

WORK PLAN AND BUDGET 2013

EQUINET European Network of Equality Bodies





DECEMBER 2012

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INTRODUCTION

Equinet plays a key role in offering peer support for the staff of equality bodies and institutional support for the equality bodies themselves. This is important in maximising the potential of equality bodies to advance equality and the elimination of discrimination across Europe. Equinet offers equality bodies a means through which to communicate the learning from the implementation of their unique mandate and to enable policy makers and other stakeholders to have access to this learning and to exchange with equality bodies on equal treatment issues.

Equinet now has a membership of almost 40 equality bodies in more than thirty different countries. Equinet offers valuable opportunities to these equality bodies to engage in peer learning to develop their capacities and enhance their impact. Equinet provides a presence for these equality bodies at a European level that is important in communicating, supporting and promoting the potential and contribution of equality bodies to the enhancement of European societies and effective implementation of equality legislation even in these times of crisis.

Equinet is currently engaged in implementing its strategic plan 2011-2014. The first two years of this strategic plan have witnessed growth in numbers, in capacity and in relevance of Equinet and its activities. 2013 will continue the work of these two years to ensure consolidation of and continuity in these achievements.

Exciting challenges await Equinet for 2013 as it incorporates the work of the network of gender equality bodies. This new development will reinforce and enhance current networking of gender equality bodies just as it will reinforce and enhance the gender focus in Equinet's work. It will be important to map current activity within the field of gender equality so that Equinet can establish its particular niche and make a valuable contribution. This initiative will require a significant evolution in the work programme of Equinet as well as in its resource base. It will involve a new working group alongside an additional training event and high-level seminar. It will involve the expansion of the secretariat with an additional officer, dedicated primarily to dealing with gender-related issues.

Equinet will continue with its mission to 'enable equality bodies to achieve and exercise their full potential at Member State level by sustaining and developing a networking between, and a platform for, equality bodies at European level'. Its work has been enabled to date in particular by the European Commission and also by a range of stakeholders. It is hoped that these important relationships will continue to thrive in 2013 so that Equinet can continue to realise its valuable potential.

Note:

This Work Plan 2013 mirrors the structure of the Equinet Strategic Plan 2011-2014. Each **specific** action in the Work Plan 2013 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 \underline{SPx} is the strategy number as referenced in the Strategic Plan and \underline{y} is the number of the activity among those foreseen under that strategy.

Activities for 2013

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	OUTPUTS	
TIPE OF ACTIVITY	0017015	
STRATEGY 1 - ENHANCE STAFF DEVELOPMENT		
Working group Equality Law in Practice	2 Meetings	
	1 Paper	
Training event for members – legal	1 Event	
– gender issues	1 Event	
 support to duty bearers 	1 Event	
European high level seminar – Legal	1 Seminar	
– Gender Issues	1 Seminar	
Internal/external communication	8 E-newsletters	
	1 Annual Report	
	1 Website Platform Moderated	
Supporting good practice on reasonable accommodation	1 Guide	
STRATEGY 2 - ENHANCE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Working group Strategy Development	2 Meetings	
	1 Report	
Working group Communication Strategies and	2 Meetings	
Practices	1 Report	
Working group – Gender Related Issues	2 Meetings	
	1 Report	
Meeting with national human rights institutions on linkages between equality/human rights	1 Meeting	
STRATEGY 3 - CONTRIBUTING TO	POLICY FORMATION	
Working group <i>Policy Formation</i>	2 Meetings	
	2 Perspectives	
Paper on Assessing Impact of Equality Bodies	1 Paper Commissioned (min)	
STRATEGY 4 - GROWTH AND POSITIONING AS A NETWORK		
Participation in stakeholders' events	Regular [*]	
MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION		
Annual General Meeting (AGM)	1 meeting	
Board meetings	4 meetings (min)	

^{*} 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 2013 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:

SP 1.1 Working Group - Equality Law in Practice

The working group *Equality Law in Practice* is Equinet's platform for caseworkers/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 problems and a comparative analysis of EU and national legislation and jurisprudence in the field of equality and anti-discrimination law.

In 2013 the working group will:

- Develop a paper from a legal perspective based on the experience of equality bodies as a contribution to the review by the European Commission of equal treatment Directives during the first half of 2013. Equinet will support the policy debate on the review of the Directives with the learning from this paper.
- Conduct a comparative analysis of a number of cases, 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 support the major themes that Equinet is working on or where there is evidence that there is a significant uncertainty in the interpretation of equal treatment laws. This analysis will be completed and published in the first half of 2014.
- Contribute to the organization of the High Level Legal Seminar and the Legal Training as appropriate.

The working group will meet twice during the year.

SP 1.2 Internal and external communication

Equinet will:

- Operate its new website as the key platform for interaction and communication between members and between Equinet and its members. Maintain and moderate a members' forum on the website as the core of this key platform for interaction and exchange. Develop and implement a promotion of this website to maximise its usage and to secure a high visibility for it. Use social media as appropriate to complement this platform.
- Issue a regular *e-newsletter* to publicize the latest developments in the field of antidiscrimination in Europe and the latest news from Equinet, its members, European Institutions and other European stakeholders.
- Engage with the relevant stakeholders at EU level to encourage and enable them to communicate their initiatives in the field of equality and discrimination through the Equinet channels and to seek their support in communicating Equinet initiatives.
- Circulate Email alerts on an ad-hoc basis to notify member equality bodies of important and topical issues and requests originating from members and external stakeholders.
- Design, publish and disseminate reports resulting from the work of the Equinet working groups and activities in English.
- Design, publish and disseminate Equinet *perspectives* (produced by working group *Policy Formation*). *Perspectives* will be published in English and French.

- Keep the *Equinet Membership Handbook* up to date and disseminate it as appropriate to members and potential members to provide up-to-date accurate information on the different Equinet administrative procedures in place.
- Publish an *annual report* covering the range of activities and initiatives undertaken by Equinet in 2012. The annual report will be published in English and French.

The dissemination of Equinet publications will be planned so as to ensure a wide reach over the year (with at least two bulks of mailing).

SP 1.3a Training on supporting, taking and hearing of complaints and legal cases (Berlin, Germany, March 2013)

Equinet will organise a training event for caseworkers/legal staff of equality bodies focusing on specific legal issues in the field of anti-discrimination legislation. The training 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 dealing with cases and to further develop their skills in interpreting and effectively using anti-discrimination legislation. This training puts the emphasis on levelling up participants' practical knowledge by offering ample opportunities for interactive and open discussions and debates in the workshops.

The Equinet Board will decide the specific topic and detailed programme for this training with support and input from the working group *Equality Law in Practice* and the host member as required.

All member equality bodies will be encouraged to send representatives, with a target of 40 participants.

SP 1.3b Training on 'gender related issues' (Lisbon, Portugal, September 2013)

Equinet will organise a training event for its members focusing on their work on gender related issues. The training will explore effective approaches and activities by which equality bodies can advance gender equality and eliminate gender based discrimination in relation to the issues selected. It will provide a platform for the equality bodies to share their relevant experiences in this area. This training puts the emphasis on levelling up participants' practical knowledge by offering ample opportunities for interactive and open discussion and debate in the workshops.

The Equinet Board will identify the specific issues and develop the detailed training programme, with support and input, as required, from the working group *Gender related issues*, the host member and the mapping exercise carried out on gender specific work at European level.

All member equality bodies will be encouraged to send representatives, with a target of 40 participants.

SP 1.3c Training on supporting duty bearers under equal treatment legislation to improve their practices and build a culture of rights (Zagreb, Croatia, October 2013)

Equinet will organise a training event for its members focusing on their work in supporting duty bearers. The training will explore effective approaches and activities by which equality bodies can encourage and support duty bearers to implement good practice and to support a wider culture of rights. It will provide a platform for the equality bodies to share their experiences in this area. This training will be based on the work of the working group *Strategy Development* and will include a focus on the two good practice guides developed by Equinet in this field. This training puts the emphasis on levelling up participants' practical knowledge by offering ample opportunities for interactive and open discussion and debate in the workshops.

The Equinet Board will develop the detailed training programme, with support and input from the working group *Strategy Development* and host member as required.

All member equality bodies will be encouraged to send representatives, with a target of 40

participants.

SP 1.4a Equinet High Level Legal Seminar (Brussels, Belgium, May 2013)

Equinet will organise a one day expert legal seminar in 2013, which will focus on key concepts and recent developments in anti-discrimination legislation and jurisprudence. The seminar will focus on the review of the EU equal treatment Directives.

The Board will develop the focus and detailed programme for the seminar.

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.

SP 1.4b Equinet High Level Seminar on 'Gender Related Issues' (Brussels, Belgium, June 2013)

Equinet will organise a one day expert seminar in 2013, which will focus on key current gender related issues.

The Board will develop the focus and detailed programme for the seminar based on the mapping exercise carried out on gender specific work at European level, the work of the working group *Gender Related Issues* and building on the previous work of the gender equality bodies' network.

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

SP 1.5 Guidance for equality bodies in supporting good practice by employers and service providers in making reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities

Equinet will produce one case study on effective approaches by equality bodies in supporting good practice in making reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities by employers and service providers. This will include a section on supporting reasonable accommodation on other grounds which makes use of the learning from the work done in relation to the disability ground.

One Equinet member organisation with effective action in this field will lead the work on the drafting this case study, taking into account and referencing other good practice examples as appropriate and available.

The case study 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:

SP 2.1 Working Group - Strategy Development

The working group *Strategy Development* is Equinet's platform for staff members of equality bodies that are concerned with strategic issues and planning within their equality body 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 and resources available to equality bodies.

In 2013 the working group will:

- Continue its work of analysing equality bodies' role in relation to the duty-bearers in the field of non-discrimination, such as employers, public bodies and service providers.
- Assist with the preparation of the training event on supporting duty bearers.
- Produce and disseminate a final report drawing from the analysis of good practice examples that could form part of a strategy for equality bodies to cooperate with these duty-bearers to improve their practices and to contribute to a culture of equality.

The working group will meet twice during the year.

SP 2.2a Working Group - Communication Strategies and Practices

The working group *Communication Strategies* is Equinet's platform for 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 2013 the working group will:

- Examine communication practices by equality bodies in terms of effective strategies to frame and shape their profile to affect positive change through their communications about their work. This will serve as a basis for a comparative analysis of such communication practices in different European countries.
- Draw conclusions and compile a series of lessons to inform the work of communicators working within equality bodies and publish a report on these lessons that will be broadly disseminated.
- Continue to develop its resource database on communication tools.

The working group will meet twice during the year.

SP 2.2b Working Group - Gender Related Issues

The working group *Gender Related Issues* is Equinet's platform for staff members of equality bodies that are working on gender issues. It aims to enable discussion, reflection and action on the effective promotion of gender equality and to combat gender discrimination by equality bodies. The working group will initially consider the mapping exercise carried out by the Secretariat on the current initiatives at EU level in relation to gender equality with a view to establishing the particular added value Equinet can bring to this field of work.

In 2013 the working group will:

- Publish a report on the outcomes from the gender issues training event for broad dissemination among equality bodies and other stakeholders.
- Inform and support the incorporation by Equinet of the work of the Network of Gender Equality Bodies, in particular the organisation of the training event and the High Level seminar.

The working group will meet twice during the year.

SP 2.3 Ad-hoc member networking initiative

Equinet will initiate an Ad-Hoc member networking initiative to focus on the roles accorded to equality bodies at Member State level under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This will involve liaison with the equality bodies that have been, or could be, nominated to play such roles and cooperation and linking with the working group of the European Group of national human rights institutions which is working on this issue.

SP 2.4 Under-reporting

Equinet will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders in exploring new ways to address the issue of under-reporting of discrimination and informing the focus of its members on this issue. The work on this issue will also include a wide dissemination of the report on this issue produced by the working group *Communication Strategies and Practices* in 2012.

Equinet will host a roundtable discussion with representatives of EU level NGOs to explore cooperation on making equal treatment legislation work for people who experience discrimination.

SP 2.5 Development of standards

Equinet will continue to work with relevant stakeholders to explore and assist in the development of standards for the establishment and operation of equality bodies and to build a broader debate about the need for and content of such standards.

Equinet will disseminate its 2012 *perspective* on the current situation of and challenges facing equality bodies to support this work in relation to standards.

SP 2.6 Linkage between equality and human rights

Equinet will sustain the contacts established with the European Group of National Human Rights Institutions to follow-up on the *perspective* Equinet produced on the issue of linking equality and human rights in 2011.

Equinet will explore the potential for a joint meeting of Equinet members and members of the European Group of National Human Rights to exchange on the issues that arise in relation to these linkages.

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:

SP 3.1 Working Group - Policy Formation

The working group 'Policy Formation' is Equinet's platform for enabling a constructive dialogue with EU institutions and 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 equality bodies at Member State level.

The working group will support the dissemination of the *perspectives* on current challenges facing equality bodies and on the race ground published during 2012. It will produce and publish an analysis of the work being done by equality bodies in relation to LGBT people. This will be based on a survey of the work done by individual equality bodies in relation to this ground and an analysis of this work and its implications for equality bodies and for policy makers.

The working group will prepare a second *perspective* related to a timely and relevant European policy development to be identified by the Equinet Board during the year.

The working group will meet twice during the year.

SP 3.2 Data collection using the Equinet template

Equinet will continue to explore the potential for the collection of comparable complaints data from equality bodies that would enable a monitoring of trends and patterns of discrimination.

SP 3.3 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 the working group.

SP 3.4 Commissioning and conducting studies

Equinet will commission a paper (or papers, as appropriate) on processes and indicators for measuring the impact of equality bodies and their work.

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:

SP 4.1 Mapping of national equality bodies in Europe

Equinet will maintain and publish on its website up to date profiles of member equality bodies. It will monitor further developments in relation to new and existing equality bodies.

SP 4.2 Facilitate communication and networking between members

Equinet will continue to facilitate cooperation between its members. This will include encouraging networking possibilities between equality bodies that share specific functions or focus and bilateral networking or staff exchange processes between equality bodies to share experience and mutually reinforce their capacities.

SP 4.3 Communication and relationships with European stakeholders

Equinet will continue to engage directly with the European Commission, in particular those units responsible for equality and non-discrimination issues.

Equinet will also engage as required with the Governmental Expert Group of the European Commission, relevant European Union Institutions and agencies including EIGE and FRA, other relevant international organisations and relevant European level stakeholders as appropriate.

Equinet will convene its annual meeting with stakeholders from civil society and the social partner organisations at European Union level and develop cooperation as appropriate.

SP 4.4 Recognition of equality bodies and their work at European Union and Member State level

Equinet will strive to promote its website (in particular the sections with members' profiles and news from members) as a key source of information about equality bodies and their work.

Equinet will take steps to support equality bodies that find their independence or effectiveness threatened upon members' request whenever this is required and appropriate.

SP 4.5 Financial stability and development of the network

Equinet will continue to ensure the financial stability of the network securing adequate funding.

Equinet will continue to engage with the planning and roll out of the European Union's Rights and Citizenship Programme, the successor programme to PROGRESS.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Equinet Board Members will hold four Board Meetings throughout the year (with the possibility of further meetings if deemed necessary by the Board) to ensure the effective implementation of this Work Programme.

The Board will monitor the quality of the work of Equinet by assessing quantitative and qualitative feedback from members throughout the year (e.g. using training and seminar evaluation forms). The Board will also commission an external evaluation of the work of Equinet in the final quarter. This evaluation will assess the extent to which activities are meeting the needs of Equinet members and achieving the goals established for Equinet. It will also contribute to the future preparation of Equinet's Strategic Plan 2015-2018.

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

Due to the incorporation of the gender equality bodies network the Secretariat will expand with one new staff member during the year. The Secretariat will appraise current operating procedures and processes both internal to the Secretariat and within the wider organisation, with a view to further developing its own internal procedures and processes and to providing the Board with a report on the procedures and processes of the wider organisation at the end of 2013 for further consideration as Equinet moves into the final year of its current Strategic Plan. This will also contribute to the future preparation of Equinet's Strategic Plan 2015-2018.

The Secretariat will ensure that Equinet meets all its accountability duties towards the European Commission including by producing a final activity and financial report and by regularly informing its representatives of Equinet activities.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Equinet Members will take place in the last quarter of 2013.

Staff members will receive formal appraisals of their work and will be given the possibility to develop their skills and knowledge as appropriate.

ANNEX I

CALENDAR OF PLANNED EQUINET ACTIVITIES FOR 2013

KEY ACTIVITY	PERIOD OF THE YEAR	
Board meeting 1	21 January (Mon)	
Launch of project on supporting good practice in reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities	First quarter	
Commission paper on impact assessment for equality bodies	First quarter	
First meeting working group Equality Law in Practice	First quarter	
First meeting working group Policy Formation	First quarter	
First meeting working group Gender Related Issues	First quarter	
First meeting working group Communications Strategies and Practices	First quarter	
First meeting working group Strategy Development	First quarter	
Legal training	18-19 March (Wed-Thurs) – Berlin	
Board meeting 2	19-20 March (Thurs-Fri) – Berlin	
Dissemination of position on review of equal treatment Directives developed through working group <i>Equality Law in Practice</i> Production and dissemination of perspective on equality body work	Second quarter	
on LGBT issues.	Second quarter	
Production and dissemination of Annual Report 2012	Second quarter	
Board meeting 3	15 May (Wed) - Brussels	
Equinet High Level Legal Seminar	16 May (Thurs) - Brussels	
Equinet high-level seminar on gender related issues	27 June (Thurs) - Brussels	
Second meeting working group Strategy Development	Third quarter	
Second meeting working group Policy Formation	Third quarter	
Second meeting working group Communication Strategies and Practices	Third quarter	
Second meeting working group Gender Related Issues	Third quarter	
Second meeting working group Equality Law in Practice	Third quarter	
Training on gender related issues	18-19 September (Wed-Thurs) – Lisbon	
Board meeting 4	19-20 September (Thurs-Fri) – Lisbon	
Training on supporting duty bearers	24-25 October (Thurs-Fri) – Zagreb	
Joint meeting with European Group of National Human Rights Institutions on linkages between equality and human rights work	Fourth quarter	
Production and dissemination of the second perspective prepared through the working group Policy Formation	Fourth quarter	
Production and dissemination of report from training on gender issues Production and dissemination of case study on supporting good	Fourth quarter	
practice in reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities by employers and service providers Production and dissemination of report on work with duty bearers	Fourth quarter	
by working group <i>Strategy Development</i> Production and dissemination of report on shaping profile of	Fourth quarter	
equality bodies by working group Communication Strategies and Practices	Fourth quarter	
Equinet Annual General Meeting (AGM)	28 November (Thurs)	

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2013

INCOME 2013	
Sources of funding	Projected Amount (€)
PROGRESS programme of the E.C.	739,625
Membership fees	60,000
Members' Time Commitment	169,460
Total Funding for 2013	969,085

EXPENSES 2013	
Activities	Projected cost (€)
Training on duty-bearers in Zagreb (flights + accommodation + venue)	37,000
Legal Training in Berlin (flights + accommodation + venue)	36,000
Training on gender-related issues in Lisbon (flights + accommodation + venue)	36,000
High Level Legal seminar in Brussels (flights + accommodation + venue)	23,000
High Level Seminar on gender-related issues (flights + accommodation + venue)	23,000
10 working group meetings (flights + accommodation)	50,000
Equinet AGM (flights + accommodation + venue)	19,700
Regular Board meetings (at least 4 with 9 members) (flights + accommodation)	10,000
5 working group outputs/publications + 1 ad hoc initiative output	16,000
Website enhancements + maintenance	10,500
Annual Report	4,000
Secretariat/Board Travel and subsistence	16,000
Experts (including external evaluation)	37,600
Equinet promotional material	2,600
Dissemination/mailings of Equinet productions	6,500
Translation (including 2 perspectives)	3,500
Simultaneous Interpretation	5,000
Amortization	2,500
Total	338,900
Other costs	Projected cost (€)
Accounting + audits	11,300
Fixed costs (rent, insurances)	60,335
Total salaries 2013	389,090
Members' Time Commitment	169,460
Total	630,185
Total Expenses 2013	969,085
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SUMMARY BUDGET 2013	000.005
Total 2013 Income	969,085

Total 2013 Expenses

969,085