

# EQUINET CONFERENCE

## TAKING ACTION for GENDER EQUALITY

*23 March 2015, Residence Palace, Brussels*



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Equinet warmly thanks all the chairs, speakers and participants for having contributed to the success of this event.

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# EQUINET & CONFERENCE BACKGROUND

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**Equinet** is the **European Network of Equality Bodies**, a membership organisation bringing together [42 equality bodies](#) from 32 European countries including all EU Members 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 the grounds of discrimination covered by European Union law – **gender, race and ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability**.

Equinet aims to promote equality in Europe by enhancing the strategic capacity of its members and developing the skills and competences of their staff. Equinet also works 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.



The current European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men is coming to an end in 2015. The Strategy is a comprehensive framework committing the Commission to promote gender equality in all its policies for the following thematic priorities:

- equal economic independence for women and men;
- equal pay for work of equal value;
- equality in decision-making;
- dignity, integrity and ending gender-based violence;
- promoting gender equality beyond the EU;
- horizontal issues (gender roles, including the role of men, legislation and governance tools).

This five-year Strategy recognises the essential role of equality bodies in assisting victims, promoting rights and developing research on gender-based discrimination.

Equinet organised this conference with the aim of sharing equality bodies' expertise on gender equality with EU level stakeholders, as well as facilitating discussions on future strategic priorities and tools in the field of gender equality.

This event aims to create a momentum to assess achievements made possible by the Strategy and remaining challenges from the perspective of equality bodies.

During the Conference, Equinet:

- Presented the preliminary findings of the Equinet Perspective on the work of equality bodies on gender equality and future strategic priorities, with the working title *The Persistence of Discrimination, Harassment and Inequality for Women. The Work of Equality Bodies Informing a New European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality*.
- Highlighted equality bodies' experiences in the implementation of gender equality legislation and policies.
- Provided a platform for discussion on key priorities, good practices and possible future developments at EU and national level.
- Facilitated an exchange between equality bodies, EU institutions and stakeholders contributing to effective cooperation for the promotion of gender equality.

Both the Perspective and this Conference formed part of the outputs of the *Equinet Working Group on Gender Equality*, which was established in 2013 following the incorporation of the work of the Network of Gender Equality Bodies (previously coordinated by the European Commission) into Equinet – the European Network of Equality Bodies. The working group aims to enable discussion, exchange of good practice, reflection among staff members of equality bodies, as well as action on the effective promotion of gender equality and to combat gender discrimination by equality bodies.

# CONFERENCE AGENDA

08.30 - 09.00	<b>Registration and Welcome</b>	
09.00- 09.20	<b>Keynote Address</b> Věra Jourová - Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, European Commission	
09.20- 09.45	<b>Welcome Speech</b> Evelyn Collins – Chair of Equinet, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	
09.45 – 11.00	<b>SESSION 1 – Mainstreaming gender equality</b> This session will address the role equality bodies play in contributing to change in the functioning of public and private institutions, and areas for further development. Chair: <i>Petr Polák</i> , Head of Department of Equal Treatment, Public Defender of Rights, Czech Republic	
	Mainstreaming gender equality in Northern Ireland: implementing the statutory equality duty	<i>Darren McKinstry</i> , Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
	Learnings from equality bodies’ promotion and policy work, from Equinet <i>Perspective</i>	<i>Mari-Liis Sepper</i> , Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, Estonia
	What policy context is needed to enable mainstreaming gender equality?	<i>Agnès Hubert</i> , College of Europe, former Adviser in the Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA)
<b>Questions &amp; Answers – Discussion</b>		
11.00- 11.20	<b>Coffee break</b>	
11.20 – 12.35	<b>SESSION 2 – Litigating for change</b> This session will address the role equality bodies play in implementing and developing gender equality legislation, and areas for improvement. Chair: <i>Goran Selanec</i> , Deputy Ombudsman, Office of the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality, Croatia	
	Litigating for change in Sweden	<i>Martin Mörk</i> , Equality Ombudsman, Sweden
	Learnings from equality bodies’ legal work, from Equinet <i>Perspective</i>	<i>Kosana Beker</i> , Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, Serbia
	What legal and policy context is needed to complete gender equality legislation and implement it?	<i>Snježana Vasiljević</i> , Assistant Professor and Chair of European Public Law, University of Zagreb

<i>Questions &amp; Answers – Discussion</i>	
12.35-13.40	<b>Lunch</b>
13.40 – 14.55	<p><b>SESSION 3 – Communication and awareness raising</b></p> <p>This session will address the role equality bodies play in raising awareness on structural gender inequality and its roots, improving rights awareness, as well as areas for improvement.</p> <p><b>Chair: Sandra Konstatzky, Deputy Director, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria</b></p>
	<p>Raising awareness in the Netherlands</p> <p><b>Carina van Eck, Commissioner, Netherlands Institute for Human Rights</b></p>
	<p>Learnings from equality bodies' work on raising awareness, from Equinet Perspective</p> <p><b>Thekla Demetriadou, Office of the Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman), Cyprus</b></p>
	<p>What policy context is needed to enable awareness raising for gender equality?</p> <p><b>Jane Morrice, Vice-President, European Economic and Social Committee</b></p>
<i>Questions &amp; Answers – Discussion</i>	
14.55-15.10	<b>Coffee break</b>
15.10 – 16.30	<p><b>SESSION 4 – Europe in 2020 – our vision for gender equality</b></p> <p>This session will close the seminar with visions of Europe in 2020, following five years of strategic work on gender equality.</p> <p><b>Chair: Daniela Bankier, Head of Gender Equality Unit, European Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evelyn Collins, Chair of Equinet, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland</b></li> <li>• <b>Joanna Maycock, Secretary General, European Women's Lobby</b></li> <li>• <b>Virginija Langbakk, Director, European Institute for Gender Equality</b></li> </ul>
<i>Questions &amp; Answers – Discussion</i>	
16.30 – 17.00	<p><b>Closing of the seminar</b></p> <p><b>Anne Gaspard – Executive Director, Equinet</b></p>

# CONFERENCE SUMMARY



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS by VĚRA JOUROVÁ



**Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality**, opened the Conference with a keynote address. She highlighted the prevailing socio-political context for women in Europe by giving figures for the **pay** and **pension gaps** between men and women. In relation to the substantially lower pension for women, she underlined the importance of policies that currently make women pay a high price for caring for others. She touched upon discussions for the proposal of the new **Maternity Leave Directive** or an alternative policy mix on work-life balance. In addition to economic issues she highlighted **violence** as one of the most worrying issues affecting women across Europe. Furthermore, the Commissioner addressed the problem of the **under-representation of women in positions of power**, particularly on the boards of companies. In this regard she expressed her support for the **Women on Boards Directive** and quotas in the context of the under-representation of women in politics. She also expressed her worries for **increasing intolerance** across Europe (especially antisemitism and antigypsism) and called on women to take a stand against this negative trend.



## WELCOME SPEECH by EVELYN COLLINS



**Evelyn Collins, Chair of Equinet and Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland** welcomed the participants to the Conference and expressed her thanks to the Commissioner for her keynote address. She outlined the objectives of the Conference - sharing the expertise of national equality bodies on the issue of gender equality and introducing the **Equinet Perspective**, a report gathering information about the work of the national equality bodies in the area of gender equality - and explained the mission of equality bodies in general. In her speech she stressed that the findings presented in the **Equinet Perspective 'The Persistence of Discrimination, Harassment and Inequality for Women'** will be further used to inform a new European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality 2015-2020. She summarized the key proposals for further development in the field of gender equality as stated in the Perspective: *implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in policy-making, further legislation in relation to the need for reconciliation between work and family life, stronger actions on combating violence against women, and tackling gender pay gap*. Among the proposals, importance was also given to the need for further development of the institutional infrastructure for equality with particular focus on establishing common *European Standards* that would enable effective and independent work of National Equality Bodies across the EU.



## SESSION 1 – Mainstreaming Gender Equality



The Chair of the Session, Petr Polák, Head of Department of Equal Treatment at Public Defender of Rights in Czech Republic, welcomed the speakers and introduced the aim of the session - to share equality bodies' expertise on mainstreaming gender equality and contribute to change in the functioning of public and private institutions, and to discuss areas of further development.

### Mainstreaming gender equality in Northern Ireland: implementing the statutory equality duty

Darren McKinstry, Director of Policy and Research of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, explained the **statutory equality duty**, the equality mainstreaming duty that is in force in the public sector in Northern Ireland. To comply with the duty, public authorities have to make proactive actions to promote equality, and to consider equality in all aspects of their work: from how they plan and deliver a service; to policies on employing people or buying services, to approving budgets. He also presented the ways for the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to support its implementation, including



equality schemes, and the monitoring and review of impact on equality of all policies. In addition to positive impacts that the statutory equality duty has on achieving gender equality in Northern Ireland, he stressed the problem of the lack of evidence in the field of implementation outcomes. He concluded by giving examples of campaigns promoting gender equality on the boards of public employers and in childcare.

## Learnings from equality bodies' promotion and policy work from Equinet Perspective



**Mari-Liis Sepper, Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner in Estonia**, presented the findings from the **Equinet Perspective** regarding equality bodies' work in the field of gender mainstreaming. She gave an overview of equality bodies' work on **the issue of equal pay and work-life balance** highlighting several examples from national equality bodies. She summarized the findings,

touching upon gender mainstreaming work done by the equality bodies in the **field of policy-making**. She concluded by presenting **new priorities and areas for further development** as stated in the Equinet Perspective:

- *Considering austerity measures and the context of the crisis, the needs of women in poverty and of women have increased caring responsibilities in the absence of public services.*
- *Intersectional discrimination exists and women have different experiences.*
- *Implementing gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in policy making and implementation, including on the Europe 2020 Strategy.*
- *Tackling inequalities in the labour market at structural and institutional level.*
- *Strengthening of equality bodies as relevant stakeholders, including with standards for their work and resources*
- *Adopting positive actions, and positive duties for employers, providers of goods and services and educational institutions, and for policy makers.*

## What policy context is needed to enable mainstreaming gender equality?

**Agnès Hubert, Associate Researcher for PRESAGE Science Po and former Adviser in the Bureau of European Policy Advisers**, defined the concept of gender mainstreaming as **a strategy designed to integrate gender concerns** into policies and programmes, in the case of the EU - both valid for the European Institutions and Members States. She gave an overview of the **policy context** for gender mainstreaming, understood as a legal obligation under EU treaties, an economic necessity and an asset for political legitimacy, accountability and confidence, to be used together with specific positive actions for women. Furthermore, she outlined the **ideal policy context**, under which gender mainstreaming could fully reach its objectives in the area of *institutions* (political actors focusing on gender equality, e.g. group of Commissioners, and tools such as impact assessments and evaluations), *interests* (mobilization of groups with a vested interest in advancing gender equality policies) and *ideas* (integration of gender equality into the most influential policies, coupled with gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming tools).



**The discussion** that followed the presentations touched upon gender mainstreaming as an argument in litigation, positive examples of gender mainstreaming in Austria, and European standards for equality bodies.

## SESSION 2 – Litigating for Change



The Chair of the Session, Goran Selanec, Deputy Ombudsman at the Office of the Ombudswoman for Gender Equality in Croatia, introduced the aim of the session, to share equality bodies' expertise on implementing and developing gender equality legislation, and areas for improvement.

### Litigating for Change in Sweden



Martin Mörk, Deputy Equality Ombudsman in Sweden, stressed the **awareness-raising effect of litigation** and the importance of approaching litigation strategically. He indicated three of the most common issues in litigation that are related to gender inequality: sexual harassment, discrimination in pay, and pregnancy-related discrimination. He went on to describe examples of litigation cases that were used for public awareness raising and

policy developments in Sweden. In the process of litigating for gender equality he stressed **the importance of investigation, transparency with the victims on the reciprocal strategic goals from litigation and communication plan to accompany litigation.**

## Learnings from equality bodies' legal work, from Equinet Perspective

**Kosana Beker, Assistant to the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in Serbia**, presented the findings from the **Equinet Perspective** regarding equality bodies' legal work in the field of gender equality. She stressed that **under-reporting** is the biggest problem identified by the equality bodies in the area of litigation. She then gave an overview of equality bodies' work in litigation on the most prevalent issues of pregnancy-related discrimination, harassment on the basis of gender and sexual harassment, and discrimination in employment. She concluded the briefing by presenting **new priorities and areas for further development**:



- *Developing the EU legal framework and policies regarding gender based harassment and sexual harassment.*
- *Closing the current gap in equal treatment legislation to include education, media and advertisement, and to include trans and intersex people.*
- *Strengthening legislation against pregnancy-related discrimination with the adoption of the Maternity Directive.*
- *Developing the framework for work-life balance with comprehensive statutory leave provisions and provision of care services.*
- *Developing further legislation on the transparency of pay.*
- *Prioritising the rights of people working in care services and domestic workers.*
- *Focus on multiple discrimination and intersectionality.*
- *Ensuring common minimum standards for independence, resources, and powers of equality bodies including litigation powers.*

## What legal and policy context is needed to complete gender equality legislation and implement it?



**Snježana Vasiljević, Assistant Professor and Chair of European Public Law at University of Zagreb**, outlined the policy and legal context in countries of Western Balkans and Eastern Europe with a special focus on Croatia. She first explained the historical context of the legal protection of gender equality on a European level (e.g. the principle of equal pay for men and women introduced by the Treaty of Rome in 1957) and then touched upon the problems of implementation in the current

socio-political context of Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. She gave **recommendations for improvement**, such as:

- *Adopting positive actions*
- *Effective institutional mechanisms*
- *Institutional strengthening of gender equality bodies*
- *Raising public awareness through media*
- *Monitoring of the implementation process.*

**The discussion** that followed the presentations touched upon the protection of the ‘victims’ in litigation, the importance of legislation for litigation and the need for legislation regarding sexism in the media and advertisement.



## SESSION 3 – Communication and Awareness Raising



The Chair of the session, **Sandra Konstatzky, Deputy Director of the Ombud for Equal Treatment in Austria**, introduced the aim of the session, to share equality bodies' expertise on communicating on structural gender inequality and on improving rights awareness.

### Raising awareness in the Netherlands

**Carina van Eck, Commissioner at Netherlands Institute for Human Rights**, highlighted the **aspect of awareness-raising in communication** for gender equality through describing the work of Netherlands Institute for Human Rights in the field of *education, campaigns, research and trainings*. She described three examples of awareness-raising campaigns carried out by the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights touching upon issues of pregnancy related discrimination, pay gap for women employees in hospitals and biased selection in job recruitments. Drawing from these examples she further elaborated on the trainings methods aiming at diminishing the discriminative nature of stereotypes. She concluded with giving suggestions for further development and highlighting priorities for future action:



- *The need for awareness raising and human rights education as a preventative measures. Since only if one knows about one's rights and the rights of others, it*



*increases the change that persons adhere to human rights and equal treatment law*

- *The need to diminish obstacles for reporting discrimination and to facilitate victims of discriminations in finding ways to seek redress, since underreporting remains a problem.*
- *The usefulness of creating an interactive, digital platform to exchange ideas and good practices, including training modules, blue prints for awareness raising campaigns and other tools and products that may be of use to other Equal treatment bodies. This as a way to avoid reinventing the wheel. European Commission could take a lead in creating this platform.*

## **Learnings from equality bodies' work on raising awareness, from Equinet *Perspective***



**Thekla Demetriadou, representing the Office of the Commissioner for Administration in Cyprus,** introduced the findings of the **Equinet Perspective** on equality bodies' communication work regarding gender equality. She summarized the type of work equality bodies do in the area of communication, including awareness-raising, implementation of communication initiatives,

engagement with civil society, challenging gender stereotypes and sexism, trainings and education, and engagement with men. She built on these experiences presenting **new priorities and areas for further development:**

- *New communication strategies aiming to raise awareness on gender equality should take into account the changing context of economic crisis.*
- *The myth that gender equality has already been achieved needs to be countered by gaining hearts and minds.*
- *Communication narratives need to be based on evidence and data exemplifying the reality of persisting gender inequality.*
- *Engaging and mobilizing men is imperative.*
- *Supporting the communication work of equality bodies and encouraging public awareness raising campaigns in the civil society.*
- *Tackling sexism in the media, advertisement and education.*

## What policy context is needed to enable understanding of gender inequality and awareness of rights?

**Jane Morrice, Vice-President of the European Economic and Social Committee**, outlined the policy context needed to enable awareness raising for gender equality. She stressed that although there have been great legal and policy developments in the field of gender equality, communication on this topic still faces misunderstandings and prejudice. She shared with the audience information on the **opinions that were issued by the European Economic and Social Committee** on recent policy developments in the field of gender equality regarding the Maternity Leave Directive, Europe 2020, female entrepreneurship. In conclusion she gave **recommendations for more effective communication** on

gender equality: to make the language understandable to the general public, to ensure funding on gender equality, to repeat key messages and to focus on target groups.



The **discussion** following the presentations touched upon the use of the economic argument for gender equality in public campaigns and Equinet project on values-based communication, as well as the use of social media for promoting gender equality.



## SESSION 4 –Europe in 2020 – our vision for gender equality



The Chair of the session, Daniela Bankier, Head of the Gender Equality Unit at the European Commission, explained the aim of the session, to identify what, in the eyes of the panelists, would be the most important priorities to tackle by future EU gender equality policy and how a gender equal Europe could look like.

### Evelyn Collins



Evelyn Collins, Chair of Equinet and Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, stressed the **importance of the values** of equality, dignity and non-discrimination that will be re-discovered and strongly reaffirmed in the European future. According to her vision, in the year 2020 there will be complete equal treatment legislation in place covering all areas of life and national equality bodies will be recognized as important

defenders and supporters of equality. The emphasis of a new generation of equal

treatment legislation will be on imposing duties on the public and private sectors to be systematic in respecting the values of equality and non-discrimination. The mission of equality bodies will shift from work on preventing discrimination to giving support to and establishing innovative standards, based on values of equality across policies, public and private services, and employment. The effective work of equality bodies will be fully safeguarded and supported by the European level Standards. The gender mainstreaming goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy will be achieved and implemented on the national level. The media, advertising and education will be governed by the developed equality legislation and will work together in bringing cultural change free from gender stereotyping and discrimination. Finally, men and women will practice gender equality in their own private lives, where division of caring and housework will be equally distributed among men and women.

## Joanna Maycock

**Joana Maycock, Secretary General at European Women's Lobby**, highlighted the most worrying issues that women across Europe face today. Drawing from the reflection on positive and negative contexts of gender equality in Europe today (austerity measures negatively affecting gender equality, failures in implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy, persisting gender pay gap, the important signal of the widely attended 5th World Conference on Gender Equality, etc.) she stressed that not until the year 2030 should we realistically expect a Europe that will be based on feminist values, but we must continue to make such demands and work towards that goal in the meantime. She gave a vision of a **feminist Europe**, in which the human rights of men and women will be fully respected, the economic system will be measured by ethical principles, the Horizontal Directive will be in place and the Istanbul Convention fully ratified.



## Virginija Langbakk



**Virginija Langbakk, Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality**, called for future collaborations between the European Institute for Gender Equality and national equality bodies, particularly in the context of the EIGE's preparation of the **Gender Mainstreaming Platform**, an on-line data source for gender issues in Europe. According to her vision, by 2020 equality bodies will have a

stronger focus on gender equality and there will be transparent and substantial resources available for work on gender equality. Gender mainstreaming policies will be supported by the in-depth analyses based on available data and commonly agreed methodological approach. She also foresees the closing of the gender pay gap, greater gender balance in the private sphere and improved approaches to combating sexual harassment.

**The discussion** that followed the presentations touched upon the question of multiple- or single-ground focus of equality bodies, intersectional discrimination of women, and innovation as a future driver of gender equality.

## CONFERENCE CLOSING

**Anne Gaspard, Executive Director of Equinet**, closed the seminar by thanking the participants and highlighted the outcomes of the Conference with suggestions for further work in the field of gender equality.



Speakers' presentations are available by clicking on this [link](#).

# ANNEX – Equinet Perspective (Executive Summary)

## THE PERSISTENCE OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND INEQUALITY FOR WOMEN

### THE WORK OF EQUALITY BODIES INFORMING A NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION STRATEGY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

#### AN EQUINET PERSPECTIVE (DRAFT VERSION - MARCH 2015)

##### Executive Summary

Equinet has prepared this *Perspective* to gather the learning from the work of equality bodies across Europe so as to inform the preparation and content of a new European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality. It is based on a workshop of the Equinet Gender Equality Working Group and a survey of its member equality bodies that was responded to by twenty six equality bodies.

The work of the equality bodies is gathered and analysed under five different headings:

- **Mainstreaming led initiatives:** focus on issues of equal pay, work-life balance and policy-making.
- **Litigation led initiatives:** focus on issues of pregnancy related discrimination, harassment on the ground of gender and sexual harassment, and goods and services. Litigation led work included a focus on under-reporting of discrimination.
- **Communication led initiatives:** focus on addressing gender stereotypes.
- **Activities in relation to men:** focus on litigation, the role of men in gender equality, breaking stereotypes, and equality in the sphere of caring work.
- **Activities in relation to trans people:** focus on litigation, research and legal recognition of trans people.

Proposals for the new Strategy are set out based on this analysis of the work of equality bodies and on earlier Equinet initiatives in relation to violence against women, the Gender Goods and Services Directive, work life balance, equal pay, discrimination against trans people, and harassment on the ground of gender and sexual harassment.

These proposals include the need for the new Strategy to address the challenge of stimulating a new priority for gender equality, finding new activities capable of engaging with the impact of austerity policies, and establishing further ways to measure progress on gender equality.

They include the need to continue work on the areas prioritised under the current strategy, in particular addressing:

1. Gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming in policy-making, policy implementation and policy evaluation, in particular the Europe 2020 Strategy.

2. Further legislation at European level in relation to the need for reconciliation between work and family life, including a comprehensive leave framework encompassing different forms of statutory leave (including paternity leave), rights in relation to flexible working arrangements and continued work on and adoption of the Maternity Directive.
3. Action on violence against women including, in particular, harassment on the ground of gender and sexual harassment in the workplace, in education, and in the provision of goods and services.
4. Segregation in the labour market and unequal pay, with particular attention to transparency and the implementation of the European Commission recommendation on the gender pay gap.

They include the need to continue work on the horizontal issues prioritised under the current strategy, in particular addressing:

1. The role and contribution of men in relation to gender equality.
2. The elimination of discrimination, gaps in equal treatment legislation, realising the potential of equality bodies, and under-reporting of discrimination.
3. The elimination of pregnancy-related discrimination in employment, including further legislation to secure the rights of pregnant women and their protection from discrimination.

New priority themes are proposed as part of these proposals, in particular addressing:

1. Equality in the field of caring work including promoting workplace practice that is supportive of work-life balance, reversing the increased caring responsibilities on women as a result of austerity policies, the rights of domestic workers, and the role of men in caring work.
2. Stereotyping on the ground of gender in the media, advertising, and education.
3. Trans people, Intersex people, and gender identity/gender expression issues.
4. Multiple discrimination where the ground of gender intersects with the grounds of age, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, and sexual orientation and with issues of poverty and of lone parenting.

The proposals include a focus on the need to further develop the infrastructure for equality, in particular addressing:

1. The inclusion of equality bodies in deliberation, decision-making and monitoring in relation to the Strategy at Member State and European levels.
2. Developing standards at European level to ensure that the conditions are sufficiently created for equality bodies to achieve their full potential in their work on gender equality.
3. Measures in equal treatment legislation that require equality action plans on the ground of gender by employers and service providers; that strengthen and support positive action on the ground of gender by employers and service providers; and that require public bodies to have due regard to gender equality in carrying out their functions.
4. In the absence of such measures, the new Strategy could promote and support the preparation and implementation of equality action plans on the ground of gender on a voluntary basis by employers and service providers; ensure clarification and a broader interpretation as to when positive action can be used and to what extent; and promote and support gender mainstreaming at a national level



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