

Equality bodies and the new freedom of movement directive – challenge or opportunity?

Equinet Conference

Draft Programme

VENUE	Paris
DATE	8 December 2015

OBJECTIVES

Directive 2014/54/EU on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers was adopted in April 2014. It stipulates that “each Member State shall designate one or more structures or bodies (...) for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment of Union workers and members of their family without discrimination on grounds of nationality (...) and shall make the necessary arrangements for the proper functioning of such bodies”. The competences of these bodies are similar to competences of equality bodies under EU equal treatment legislation, albeit they appear to go further in some respect. Whereas some Equinet members already hold a mandate to deal with nationality-based discrimination, this Directive could potentially give new competences to other equality bodies.

This Equinet conference is dedicated to the role of equality bodies in combating nationality-based discrimination in the framework of the implementation of the new Directive. It will bring together equality bodies and relevant European stakeholders to analyse the role and potential challenges for equality bodies under the Directive and generally in addressing nationality-based discrimination.

This conference will:

- Inform equality bodies about the new Directive
- Position equality bodies as key actors in combating nationality-based discrimination
- Allow equality bodies to share their experience, expertise and good practices with other Equinet members and European stakeholders
- Discuss the challenges equality bodies might face under the new Directive

PARTICIPANTS

This Equinet Conference is aimed at senior management and experts from national equality bodies, representatives of EU institutions and agencies, NGOs, policy or legal experts, social partners and other organisations active in the field.



PROGRAMME – 8 December

08.30-09.00 **Registration and Welcome**

Opening speech:

09.00-09.30 **Evelyn Collins – Chair of Equinet, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland**
Jacques Toubon – Defender of Rights, France

SESSION 1 – Taking stock and challenges ahead

09.30-11.00 This session will take stock of the situation regarding labour mobility within the EU and it will present and discuss with the European Commission the key findings of an Equinet Discussion Paper on free movement of EU workers.
Chair: Evelyn Collins – Chair of Equinet, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

09.30-09.50 **Taking stock of the situation and statistics – 2015 Annual report on labour mobility** **Elena Fries-Tersch**
Milieu

09.50-10.10 **Presentation of key findings of the Equinet Discussion Paper on free movement, including potential challenges for equality bodies** (*prepared by the Equinet Working Group on Equality Law*) **Jayne Hardwick**
 Senior Lawyer, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Great Britain

10.10-10.30 **Responses from the European Commission and their view on the Directive’s potential – what role for equality bodies?** **Dimitrios Kontizas**, European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Head of Sector Free Movement of Workers, Unit B4

Questions & Answers – Discussion (30’)

11.00-11.30 **Coffee break**

SESSION 2 – The experience of researchers and practitioners

11.30 – 13.00 This session will convene specialist experts and organisations to further discuss the implications of the Directive and the potential role of equality bodies.
Chair: tbc

11.30-11.50 **Free movement of EU workers – the situation, challenges and solutions. What will the Directive change?** **Dr. Herwig Verschueren**, University of Antwerp - Free University of Brussels

11.50-12.10	The work of the FRA on free movement and nationality-based discrimination	Representative of the FRA (<i>tbc</i>)
12.10-12.40	The work of and cooperation with existing information and assistance services: SOLVIT	Damien Foizon and Katarzyna Plonowska SOLVIT National Centre France
Questions & Answers – Discussion (20')		
13.00-14.15	Lunch	
SESSION 3 – The experience of equality bodies		
14.15 – 15.45	This session will delve into the experience of equality bodies already addressing free movement issues and nationality discrimination cases, with particular attention to bodies that have already been designated under the Directive. Chair: tbc	
14.15-14.45	Experience, expectations and strategies – the role of equality bodies under the Directive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liisa Pakosta, Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, Estonia ▪ Chrysoula Malisianou, Defender of Rights, France ▪ Sinéad Lucey, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
14.45-15.15	Case studies from equality bodies on free movement and nationality-based discrimination – how to deal with these cases?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Veronika Bazalová, Public Defender of Rights, Czech Republic ▪ Madalina Rosu, National Council for Combating Discrimination, Romania
Questions & Answers – Discussion (30')		
15.45 – 16.00	Closing of the Conference Jacques Toubon – Defender of Rights, France Anne Gaspard – Executive Director, Equinet	