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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 / 0032 2 212 31 80).

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# Highlight: European Equal Pay Day and the Gender Pay Gap

## 2nd November marks the European Equal Pay Day

On the occasion of the European Equal Pay Day, the EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality**, Věra Jourová** highlighted the need to take urgent action to combat the perpetual gender pay gap.

"*Monday 2 November marks the day in the year when women across Europe stop earning for the rest of the year in comparison to men," she said. "The average hourly wage for women in Europe is 16% lower than it is for men. Women continue to work nearly two months for free every year, because of an average hourly wage for women 16% inferior to that of men. Equality between men and women is one of the fundamental values of the European Union, but this day reminds us that it is not one of its fundamental realities."*

For raising awareness on the gender pay gap, the European Commission launched an [animated infographic](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/infographs/equal-pay-day-2015/equal-pay-day/index_en.html)  explaining some of the reasons behind the gender pay gap and an **information package** which includes:

* A [statement by Věra Jourová](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-5953_en.htm), accompanied by Questions and Answers;
* [28 Country factsheets](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/index_en.htm#pay) – one for each EU Member State - with figures on the gender pay gap and the overall gender earnings gap in the different Member States; and
* An [EU factsheet](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender_pay_gap/gpg_eu_factsheet_2015_en.pdf)  with the same information for the European Union as a whole.

**For more information click** [**here**](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm) **Read Equinet’s report “Equal Pay – The experience of equality bodies” (2013)** [**here**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equal-Pay-the-experience-of)

# Thematic Policy Developments

## General Developments

**The European Commission publishes its new Work Plan 2016**

On 27 October 2015, the European Commission adopted its [2016 Work Programme](http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp_2016_en.pdf), the second of the Juncker Commission, reaffirming the commitment to the ten political priorities of its Political Guidelines.

The new initiatives which the Commission will deliver in 2016 include:

* Initiatives on Better **Migration Management**, and proposals on Border Management
* A New Skills Agenda for Europe, **a New Start for Working Parents**, and a Pillar of Social Rights as part of a deepening of Economic and Monetary Union

The Work Plan notably states that ‘*special attention will be paid to work-life balance of working families, with a view to increasing women's participation in the labour market. The Women on Boards Directive should be adopted in 2016 and the Commission will continue its practical work to promote gender equalit*y.’ It is also stated that a particular emphasis will be put ‘*on improving access to selected goods and services for people with disabilities*.’

**More information is available** [**here**](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5923_en.htm)

## Gender Equality

**The European Commission launches consultation of EU social partner organisations on work-life balance**

On 11 October, the European Commission launched a first stage consultation with EU social partner organisations on how to improve work-life balance and reduce obstacles to women's participation in the labour market.

The employees' and employers' organisations have until 4 January 2016 to submit their views on the possible directions of EU action. In addition, a broad public consultation on work-life balance is also set to be launched at the end of November.

**More information is available** [**here**](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2380&furtherNews=yes)

**The DG Justice of the European Commission publishes the results of the public consultation on equality between men and women in the EU**

On 30 October 2015, the European Commission published the analysis report of the public consultation “**Equality between women and men in the EU**”, which ran between April and July this year. Almost 5 000 responses were received from across the EU, from individuals and from organisations, ranging from equality bodies to NGOs to Member State authorities.

The results of the consultation furthermore prioritised themes to be tackled by the European Commission as follows:

1. Women being paid less than men for the same work or work of equal value;

2. The small number of women in positions of power in politics and businesses;

3. Facing prejudice because of preconceived ideas about the image and role of women and men;

4. Gender-based violence;

5. Widespread violation of women's rights worldwide;

6. The unequal sharing of caring and household tasks between men and women.

**For more information, click** [**here**](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/news/151030-2_en.htm) **and to download the report, click** [**here**](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/files/public-consultation-gender-web_en.pdf)

**The European Parliament holds a mini hearing on Women on Boards**

On 12 November 2015, the European Parliament Committees on Legal Affairs and on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality held a hearing of experts on women on boards. The current state of the “proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures” (so-called “Women on Boards” directive) was also discussed.

**For more information, click** [**here**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/femm/events.html?id=20151112CHE00181) **Watch the recording of the hearing** [**here**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20151112-1500-COMMITTEE-JURI-FEMM)

## Disability

**The European Parliament publishes a report procedure on the implementation of the UN CRPD**

The Employment and Social Affair Committee of the European Parliament launched a **report procedure on the implementation by the EU of the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, with special regards to the concluding observations of the UN CRPD. The EU was under review by the UN CRPD in September, and the Treaty Body issued some key recommendations, including the adoption by the EU of the Horizontal Directive *(see Members’ Bulletin on EU Developments – August 2015)*.

**For more information about the report, click** [**here**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=&reference=2015/2258(INI)) **Read the UN CRPD concluding observations** [**here**](http://eurochild.org/fileadmin/public/05_Library/Thematic_priorities/01_Childrens_Rights/Other/CRPD_C_EU_CO_1_21617_E.pdf)

# Publications, funding opportunities and events

## General information

**PUBLICATION European Commission – Analytical Web Note –** [“High and rising inequalities; what can be done about it (at EU level)?”](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7830&type=2&furtherPubs=yes)

This note reviews the main drivers of inequality in the European Union and reflects on what can be done about it at EU level. It explains the distinction between inequalities of opportunities and inequalities of outcomes and discusses how inequality affects growth and the labour market.

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS** [Action grants to support national or transnational projects to support judicial cooperation in civil matters](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/calls/2015_action_grants/just_2015_jcoo_ag_en.htm) *(Deadline: 19 January 2016)*

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS** [Daphne call - Restricted call - Action grants for running 116 000 hotlines for missing children](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/calls/2015_action_grants/just_2015_rdap_ag_0116_en.htm)*(Deadline: 12 January 2016)*

## Gender Equality

**EVENT** **European Commission –** Peer Review Seminar 2015 - Gender Segregation in the Labour Market and Education **–** [Papers published](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2015/gender_segregation_en.htm)

**EVENT Council of Europe -** “Towards Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice” (15-16 October 2015) – [presentations available](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/05conferences/2015_BerneConfAccessJustice/List_speeches_en.asp)

## Disability

**EVENT European Commission –** [**Conference "Growing together in a barrier-free Europe"**](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1069&furtherevents=yes)- Celebrating the Day of Persons with Disabilities **–** 7-8 December 2015, Brussels

## Age

**EVENT European Parliament – European Youth Event (20-21 May 2016)** – more information and registration [here](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=1075&furtherEvents=yes)

# Recent case-law

## European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

* **Vrountou v. Cyprus (no. 33631/06) – 13 October 2015**

The provision of refugee cards to children of displaced men but not to children of displaced women is discriminatory.
Read the case [here](http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/561e0fef4.pdf).

* **Balázs v. Hungary (n°15529/12) – 20 October 2015**Hungary condemned by the European Court of Human Rights for failing to investigate a racist attack against a Roma man.Read the case [here](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-158033#{"itemid":["001-158033"]}).
* **M’Bala M’Bala v. France (no. 25239/13) – 10 November 2015**
The European Convention on Human Rights does not protect negationist and anti-Semitic performances
Read the press release and the case [here](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng-press#{"itemid":["003-5219432-6470458"]}).