarter/beginning second quarter
First meeting working group <i>Strategy Development</i>	End first quarter/beginning second quarter
Meeting working group <i>Policy Formation</i>	End first quarter/beginning second quarter
Launch of the Project on Data Collection	End second quarter/beginning third quarter
<b>Training on communication strategies and practices</b>	<b>30-31 May 2011</b>
<b>Board meeting 3</b>	<b>1 June 2011</b>
Second meeting working group <i>Equality Law in Practice</i>	End third quarter/beginning fourth quarter
Second meeting working group <i>Strategy Development</i>	End third quarter/beginning fourth quarter
<b>Legal Training</b>	<b>19-20 September 2011</b>
<b>Board meeting 4 (around legal training)</b>	<b>21 September 2011</b>
Meetings for the initiatives on Roma and trans People	Third/fourth quarter
<b>Equinet Annual General Meeting</b>	<b>November 2011</b>
Production and dissemination of output working group <i>Equality Law in Practice</i>	Fourth quarter
Production and dissemination of output working group <i>Strategy Development</i>	Fourth quarter
Production and dissemination of output working group <i>Policy Formation</i>	Fourth quarter
Production and dissemination of guides on good practices	Fourth quarter
Production and dissemination of factsheets on communication practices	Fourth quarter

**ANNEX II****OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS FOR EQUINET ACTIVITIES 2011**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Projected cost (€)</b>
Communication Strategies and Practices Training	35,000
Legal Training	35,000
Legal seminar	35,000
6 working group meetings	24,000
Ad-hoc initiatives	12,000
Participation in relevant events and exchange meetings at EU level (EC, EP, FRA, EIGE, other stakeholders)	3,000
Equinet AGM	16,000
Regular Board meetings (at least 4)	10,000
4 working group outputs/publications + translation (incl. 2 perspectives)	29,000
Website enhancements + maintenance	9,000
Annual Report	4,000
Secretariat/Board representation (e.g. visits to members...)	10,000
Experts (including external evaluation)	10,000
Equinet promotional material	2,000
Dissemination/mailings of Equinet productions	5,000
Other services	10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>249,000</b>

<b>Other costs</b>	<b>Projected cost (€)</b>
Accounting + audits	13,000
Fixed costs (rent, insurances...)	51,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>64,000</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>313,000</b>
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<b>Summary</b>	
Total activity 2011 expenditures	<b>313,000</b>
Total salaries 2011	<b>292,000</b>
<b>Total cash expenditures 2011</b>	<b>605,000</b>