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**Dear Equinet Members,**This Members’ Bulletin gathers **the latest European Union (EU) and international developments**. It aims to give you an **overview of relevant policy and legal developments**, as well as latest calls for interest, funding opportunities and upcoming events. We very much hope this members’ bulletin will be useful in your day-to-day work and we would be grateful if you could **disseminate it among your colleagues**. Your feedback is also greatly appreciated. Should you have any comments or further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Project Officer ([Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org](mailto:Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org) / 0032 2 212 31 80).

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# Highlight: towards a new Gender Equality Strategy?

**This year, the European** [**Strategy for Equality between women and men**](http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6568&langId=en) **is coming to an end. The European Commission has engaged in the process of consulting stakeholders to decide on the future of the Strategy. At the same time, negotiations of several essential pieces of EU legislation are stuck for many years.**

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## Public Consultation: Equality between women and men in the EU (Deadline: 21/07/2015)

Following the [Forum on Future of Gender Equality](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/150420_en.htm) which was held in April 2015 in Brussels, the European Commission has launched **a call for public consultation** on the topic of equality between men and women. The objective of the consultation is to collect the views of the broad public in the context of the preparation of the Commission’s policy on equality between women and men after 2015. **Equality Bodies are listed among consultation target groups**. To participate in the consultation, complete the [questionnaire](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/opinion/150421_en.htm) by **21 July 2015**. Read more [here](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/opinion/150421_en.htm).

## Policy update: current pending EU Directives on gender equality

**Three EU Directives** relating to gender equality are currently under discussion at EU level:

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| **The recast Maternity Leave Directive**  In 2008, the European Commission introduced a [proposal](http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=607&langId=en) to revise the **1992 EU Maternity Leave Directive**. In 2010, the proposal was adopted in its first reading by the European Parliament. Since then, **the negotiations are blocked at Council of the EU level** by several Member States. If no agreement has been reached by June 2015, the European Commission will **withdraw the initial proposal** from the EU legislative process. [EU civil society organisations](http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article7187&lang=en) are strongly mobilised to avoid such withdrawal.  More information is available [here](http://www.euractiv.com/sections/social-europe-jobs/commission-cut-maternity-leave-2015-work-programme-310899). | **The Women on Board  Directive**  In 2012, the European Commission proposed a Directive setting up b an **objective of a 40% presence of the under-represented sex** among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges. The proposal of Directive has been adopted [in its first reading](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1118_en.htm) by the European Parliament. It is currently stuck at the Council of the EU level due to the opposition of several Member States.  More information is available [here](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1205_en.htm) and [here](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/121114_en.htm). | **The Equal Treatment  Directive**  In 2008, the European Commission has adopted [a proposal of Directive](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52008PC0426) to implement the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation beyond employment. The proposal mentions in its preamble the necessity to take multiple discrimination against women into account. The Directive has been adopted in its first reading by the European Parliament but is also currently stuck at Council of the EU level. It is Equinet’s firm position that **the extension of EU equal treatment legislation** with the adoption of the proposed Directive **is long overdue and highly necessary**. More information is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/IMG/pdf/ec_horizontal_directive-note_for_equinet_members.pdf). |

## Reminder: Summary of Equinet Gender Equality Conference is available

On Monday 23th March 2015, Equinet held the conference **“Taking action for Gender Equality”** in Brussels. The conference was a huge success, both in terms of attendance and quality of the discussion.

You can download the speakers’ presentations, the summary of the conference as well as the draft perspective "*The persistence of discrimination, harassment and inequality for women – the work of equality bodies to inform a new European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality*” [on our website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Conference-Taking-Action-623).



# Thematic Policy Developments

## Race/Ethnicity

* **Infringement against Slovakia on discrimination of Romani children in schools**

On 29 April 2015, the European Commission gave [formal notice](http://www.errc.org/article/commission-takes-tougher-stance-on-member-states-discriminating-roma/4359) that it would start infringement procedures against the Slovak Republic for breach of EU Anti-Discrimination Law in relation to Romani children in schools. More information is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/European-Commission-s-decision-to).

* **World Roma Day: the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) calls on intensified efforts to improve Roma inclusion**

In 2015, this day serves as a timely reminder that in order to honour its past commitments, the European Union and its Member States must intensify their efforts to ensure the fundamental rights of all Roma in the EU are fully respected and fulfilled. The full article is available [here](http://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2015/roma-inclusion-efforts-must-be-intensified).

## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

* **Council of Europe adopts resolution for the rights of trans people**

Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) adopted a [resolution](http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewPDF.asp?FileID=21630&Language=EN) for the rights of Trans people. The resolution calls for the abolition of medical requirements as a basis for legal gender recognitions and for depathologisation of Trans identities. The report also makes several recommendation regarding the accessibility to the gender reassignment procedures and health care for Trans people.

## Religion and Belief

* **European Commission call for inputs to its first annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights in the EU (Deadline: Friday 15th May)**

**On 1st and 2nd October 2015**, the First Vice-President of the European Commission, Frans Timmermans, in cooperation with the EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Věra Jourová, will host **the first Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights in the EU**.

The European Commission would like to collect input from stakeholders on a number of questions on the topic **“Tolerance and respect: preventing and combating anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim hatred in Europe”**. Input will be welcome by **15th May 2015**. Contributions can be sent to [JUST\_Colloquium@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JUST_Colloquium@ec.europa.eu).

More information about the Annual Colloquium and the consultation is available [here](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/index_en.htm) and [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/European-Commission-calls-for). Questions of the consultation are available [on this link](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/colloquium-fundamental-rights-2015/files/2015colloquium_questions_en.pdf).

Equinet will prepare a contribution to the consultation. **Should your equality body decide to submit its own questionnaire,** we will welcome to be informed. Please do not hesitate to contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Project Officer ([Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org](mailto:Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org) - 0032 2 212 31 80) to share and coordinate your input with us.

## Disability

* **United Nations’ requests to the EU regarding UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

United Nations have addressed a [list of issues](../../../../../Activities/2015/Disability%20&%20UNCRPD/UNCRPD%20Committee%20-%20List%20of%20Issues%20April%202015.doc) to the initial report of the European Union on the implementation of the UN convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

* **Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: presentations available**

On 29th April, the European Commission held a work forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disability. Presentations are available [on the European Commission’s website](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1038&furtherEvents=yes) (top right corner of the page).

# Latest publications, funding opportunities and calls for proposals

## General information

* **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Analysis of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**

The European Parliament issued an analysis [‘Fundamental Rights in the European Union: The role of the Charter after the Lisbon Treaty’](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/IDAN/2015/554168/EPRS_IDA(2015)554168_EN.pdf) that looks at historical developments and contemporary legal implications of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

* **EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Report on the ‘shift of the burden of proof’**

The European Commission (DG Justice and Consumers) published a [report](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/150325_en.htm) that focuses on ‘shift of the burden of proof’ from the claimant to the respondent with regards to the dilemmas of implementation on national and European level.

* **EU FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AGENCY: New mobile application on the Charter of Fundamental Rights developed by the FRA**

The FRA has developed an EU Charter app - a fundamental rights one-stop-shop for mobile devices. More information is available [here](http://fra.europa.eu/en/charter4mobile).

## Gender Equality

* **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: New reports of the Committee of Women’s Rights and Gender Equality**

3 new reports have been published by the European Parliament FEMM Committee:   
- An [opinion](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/femm/pa/1056/1056445/1056445en.pdf) on the situation of women **within marginalized communities**   
- A [report](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fNONSGML%2bCOMPARL%2bPE-549.388%2b01%2bDOC%2bPDF%2bV0%2f%2fEN) on the implementation of the **Recast Directive 2006/54/EC** (equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation)   
- A [report](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fNONSGML%2bCOMPARL%2bPE-554.814%2b01%2bDOC%2bPDF%2bV0%2f%2fEN) on gender discrimination **in access to education**.

## Age

* **EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Report on Youth Discrimination in EU**

The report [‘Overview of Youth Discrimination in the European Union’](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/overview_youth_discrimination_en.pdf), prepared for DG Justice and Consumers in the European Commission, focuses on two areas of discrimination from the perspective of young people (broadly speaking those aged between 15 and 25 years) – namely on discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic origin, and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

* **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: New reports of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs on age discrimination**

2 documents have been published by the European Parliament EMPL Committee:   
- A [report](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fNONSGML%2bCOMPARL%2bPE-554.950%2b01%2bDOC%2bPDF%2bV0%2f%2fEN) on reducing inequalities with special focus on child poverty. Report gives recommendation to the Commission and to the Member States on measures needed for tackling child poverty.   
- A [study](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/536326/IPOL_ATAG(2015)536326_EN.pdf) ‘Differential Treatment of Workers under 25 with a View to their Access to the Labour Market’ that looks on the discrimination of young people under Employment Framework Directive.

* **EU FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AGENCY: report on child’s rights protection in judicial systems**

EU Fundamental Rights Agency [reviews](http://fra.europa.eu/en/press-release/2015/justice-needs-be-more-child-friendly-finds-fra) the situation for children in criminal proceedings and gives recommendations for improving juridical systems from perspective of children’s rights.

## Disability

* **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: study on employment of persons with disabilities**

The European Parliament Employment and Social Committee’s [study](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/536327/IPOL_ATAG(2015)536327_EN.pdf) ‘*Reasonable Accommodation and Sheltered Workshops for People with Disabilities: Costs and Returns of Investments’* focuses on overviewing policy measures that enable equal access to employment for people with disabilities.

# Recent case-law

## http://cdn.property118.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Landlord-and-Tenant-Case-Law.pngEuropean Court of Justice (ECJ)

* **European Court of Justice ruling on blood donations ban for MSM**

European Court of Justice [ruled](http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=164021&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=req&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=287505) on 30 April 2015 that permanently banning men that have sex with men (MSM) from blood donations can justified, depending on the situation from the country.

You can read the press release by European Parliament’s LGBTI Intergroup [here](http://www.lgbt-ep.eu/press-releases/eu-court-permanent-exclusion-homosexual-and-bisexual-men-from-blood-donation-may-be-justified/).

## European Court of Human Rights

* **Danis and Association of Ethnic Turks v. Romania (application no. 16632/09)**

Late change in electoral law infringed right to stand for election of an association representing the Turkish minority. [The court](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/fra-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-5067297-6235749#{"itemid":["003-5067297-6235749"]}) found a violation of Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) and Article 3 of Protocol no. 1 (right to free elections) since by amending the electoral legislation seven months before the 2008 parliamentary elections, the authorities had not given the applicants the opportunity in such a way as to be able to satisfy the eligibility criteria introduced as a result of the new legislation.

* **Junta Rectora del Ertzainen Nazional Elkartasuna v. Spain (application no. 45892/09)**

[The case](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/fra-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-5067285-6235721#{"itemid":["003-5067285-6235721"]}) concerns the inability of members of a police officers’ trade union to exercise the right to strike. The court found that the stringent requirements imposed on ‘law-enforcement agents’ justified the ban on strike action on account of the fact that they were armed and needed to provide uninterrupted service. The court did not find a case of discrimination.