

Equinet Executive Board Meeting V
4 December 2012
Brussels, Belgium

Venue:

Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism,
138 rue royale
1000 Brussels
Belgium

ATTENDANCE:

<p><u>Board Members:</u> Jozef De Witte (JDW) - Chair Evelyn Collins (ECo) Domenica Ghidei (DG) Elke Lujansky-Lammer (ELL) Therese Spiteri (TS) Néphèli Yatropoulos (NY) Tena Simonovic-Einwalter (TSE)</p> <p><u>Board Advisor:</u> Niall Crowley (NC)</p>	<p><u>Equinet Secretariat:</u> Anne Gaspard (AG), Executive Director Tamás Kádár (TK), Policy Officer/Acting Director Yannick Godin (YG), Administration Officer Cosmin Popa (CP), Communications Officer Catharina Sahl (CS), Policy Assistant (<i>present from agenda point 5 on</i>) Raili Uibo (RU), Trainee</p>
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Apologies:

Csaba Ferenc Asztalos (CA)
Julija Sartuch (JS)

Chair of the meeting: Jozef De Witte (JDW)

Minutes: Yannick Godin (YG)

DRAFT MINUTES

4 December 2012

1. Opening

Jozef De Witte (JDW) opened the Board Meeting at 13:30 and welcomed all Board Members and Equinet Secretariat team. The proposed agenda for the meeting was reviewed and agreed upon by all participants.

JDW presented apologies received from Csaba Ferenc Asztalos and Julija Sartuch.

2. Announcements

ECo: Equality Commission for Northern Ireland assisted a man in his religious discrimination complaint against a Government Department in respect of a public appointment. The Fair Employment Tribunal found in the applicant's favour and the agreed compensation was 150,000 GBP, the highest amount of compensation achieved in a religious discrimination case assisted by the Commission.

DG: The former Dutch Equal Treatment Commission is now the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights. The transition to the new mandate is a learning process given the broadened scope of work it implies.

ELL: Decision of the government not to amend the Equal Treatment Act in Austria, no leveling up, due to political opposition.

TSE:

- First Supreme Court judgment establishing discrimination. The court found that the statements of the defendant (the President of the Croatian Football Association) constituted discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- The election process of the new Croatian Ombudsman is ongoing, but the procedure was stopped by one of the parliamentary committees reviewing the candidates.

3. Minutes of last 27/28 September Equinet meeting

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- The sentence "*The Board also agrees that it is important to find the right balance so that...*" is to be removed.
- The mention "*didn't seem to show a lot of interest for an initiative in the matter but mentioned their*" to be changed to "demonstrated a particular".

DECISION: Pending the application of the two amendments proposed above, the minutes of the 27-28 September 2012 Equinet Board Meeting are adopted by the Board and can be uploaded on the Equinet website's Members section.

4. Strategic Issues

- **EC Network of Gender Equality Bodies Update**

TK and JDW reported that the meeting of 27 November 2012 was fruitful and that all the participants accepted the incorporation of the Network of the Gender Equality Bodies into Equinet. Equinet and gender equality bodies received reassurance that the EC will keep on being an integral part of the work on the content to be pursued in the field with gender equality bodies within Equinet.

The Board then reviewed and amended the proposed text for the publication of the open position for the new Policy Officer focusing on the gender ground.

The vacancy will be launched immediately after the General Assembly of Equinet Members adopts the Work Plan 2013 at the Equinet AGM on 5 December, should it decide to do so. The deadline for applications will be set to 10am on 7 January 2013.

RU presented the document mapping the work done on the gender ground in Europe that she drafted with the help of NC for Equinet.

The Board reviewed the document and made the following amendments:

- In the conclusion part, education to be moved to group 2 (indirectly connected to labour market), subtitle of Group 3 (outside of labour market) to be removed and the following to be added to group 3 (further goals): violence against women; hate speech/hate crime.
- Intersectionality and CEDAW to be taken into account horizontally.

- **Meeting with the EC / Equality Directorate units and implications (9 October 2012)**

Equinet representatives who attended the meeting reported that it was a well attended and very useful exchange, which was proposed to be reconvened on an annual basis by the European Commission.

- **Work Plan 2013 and Board election procedures**

No amendment received.

The EC informed Equinet that the “degressivity” rule will not apply for the 2013 grant, which means that the part of the EC funds in the Equinet budget can reach 80%.

DECISION: Whilst sticking to the main lines of the budget proposal presented to Members and if it is adopted by them at the AGM, the final figures of the Equinet budget 2013 to be introduced to the EC may be reviewed and marginally amended, considering the information recently received about the ‘degressivity’ rule change mentioned above.

5. Priority Issues –Work Programme 2012-2013

- **NEBs' role under the CRPD**

DECISION: The Board decided that Equinet should pursue extended cooperation on an ad-hoc basis (as per Annex 5.1) with the European Group of NHRIs working group on CRPD. This might include co-organisation of trainings and more regular communication.

- **Equinet Legal Training, Berlin March 2013**

The Board commented on and proposed changes to the first draft of the programme. The topic of “procedural aspects of bringing discrimination cases before national and European courts” was endorsed.

- **Cooperation with FRA**

The FRA is proposing to replace the meeting with NEBs organised each year with another meeting (1 to 1.5 day meeting in November 2013 in Vienna) involving more stakeholders: FRA, Equinet, Eurogroup of NHRIs, NEBs, CoE, CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, European Ombudsman and Ombud institutions, in order to achieve more cooperation between them. Equinet and other participants were asked to come up with possible topics for discussion. A teleconference with FRA, Equinet, CoE, CoE Commissioner for Human Rights and Eurogroup of NHRIs took place on 3 December and based on that FRA will update its concept paper and circulate it for comments among other stakeholders.

The Board suggested that the theme “Current challenges in a time of economic crisis” could be the focus of the meeting.

- **Equinet input EC Review anti-discrimination directives**

The Board agreed to base Equinet’s input – to be submitted to the EC before end 2012 - on Annex 5.4.

- **Equinet Legal Seminar May 2013**

The seminar will focus on the review of the Directives and a draft agenda will be prepared by the Secretariat for the January Board meeting.

- **Common Cause project**

DECISION: The Board agreed to test the idea of this project with the Communication WG and its Moderator and it will take a decision based also on their input at the Board meeting in January 2013.

- **Situation of the Slovenian Equality Body**

DECISION: An official letter will be sent out to the Slovenian authorities underlining the concerns of Equinet about the current shortcomings with regards to the respect of the required independence of Equality Bodies. Equinet will not put the body’s membership under review on that occasion but the letter will strongly encourage a revision of the situation of the body.

6. Issues and documents for information

Void

7. Any Other Business

CP: Libby Kinney has informed the Secretariat that she wishes to stand down as the Moderator of the Communications WG in 2013 after undertaking the role for the past two years. She has said she would continue her role for the next few months until another suitable moderator can be found. Proposals for other possible Moderators will be examined and communicated for consideration at the next Board meeting.

=== The Chair Jozef De Witte (JDW) closed the Board Meeting at 18:00 ===