

E Equinet
European network
of equality bodies



Annual **Report**

2012

Equinet at a Glance

Equinet is the **European Network of Equality Bodies**, a membership organisation bringing together 38 equality bodies from 31 European countries including all of the EU Member States.

Equality bodies are public organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and promoting equality. They are legally required to do so in relation to one, some, or all of the grounds of discrimination covered by European Union (EU) law – gender, race and ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

Equinet **aims** to enhance the strategic capacity of its member equality bodies and to develop the skills and competences of their staff. Equinet also seeks to identify and communicate the learning from the work of equality bodies, and enhance their recognition and strategic positioning in relation to all stakeholders at European level.

To achieve its aims, Equinet:

- Organises regular **training events** for staff members of equality bodies, and **high-level seminars** on key topics relevant to the European agenda on equality and non-discrimination;

- Supports research and exchange of information, data and expertise from and among equality bodies through:

- » **Working Groups** structured around thematic work areas of relevance to equality bodies, such as Equality Law in Practice, Strategy Development, Communication Strategies and Practices, Policy Formation, and Gender Equality [from 2013];
- » **Reports, policy perspectives, and good practice guides** on relevant themes relating to the work of equality bodies and developments in the field of equality and non-discrimination in Europe;
- » **Communication channels** such as the Equinet website, online members' forum, social media profiles and groups, monthly newsletters and regular email updates.

The highest decision-making structure within Equinet is the General Assembly of Equinet Members. Every two years the Assembly elects an Executive Board responsible for the overall management and the strategic leadership of the network. The operational structure consists of Working Groups of equality bodies' experts, and a Secretariat based in Brussels.

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Equinet Timeline of 2012

23 MARCH

1st meeting of the Working Group *Equality Law in Practice*, hosted in London by the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission

26 APRIL

1st meeting of the Working Group *Strategy Development*, hosted in Dublin by Ireland's Equality Authority

09 MAY

Meeting of the Working Group *Policy Formation*, hosted in Brussels by Belgium's Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism

19 SEPTEMBER

Equinet's Annual Meeting with Stakeholders (civil society and social partners) in Brussels

26-27 SEPTEMBER

Equinet Training on *Using Communications to Tackle Under-Reporting of Discrimination*, hosted in Valetta by Malta's National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

19 OCTOBER

2nd meeting of the Working Group *Equality Law in Practice*, hosted in Brno by the Czech Republic's Public Defender of Rights

Equinet launches its main publications



28 MARCH

Equinet High-Level Legal Seminar in Brussels on *Discrimination cases in front of the European Courts and the role of national equality bodies*

27 APRIL

1st meeting of the Working Group *Communication Strategies and Practices*, hosted in Dublin by Ireland's Equality Authority

23-24 MAY

Equinet Legal Training on *Alternative Dispute Resolution: A Tool for Specialised Equality Bodies*, hosted in Vilnius by Lithuania's Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson

21 SEPTEMBER

2nd meeting of the Working Group *Strategy Development*, hosted in Lisbon by Portugal's Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment

28 SEPTEMBER

2nd meeting of the Working Group *Communication Strategies and Practices*, hosted in Valetta by Malta's National Commission for the Promotion of Equality

05 DECEMBER

EQUINET ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN BRUSSELS

Equinet celebrates its 5th anniversary

Equinet Members unanimously vote in favour of the incorporation of the work of the former Gender Equality Bodies' Network into Equinet

Equinet welcomes its 38th member, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Foreword

2012 marked the fifth anniversary of the establishment of Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies. Our membership grew to 38 equality bodies from 31 countries¹, including all EU Member States, and we continued to offer a strong European platform for equality bodies.

Equinet provided peer support and capacity-building to enhance the work of our members and their staff in their mission as statutory bodies established under equal treatment legislation to promote equality and combat discrimination across Europe. This was achieved through training events, participation in thematic working groups with colleagues from other equality bodies, expert seminars, and participation in the members' forum of our website.

We enabled the learning from the work of our member equality bodies at national level to be identified and widely communicated. This was achieved through surveys of our members and the analysis and publication of survey results in our series of perspectives. It was also done through publications prepared by each of our thematic working groups. This body of literature supports our members in their work and provides a valued input to policymakers at EU level.

The independent evaluation of our work during 2012 highlighted the high value placed by our member equality bodies on the training, peer learning, policy influence and development opportunities offered by Equinet. We were encouraged by the extent to which our members reported a helpful impact on their work from their engagement with Equinet.

During 2012 Equinet had a particular focus on the challenges facing equality bodies in a time of economic crisis and the need for standards in the establishment, support and operations of equality bodies. Some equality bodies continue to benefit from a positive and supportive context, but many report challenges to their independence and effectiveness. In particular, changes to legal structure and cutbacks to resources have diminished the capacity of these equality bodies. The need for international standards to protect and promote independent and effective equality

bodies was highlighted and has been taken up by Equinet.

Equinet took on new responsibilities during 2012 with the incorporation of the work of the previous network of gender equality bodies. An enhanced gender specific focus has been developed in our work to be implemented from 2013. We hope that this will contribute to the advancement of gender equality and to a deepening of our work across the grounds of the equality agenda.

The achievements of Equinet, presented in this report, were only possible with the active participation and expert input of our member equality bodies, as well as the skill and commitment of our Executive Board. Particular thanks are due to our expert and dedicated staff team for their central contribution.

We are also grateful to the European Commission for its support through the PROGRESS programme and for its ongoing commitment to the work of Equinet and equality bodies.



Jozef De Witte
Chair of the Executive Board

Anne Gaspard
Executive Director

¹ In 2012 Equinet welcomed as a new member the recently established Commission for Protection against Discrimination from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Need for Standards to Support Equality Bodies



The provisions of the EU equal treatment Directives on the grounds of gender and racial or ethnic origin provide minimum standards for equality bodies. In a recent Equinet survey from 2012, a number of our member equality bodies pointed to the need to establish more detailed provisions on the standards required for the effectiveness and independence of equality bodies, and to give more detail on the functions currently set out in the Directives for equality bodies so that minimum standards across all Member States could be achieved for the operation of each function.

The joint report being prepared by the European Commission on the Application of Directives 2000/43/EC and 2000/78/EC (expected at the end of 2013) provides an opportunity to further develop the provisions relating to equality bodies.

Equinet raised the following issues to be considered by the European Commission and the legislators:

I. Architecture: Some Member States have an equality body that is predominantly quasi-judicial, others have an equality body that primarily provides legal supports to those who experience discrimination and takes initiatives to promote equality and some have both types of equality body. There needs to be some assessment as to the most effective institutional architecture.

II. Legal structure: The legal structure of equality bodies varies from stand-alone structures to forming part of Government Ministries to being part of a body with a broader mandate. Consideration needs to be given to the most effective legal structure of, form of accountability for, and manner of making appointments to equality bodies.

III. Powers and functions: Deficits have been identified in the powers and functions of equality bodies. Equality bodies need to have a coherent set of powers and functions in relation to all grounds covered by the Directives. Support to victims of discrimination needs to be defined to include the provision of legal advice and support. Equality bodies

need to be able to take cases in their own name, implement inquiries, and quasi-judicial equality bodies need to be empowered to impose sanctions that are dissuasive and legally binding.

IV. Mergers: A number of equality bodies have recently been merged with human rights institutions or have taken on human rights responsibilities. How these merged bodies could best address discrimination issues needs to be determined.

V. Resources: Many equality bodies have experienced significant reductions in their resources. They need to have the resources necessary to implement all their powers effectively if they are to realise their potential.

VI. Regression: Equality bodies that go beyond the requirements of the Directives need to be protected from any regression in their powers, functions and legal structure.

VII. Standards: Standards for the independence, effectiveness and operation of equality bodies are key in ensuring they can realise their significant potential.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Tackling Under-Reporting of Discrimination

Under-reporting of discrimination is a widespread phenomenon in the EU. The results of a quantitative survey conducted in 2010 by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) revealed that 82% of all those who were discriminated against on the ground of racial or ethnic origin in the previous 12 months did not report their most recent experience of discrimination anywhere².

The reasons for this are numerous. They include fear of victimisation, lack of knowledge, and a sense that nothing will change. It is especially important for equality bodies to adequately respond to this challenge as they should be the first port of call for victims of discrimination to seek assistance in the Member States.

The FRA has developed a useful framework for examining the issue of under-reporting and has published this under the theme "Access to Justice"³. Equinet used this framework to look at under-reporting during a communications training event and in a report from its working group on communications. Good communication strategies and practices need to be at the heart of any adequate response to under-reporting.

Such a communications response should aim:

I. TO INFORM MEMBERS OF GROUPS EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS AND HOW TO EXERCISE THEM. This includes finding the right channels of communication for different groups experiencing discrimination and conducting outreach activities to these groups.

II. TO BUILD CONFIDENCE AMONG MEMBERS OF GROUPS EXPERIENCING DISCRIMINATION IN EXERCISING THEIR RIGHTS. Trust needs to be built in the equality body. Equality body processes need to be accessible. Complainants need to know what will happen once they make a complaint and the process needs to be predictable. Groups experiencing discrimination need to hear about successful cases.

III. TO BUILD A CULTURE OF RIGHTS IN SOCIETY. Equality bodies need to contribute to a wider culture in society that is positively disposed to diversity and to people challenging discrimination.



² European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: EU-MIDIS Data in Focus Report 2010, *Rights Awareness and Equality Bodies, Strengthening the fundamental rights architecture in the EU III*

³ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2012 report on *Access to justice in cases of discrimination in the EU - Steps to further equality*

OUR MAIN OBJECTIVES

Objective 1

PROVIDING PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE STAFF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EQUALITY BODIES

Objective 2

PROVIDING PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EQUALITY BODIES

Objective 3

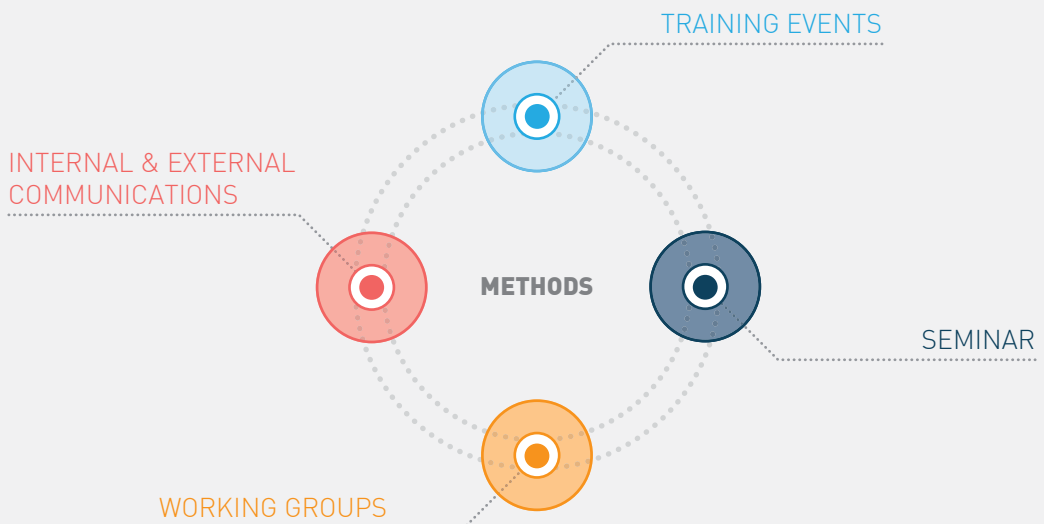
CONTRIBUTING TO POLICY FORMATION AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

Objective 4

GROWTH AND POSITIONING AS A NETWORK

THE MAIN METHODS WE USE TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES

Each method has a color code that you can follow in the next pages.



Objective 1

PROVIDING PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE STAFF DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EQUALITY BODIES



I. WORKING GROUP: EQUALITY LAW IN PRACTICE

Equinet’s Working Group on *Equality Law in Practice* brings together legal experts working at equality bodies. They analyse real-life cases to reveal how European and national equality legislation is implemented and interpreted and to share experiences related to case work, in order to contribute to effective legal work and uniform protection from discrimination across Europe.

The group analysed four cases in 2012. The first case related to alleged **discrimination by association on the gender ground** of the claimant on grounds of the pregnancy of his

partner. The second case concerned a claim of **discriminatory dismissal of older workers**. The third and fourth cases concerned **discrimination on the ground of nationality or citizenship**, allowing for an analysis of the limits of legal protection awarded to third-country nationals by EU and national legislation.

The findings for each case contain conclusions and lessons learned which are valuable for equality bodies, national governments, European institutions and other stakeholders in their work on European anti-discrimination law.

II. EQUINET HIGH-LEVEL LEGAL SEMINAR ON DISCRIMINATION CASES BEFORE EUROPEAN COURTS



Equinet organised its annual High-Level Legal Seminar in Brussels, focusing on discrimination cases before the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights. The aim of the seminar was to give senior legal experts from national equality bodies and other stakeholders working with the European anti-

discrimination legislation insights into recent case law of the European courts in the field of equality. It also focused on the role that national equality bodies could play before these courts as well as the procedural difficulties of influencing the law through such strategic litigation.



“I am exceedingly grateful to Equinet for encouraging me to reflect on the important CJEU’s Advocate General’s opinion in the Galina Meister case during the High-Level Legal Seminar. I was able to do this in front of a professional and committed audience who answered most of my outstanding questions and also proved a helpful sounding board to my criticism of the opinion. The experience inspired me to approach the subsequent CJEU judgment in a more complex manner in an article written for the European Anti-discrimination Law Review.”

Lilla Farkas, Associate Legal Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Group

III. EQUINET LEGAL TRAINING ON ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Equinet organised its annual Legal Training in Vilnius, hosted by the Office of the Lithuanian Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, on the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms (ADR) such as mediation or negotiation in cases of discrimination dealt with by equality bodies.

The keynote presentations by qualified experts and the workshop discussions explored the strategic use of ADR by equality bodies, examples of cases where it was successfully used, the

challenges of convincing parties to agree to negotiations and those related to the neutrality of an equality body acting as a mediator, ways of handling the power imbalance between the parties and the cases of discrimination in which ADR is and is not a good option.

Representatives of equality bodies with different mandates, practices and experiences regarding the use of ADR agreed on the importance of this tool and expressed their interest in a continued exchange on it.



IV. INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- **Members' only information board and annual calendar:** all meetings, events, updates, requests, invitations and deadlines are highlighted on the homepage of the members-only area of the Equinet website
- **Dedicated subsections for each working group in the members-only area of the Equinet website:** the latest updates, working documents, member contributions and meeting logistics are available to members of Equinet working groups
- **Easy-to-use members' forum with specialized discussion categories:** staff members of equality bodies can exchange information relevant to their work and to the work of Equinet
- **Better dissemination of information:** in addition to regular mass-mailings of Equinet reports and perspectives to equality bodies and key national and European organisations and experts, 2012 also saw the launch of new and improved online communication channels, such as a fully revamped website, monthly e-newsletters, and social media profiles.



V. EQUINET TRAINING ON TACKLING UNDER-REPORTING OF DISCRIMINATION THROUGH BETTER COMMUNICATION

Equinet organised a training event in Malta hosted by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, aimed at equality bodies' staff members specialised in communications.

The event was structured around three main components needed for an equality body's communication strategy to be effective in tackling under-reporting:

- Building knowledge of rights in groups that experience discrimination
- Developing confidence to exercise these rights
- Contributing to a culture of rights in the wider society.

The issues explored included using the right language and channels to reach audiences, employing a "mutual education" approach to communication projects (i.e. equality bodies and vulnerable groups learning about one another), the communication potential of connectors (i.e. individuals/groups trusted by vulnerable communities and that could play a role in better connecting equality bodies with these communities), and building partnerships with civil society and other institutions to improve communication with potential victims of discrimination.



"FRA was invited to the training organised by Equinet on tackling under-reporting to present some preliminary findings of its sociological study "Access to justice in cases of discrimination in the EU – Steps to further equality" concerning concrete communication related practices to tackle under-reporting. The training employed various methodologies, such as world café discussions and different interactive workshops, including plenary discussion facilitated remotely via videoconferencing tools. In particular, a rich selection of various participatory formats of discussion was very refreshing. The learning occurred through our active involvement and allowed us – the participants – to be creative in providing our input and exchanging experiences and practices in the area under the focus, hence ensuring that our specific training needs were met. In addition, participants were able to interact and network with each other also informally during a very nice social event organised at the end of the first day. In sum, the event was very useful and certainly met its objectives."

Jana Gajdosova, Junior Research Officer, Freedoms and Justice Department, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Objective 2

PROVIDING PEER SUPPORT TO ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EQUALITY BODIES



I. WORKING GROUP: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Equinet's Working Group on *Strategy Development* involves staff members of equality bodies concerned with planning and strategy development. They conduct discussions and collect good practices in order to support equality bodies to use their mandates and powers in a strategic and effective manner.

In 2012 the group analysed equality bodies' role in relation to duty-bearers (employers and service-providers) in the field of non-discrimination, recognising that these actors

share an important responsibility in challenging discrimination and building a more equal society. Members of the group collected and analysed good practice examples and promising projects that might contribute to a strategy for equality bodies to cooperate with duty-bearers in order to improve their practices and help to build a culture of equality.

The work of the group will culminate in the organisation of an Equinet training event and a subsequent report on this topic in 2013.

II. WORKING GROUP: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

The Working Group on *Communication Strategies and Practices* involves staff members of equality bodies that are working on communications strategies and activities or have a strong interest in this area. It aims to enable discussion, reflection and action on the effective development of communication strategies and activities by equality bodies and to contribute to the work of members in raising awareness of equality, rights

and obligations among the general public, the groups experiencing discrimination and particular sectors of society.



In 2012 the working group used the insights and practices gathered from the training event on *Tackling Under-Reporting Through Communication* and the group's meetings to write a report on strategy around this topic. This was widely disseminated to communications specialists of equality bodies.

“Adequate communication strategies and practices play a crucial role in effectively combating inequality and discrimination. By discussing our own experiences as members of the Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, we as communications specialists exchange valuable knowledge and expertise and we improve our ability to efficiently use our resources - a skill particularly required in today's difficult economic circumstances.”

Thekla Demetriadou, Officer at the Ombudsman's Office of Cyprus

Objective 3

CONTRIBUTING TO POLICY FORMATION AT EUROPEAN LEVEL



WORKING GROUP: POLICY FORMATION

The Working Group on Policy Formation involves staff members of equality bodies concerned with issues of public policy. During 2012 they produced two perspectives:

EQUALITY BODIES – CURRENT CHALLENGES

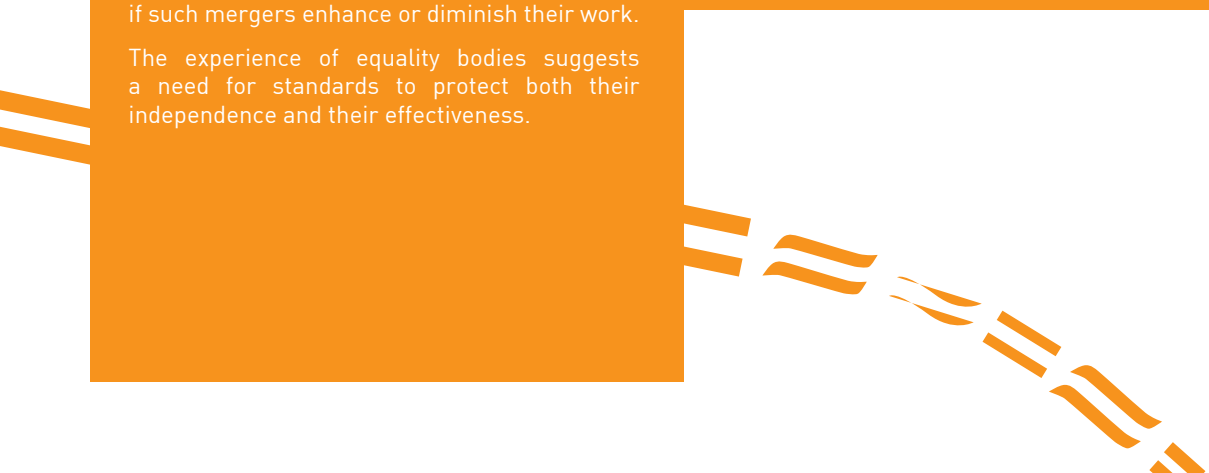
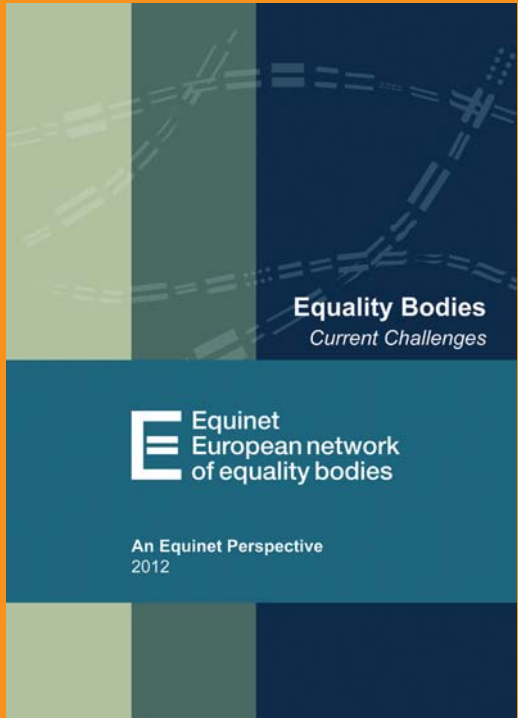
This perspective, based on a survey of twenty-seven equality bodies, explores the experience of equality bodies in the current context of economic crisis. Independence and effectiveness were the two key indicators used.

A mixed picture emerged. Some equality bodies reported improved circumstances, others reported no serious impact and a number reported being significantly diminished in this context.

The resources and effectiveness of equality bodies emerge as the key issue. Twelve equality bodies reported a significant reduction in their resources. Five of these identified the reductions as disproportionate compared to the wider public sector.

The issue of independence also emerges, especially in relation to decision making about equality bodies' legal structure. A number of mergers with other human rights mandated bodies were reported. It will take time to assess if such mergers enhance or diminish their work.

The experience of equality bodies suggests a need for standards to protect both their independence and their effectiveness.

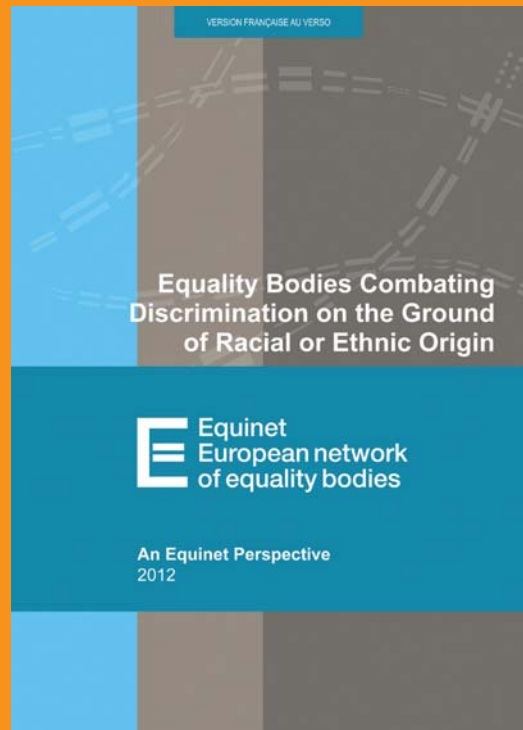


EQUALITY BODIES COMBATING DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUND OF RACIAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN

This perspective, based on a survey of twenty equality bodies, explores the work of equality bodies on the ground of racial or ethnic origin. Equality bodies deal with a broad range of discriminatory issues on this ground. In the field of employment discrimination is reported mostly in recruitment, discriminatory dismissals and harassment at the workplace. Beyond the field of employment discrimination is reported in restaurants, clubs, hotels and private rented housing but also in education and health services. Police operations, refugee and asylum issues and hate crime or speech are addressed by equality bodies that form part of a body with a broader mandate.

Under-reporting, low success rates in cases on this ground and sanctions emerge as particular problems. Twelve equality bodies reported shortcomings in the level of sanctions applied. Most quasi judicial equality bodies cannot make legally binding findings.

More detailed provisions on sanctions and on equality bodies; the inclusion of nationality as a ground of discrimination and a positive duty on public sector bodies to promote equality were suggested for developing the Race Directive.



“Learning and showing the way forward in combating discrimination and promoting equal treatment requires collecting data on the work of equality bodies in a systematic way. Equinet’s Working Group on Policy Formation is a very good platform for doing this, while at the same time providing invaluable insights through the group’s outputs for other stakeholders committed to equal treatment.”

Mandana Zarrehparvar, Working Group Member & Senior Adviser, Danish Institute for Human Rights

Objective 4

GROWTH AND POSITIONING AS A NETWORK

I. COOPERATION WITH EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS

Equinet has through the years become a point of reference at European level in the field of equality and non-discrimination, collecting and conveying the unique experience of equality bodies to policy-makers, legislators, civil society and other interested stakeholders. Equinet is indebted to the European Commission, in particular its Directorate for Equality in DG Justice, for their continued support to the network that has made this possible.

We are grateful for the excellent relationship and cooperation with our external partners and the support they provide to equality bodies and the network. These links are important in reinforcing the external legitimacy, status and standing of equality bodies as they operate in a volatile and on occasion unsupportive environment. This renders such collaboration and alliances ever more important. Equinet convened in 2012 its annual meeting with its partners from civil society and social partner organisations at European level. This provided a valuable opportunity to share and discuss our respective plans, priorities and concerns for the coming period.

Equinet was privileged to welcome representatives of the European Institutions, the

EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), social partners, civil society, anti-discrimination and equality think-tanks, academics as well as legal professionals as speakers and participants at its various events throughout 2012.

The Chair of the Executive Board and a number of equality bodies contributed to the Equality Summit organized by the European Commission and the Cypriot Presidency of the EU Council in November 2012. Participants at this important Summit made a strong and convincing case for equality bodies and a strong equality infrastructure as drivers for growth.

Equinet followed the work of the Coalition of NGOs set up in support of the European Year 2012 for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, communicating the learning from equality bodies presented in the Equinet perspective published in 2011 on this topic.

Equinet continued to develop a mutually fruitful link and collaboration with the European Group of National Human Rights Institutions, building on the Equinet perspective on the conditions for and nature of these links published in 2011.

Members of the Executive Board and staff members of the Equinet Secretariat were invited to contribute to a large number of other events, conferences and workshops organised at European Union, United Nations, and Council of Europe level.



Mr. Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, Director for Equality (DG Justice, European Commission), at the 2012 Equinet High-Level Legal Seminar on Discrimination Cases before European Courts.

II. MACEDONIAN EQUALITY BODY WELCOMED AS THE 38TH MEMBER OF EQUINET

At the 2012 Equinet Annual General Meeting, the Equinet members unanimously accepted the membership application presented by the *Commission for Protection against Discrimination of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (www.kzd.mk). The Commission is an equality body mandated to tackle discrimination on an open list of grounds. It has the power to issue opinions and recommendations on the basis of the complaints received.



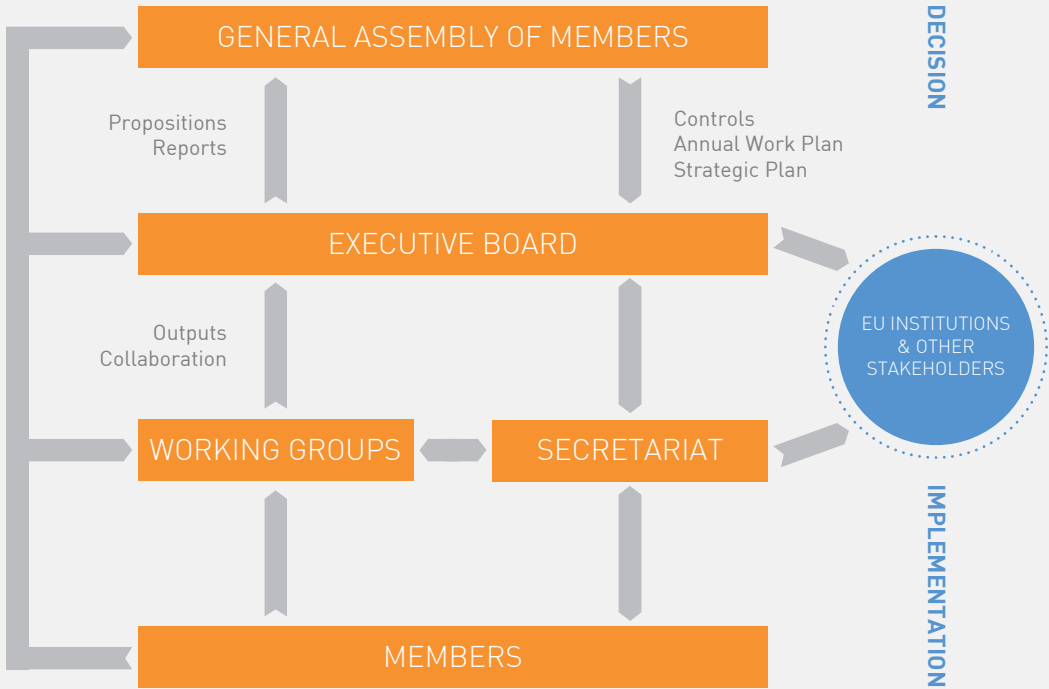
III. COMPREHENSIVE MEMBERS' PROFILES ON THE EQUINET WEBSITE

Each equality body that is a member of our network has a dedicated webpage on the Equinet website containing basic contact information, latest updates, as well as a detailed and easily downloadable profile with details on mandates, grounds and fields of discrimination covered, budget, management structure and other useful information. This is the main database at European level containing detailed information on equality bodies, and is an important source of information used by our partners and a multitude of national and European stakeholders in the field of equality and non-discrimination.



Equinet Governance

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



The main decisions concerning the general steering of Equinet are taken by the **General Assembly of Members (GA)** that is made up of all the current members of the network, and is convened at least once a year for an **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**. The GA :

- ratifies membership applications of new Members
- elects members of the Executive Board every two years
- takes decisions on the strategic direction of the network by participating in the development, reviewing and adoption of the annual Work Plan for the next year prepared by the Executive Board
- is entitled to amend the statutes of the organisation and to approve budgets and accounts.

During the course of the year, the GA delegates the management and the administration of the network to the **Executive Board**. The latter devises the strategy for implementing the work plan for the year, ensures that the means are in place to guarantee the effectiveness and sustainability of the network and acts in the best interest of the network and its members throughout the year.

All of the Executive Board members, the Board Advisor and the Equinet Treasurer execute their tasks pro bono.

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2011-2013

- **Jozef De Witte (Chair)**, Executive Director, Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism, Belgium
- **Csaba Ferenc Asztalos**, President, National Council for Combating Discrimination, Romania
- **Evelyn Collins**, Chief Executive, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Northern Ireland
- **Domenica Ghidei**, Commissioner, Equal Treatment Commission, the Netherlands
- **Elke Lujansky-Lammer**, Head of the Regional Office for Styria, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria
- **Julija Šartuch**, Adviser on international cooperation and project activities, Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, Lithuania
- **Tena Šimonović Einwalter**, Coordinator for the Area of Non-discrimination, Office of the Ombudsman, Croatia
- **Therese Spiteri**, Manager, National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, Malta
- **Néphèli Yatropoulos**, Advisor to the Defender on European and International Affairs, Defender of Rights, France

Board Advisor: Niall Crowley, Independent Expert

Equinet Treasurer: Therese Spiteri, Manager, National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, Malta



2011-2013 Equinet Board members from left to right: Domenica Ghidei, Therese Spiteri, Csaba Ferenc Asztalos, Evelyn Collins, Julija Šartuch, Tena Šimonović Einwalter, Jozef De Witte, Elke Lujansky-Lammer and Néphèli Yatropoulos.

WORKING GROUPS

The **Equinet Working Groups** are essential parts of the inner functioning of the network. Composed only of staff persons from member organisations they are, along with the trainings and the legal seminar, the place where the sharing of expertise and the cooperation between the different member equality bodies happens. Each group is headed by a Moderator who, assisted by the Equinet Secretariat, is responsible for the organisation and the implementation of the work as planned in the annual Work Plans.

In 2012 the four Equinet Working Groups were:

- **Equality Law in Practice – supporting equality bodies in their legal work**
Moderator: Jayne Hardwick, Equality and Human Rights Commission, United Kingdom, Great Britain
- **Strategy Development – supporting the strategic use of equality bodies’ powers**
Moderator: Sandra Konstatzky, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria
- **Communication Strategies and Practices – supporting equality bodies in their communication work**
Moderator: Libby Kinney, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Northern Ireland
- **Policy Formation – supporting a dialogue on the learning from the work of equality bodies**
Moderator: Evelyn Collins, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, United Kingdom, Northern Ireland

SECRETARIAT

The **Secretariat** reports to the Executive Board and implements the annual work plan of the organisation. It is responsible for organising and managing the daily activities of the network and assists individual members with their requests. It assists and coordinates the work of the Working Groups.

In 2012 the Secretariat team included:

- **Anne Gaspard**, Executive Director
- **Tamás Kádár**, Policy Officer
- **Yannick Godin**, Administration & Finance Officer
- **Caroline Nsenda**, Communications Officer (January)
- **Cosmin Popa**, Communications Intern (January - February) and Communications Officer (March onwards)
- **Catharina Sahl**, Policy Intern (March - July) and Policy Assistant (September - December)
- **Raili Uibo**, Assistant Trainee (September - December)



The Secretariat from left to right: Catharina Sahl, Yannick Godin, Tamás Kádár, Cosmin Popa and Anne Gaspard.

Equinet Finances 2012

EXPENSES 2012

	Actuals	Budget for year	Balance	% Budget spent
STAFF COSTS	269,805	309,727	39,921	87.11%
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE	151,812	142,547	-9,265	106.50%
SERVICES	156,256	141,927	-14,329	110.10%
ADMINISTRATION	13,516	11,798	-1,718	114.56%
MEMBERS' TIME CONTRIBUTIONS (EQUIVALENT IN €)	145,367	135,116	-10,251	107.59%
TOTAL	736,756	741,115	4,358	99.41%

INCOME 2012

EC GRANT 2012	532,389
MEMBERS' TIME CONTRIBUTIONS (EQUIVALENT IN €)	145,367
MEMBERSHIP FEES 2012	59,000
TOTAL	736,756

BALANCE 2012

TOTAL EXPENDITURES 2012	736,756
TOTAL INCOME 2012	736,756
BALANCE 2012	0

Equinet managed its finances well for the year and delivered its activities within budget.

About the budget headings:

Staff costs: covers the salary costs of the four staff in the secretariat and two traineeships (6 months each) per year.

Travel and Subsistence: covers travels on behalf of Equinet (staff, Board members and participants in Equinet events).

Services: covers service providers (translators, printers...) that Equinet contracts in order to accomplish its mission.

Administration: covers the running costs of the Secretariat.

Equinet has three key sources of income:

- The core income comes from the grant of the European Commission under PROGRESS. This amounted to **€532,389** in 2012.
- Membership fees provide a valuable part of the matching funding required and came to **€59,000** in 2012.
- The remainder of the matching funding is made up of the time given to the work of Equinet by staff of the equality bodies translated into a cash equivalent. This came to a value of **€145,367** in 2012 (reported as income and expenditure at the same time, since they have been contributed to Equinet and "spent" by Equinet).

The Executive Board will continue to maintain its strict oversight of Equinet's financial health so that members can continue receiving the best value for money possible.

Equinet Member Organisations

AUSTRIA

Ombud for Equal Treatment
www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.at

BELGIUM

Centre for Equal Opportunities & Opposition to Racism
www.diversite.be and www.diversiteit.be

BELGIUM

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

BULGARIA

Commission for Protection against Discrimination
www.kzd-nondiscrimination.com

CROATIA

Office of the Ombudsman
www.ombudsman.hr

CYPRUS

Office of the Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman)
www.ombudsman.gov.cy

CZECH REPUBLIC

Office of the Public Defender of Rights
www.ochrance.cz

DENMARK

Board of Equal Treatment
www.ast.dk

DENMARK

Danish Institute for Human Rights
www.humanrights.dk

ESTONIA

Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner
www.svv.ee

FINLAND

Ombudsman for Equality
www.tasa-arvo.fi

FINLAND

Ombudsman for Minorities
www.ofm.fi

FRANCE

Defender of Rights
www.defenseurdesdroits.fr

GERMANY

Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency
www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de

GREECE

Greek Ombudsman
www.synigoros.gr

HUNGARY

Equal Treatment Authority
www.egyenlobanasmod.hu

HUNGARY

Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights
www.ajbh.hu

IRELAND

Equality Authority
www.equality.ie

ITALY

National Office against Racial Discrimination - UNAR
www.unar.it

LATVIA

Office of the Ombudsman
www.tiesibsargs.lv

LITHUANIA

Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson
www.lygybe.lt

LUXEMBURG

Centre for Equal Treatment
www.cet.lu

(FYRO) MACEDONIA

Commission for the Protection against Discrimination
www.kzd.mk/mk/

MALTA

National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
www.equality.gov.mt

NETHERLANDS

Netherlands Institute for Human Rights
www.mensenrechten.nl

NORWAY

Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud
www.ldo.no

POLAND

Human Rights Defender
www.rpo.gov.pl

PORTUGAL

Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality
www.cig.gov.pt

PORTUGAL

Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment
www.cite.gov.pt

PORTUGAL

High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue
www.acidi.gov.pt

ROMANIA

National Council for Combating Discrimination
www.cncd.org.ro

SERBIA

Commission for the Protection of Equality
www.ravnopravnost.gov.rs

SLOVAKIA

National Centre for Human Rights
www.snslp.sk

SLOVENIA

Advocate of the Principle of Equality
www.zagovornik.net

SPAIN

Spanish Race and Ethnic Equality Council
www.igualdadynodiscriminacion.org

SWEDEN

Equality Ombudsman
www.do.se

UNITED KINGDOM - GREAT BRITAIN

Equality and Human Rights Commission
www.equalityhumanrights.com

UNITED KINGDOM - NORTHERN IRELAND

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
www.equalityni.org



Channels of Communication



www.equineteurope.org



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[@equineteurope](https://twitter.com/@equineteurope)



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