**
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).

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# Highlight: Disability - Updates on the European Accessibility Act and Public Consultation on the mid-term review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

## Updates on the European Accessibility Act

In December 2015, the European Commission released [**a proposal of European Accessibility Act**](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6147_en.htm) ([Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States as regards the accessibility requirements for products and services](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/COM_2015_615_2_PROPOSAL_FOR_A_DIRECTIVE_EN_V6_P1_824368.DOCX)). The proposal will define common accessibility requirements for certain products and services. It has a particular relevance in the context of the proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (the so-called Horizontal Directive) as some Member States claim that the scope of these two Directives might be overlapping.

The proposal targets **ATMs and banking services, PCs, telephones and TV equipment, telephony and audio-visual services, transport, e-books and e-commerce**.

Two pan-European organisations advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities released their opinions about the proposal:

* [Inclusion Europe](http://inclusion-europe.eu/) released a policy paper analysing the proposal and providing recommendations for improvements. The paper is available [here](http://inclusion-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/IE_policypaper_EAA_final.pdf).
* The [European Disability Forum (EDF)](http://www.edf-feph.org/) presented an initial response to the proposal, recommending to widen the scope of the Directive. The EDF’s position and analysis can be read [here](http://www.edf-feph.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=13855&thebloc=34403).

## Reminder: European Commission - Public consultation on the mid-term review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (Deadline: 18th March 2016)

The [European Disability Strategy (2010-2020)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52010DC0636) lays out a strategy to empower people with disabilities so that they can fully enjoy their rights and participate in society and the economy on an equal basis with others.

It identifies eight main areas of actions at EU level:

* accessibility
* participation
* equality
* employment
* education and training
* social protection
* health
* external action

The purpose of the consultation is to gather views on the challenges faced by all persons with disabilities in the European Union and on the impact so far of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Opened for contribution to all citizens, organisations and public authorities, this consultation closes on **18 March 2016**. **The questionnaire is available** [**here**](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/c29a28c8-9a4b-cada-17ba-f81c55580c51) **in the 24 EU languages.**

We strongly encourage you to contribute to the consultation in order to make sure that **equality bodies are taken into account** in the mid-term review of the Strategy and any future actions which could be planned by the European Commission.

**Please let us know if you are planning to send a contribution.** We would be also very happy to receive your draft contribution or, if written in your national language, a summary of the key messages you conveyed to the European Commission. In any case, the Equinet Secretariat remains at your disposal in case you need assistance and more information. Please contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Project Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org / 0032 212 31 80).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**
Read the **Equinet Perspective** ["Realising Rights: Equality Bodies and People with Disabilities. Supporting the review of the European Union Disability Strategy 2010-2020"](Equinet%20Perspective%20%22Realising%20Rights%3A%20Equality%20Bodies%20and%20People%20with%20Disabilities.%20Supporting%20the%20review%20of%20the%20European%20Union%20Disability%20Strategy%202010-2020%22).

# General information

## Policy Developments

**International Holocaust Remembrance Day – European Commission’s statement**

27th January marks International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On that occasion, Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, recalled **that only 13 out of 28 Member States implemented the** [**Council Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal justice**](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32008F0913).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Read the statement here:** <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/fundamental-rights/news/160127_en.htm>

**Reminder: EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) - Good practices of reporting and recording hate crimes**

Good practices of reporting and recording hate crimes will be gathered in a compendium and presented to the Working Party on Improving Reporting and Recording of Hate Crime in the EU on 28-29 April in Amsterdam. Please send your examples by **16 February 2016** to: hatecrime@fra.europa.eu

* Reporting online template: <http://fra.europa.eu/surveys/index.php/738118/lang-en>
* Recording online template: <http://fra.europa.eu/surveys/index.php/816988/lang-en>

## Publications, funding opportunities and events

**PUBLICATION - European Commission -** [Employment and social developments in 2015](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2442&furtherNews=yes)
The report shows that the Europe 2020 objectives are far from being achieved. Indeed, in 2014, a quarter of the EU population – about 122 million people – were at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

# Gender Equality

## Policy Developments

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION - Last days to contribute to the public consultation on Work Life Balance (Deadline: 17th February 2016)**

In November 2015, the European Commission launched **a** [**public consultation on possible action addressing the challenges of work-life balance faced by working parents and caregivers**](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/opinion/1511_roadmap_reconciliation_en.htm). The consultation is available in the 23 European languages. Contributions from all citizens, public authorities and organisations are welcome until **17 February 2015**.

The consultation is linked to the [European Commission Roadmap on Work Life Balance](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_just_012_new_initiative_replacing_maternity_leave_directive_en.pdf), which has been issued following the withdrawn of the proposal of EU Maternity Leave Directive in February 2015 (more information is available on Equinet’s website).

We strongly encourage you to contribute to the consultation in order to make sure that **equality bodies are taken into account** in any future actions which could be planned by the European Commission.

**Please let us know if you are planning to send a contribution.** We would be also very happy to receive your draft contribution or, if written in your national language, a summary of the key messages you conveyed to the European Commission. In any case, the Equinet Secretariat remains at your disposal in case you need assistance and more information. Please contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Project Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org / 0032 212 31 80).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**
Read the **Equinet** **Perspective** [“Equality bodies promoting a better work life balance for all”](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-Bodies-promoting-a-better)

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - Members of the European Parliament call on the European Commission to table a new gender equality strategy**

On Wednesday 3rd February 2016, the European Parliament adopted [a resolution calling on the European Commission to adopt a new gender equality strategy](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20160129IPR11936/Women%27s-rights-MEPs-urge-Commission-to-table-a-new-gender-equality-strategy).

According to Iraxte Garcia Perez (S&D, Spain), Chair of the FEMM Committee, “[A working document](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151203_strategic_engagement_en.pdf), which does not need to be approved by the College of Commissioners, does not deliver on the political commitments. It provides neither a dedicated budget nor concrete benchmarks and so it is not possible to evaluate the progress achieved on the objectives”

**Background information:** In December 2015, the European Commission adopted a [“strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019”](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151203_strategic_engagement_en.pdf) as a follow up to the [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2010-2015](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/strategy_equality_women_men_en.pdf). Whereas the EU Strategy 2010-2015 was a communication of the European Commission, the new document remains at the level of a staff working document.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**
Read the **Equinet Perspective** [“An Equinet Perspective: The Persistence of Discrimination, Harassment and Inequality for Women”](http://www.equineteurope.org/The-Work-of-Equality-Bodies)

## Publications, funding opportunities and events

**PUBLICATION** – **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)** – [Gender Equality Index in Serbia](http://eige.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/serbia-first-eu-candidate-country-produce-gender-equality-index)

**PUBLICATION** – **Council of Europe** - [Implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 - Annual Report 2015](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/02_GenderEqualityProgramme/Gender%20Equality%20Strategy%20-%20Annual%20Report%202015.pdf)

# Race/ethnic origin

## Policy Developments

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT – Launch of the EP Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)**

On 26th January 2016, the [European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI)](http://www.ardi-ep.eu/) was officially launched in Brussels. It aims to “to promote racial equality, counter racism, and educate about non-discrimination in the work of the European Parliament”. The work of ARDI is led by [a bureau made up of MEPs from several political groups](http://www.ardi-ep.eu/about/our-bureau/) and supported by a coordinator.

**UNITED – European Action Week against Racism, 12-21 March 2016**

Every year, [UNITED for intercultural action (European Network against nationalism, racism, fascism, in support of migrants and refugees)](http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/) run the [European Action Week against Racism](http://weekagainstracism.eu/). This year, **the campaign will start on 12th March and finish on 21st March**. You can find more information and order free campaign materials [here](http://weekagainstracism.eu/).

**Equinet wishes to highlight your work on the fight against racism during the Action Week.** If you have examples of activities (publications, campaigns or other) that you would like highlighted on our social media channels during that week, please send an email to Sarah Cooke O’Dowd (sarah.cookeodowd@equineteurope.org) with a brief overview in English as well as the relevant links to the activity. **Deadline: 4 March 2016**

## Publications, funding opportunities and events

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY** – **European Commission** - [Action grants to support national and transnational projects on non-discrimination and Roma integration](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/calls/2015_action_grants/just_2015_rdis_ag_disc_en.htm) (Deadline: 12th April 2016)

**PUBLICATION** – **ERIO (European Roma Information Office)** – [Human rights abuses and discrimination against Roma (2015)](http://www.erionet.eu/doc-snapshot_2015)

**PUBLICATION** – **Council of Europe** – [Cyberhate: An issue of continued concern for the Council of Europe’s Anti-Racism Commission](http://www.coe.int/t/democracy/source/publications/Cyberhate_2015_en.pdf)

# Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

## Publications, funding opportunities and events

**CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS** – **ILGA-Europe** - [Attitudes, opinions, beliefs about LGBTI equality in Europe](http://www.ilga-europe.org/values-and-frames)

In September this year, ILGA-Europe and PIRC ([Public Interest Research Centre](http://publicinterest.org.uk/)) started the project “Reframing LGBTI Equality in Europe”. ILGA-Europe is urgently looking for **any relevant literature on attitudes towards and beliefs about LGBTI equality, or how LGBTI equality is framed, in a European context**. Find more information and send your contributions [here](http://www.ilga-europe.org/values-and-frames).

**PUBLICATION** – **Council of Europe** – [Protecting Human Rights of Transgender Persons: a short guide to legal gender recognition](http://www.coe.int/en/web/sogi/-/a-short-guide-to-legal-gender-recognition?redirect=http://www.coe.int/en/web/sogi/home?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_DBbuuXVUomKf&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-1&p_p_col_count=2)

# Religion and Belief

## Policy Developments

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION – Launch of the webpage about “Combatting Antisemitism”**

As a follow up to the Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, which was held in Brussels on 1st and 2nd October 2015, the European Commission launched a [new webpage dedicated to combating antisemitism.](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/racism-xenophobia/combatting-antisemitism/index_en.htm) The webpage gathers relevant policy documents and data.

# Other

## Policy Developments

**COUNCIL OF EUROPE – Comment by Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner: “Travellers – Time to counter deep-rooted hostility”**

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Nils Muižnieks highlights the deep rooted hostility against travellers across Europe. To combat this, it is necessary:

* To eliminate all discriminatory provisions regulating the life of persons living in caravans.
* For authorities to condemn all instances of racist statements against Travellers and sanction hate speech directed against them.
* Engage in more research and awareness-raising concerning the history of Travellers.
* For authorities to avoid evictions, and seek human rights compliant alternatives.
* Support and replicate good practices, involving active participation of the Travellers, as mentioned here: <http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/fr>

The article is available [here.](http://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/travellers-time-to-counter-deep-rooted-hostility)

# Recent case-law

## European Court of Justice (ECJ)

* **Case C-515/14 – Commission vs. Cyprus (21 January 2016)**

Cypriot legislation on pension entitlement which places migrant workers at a disadvantage in relation to those who do not leave Cyprus is contrary to EU law. The summary of the case is available [here](http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2016-01/cp160004en.pdf).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**
Read the **Equinet discussion paper** [Equality bodies and freedom of movement](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-Bodies-and-Freedom-of)

## European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)

* **Application n°40355/11 - Boacă and Others v. Romania (7 January 2016)**

Violation of Article 14 in conjunction with Article 3, concerning a case of alleged police brutality against members of a Roma family. The case is accessible [here](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf?library=ECHR&id=003-5265242-6540832&filename=Forthcoming%20judgments%20and%20decisions%2012-14.01.16.pdf).

* **Application n°22947/13 - Magyar Tartalomszolgáltatók Egyesülete and Index.hu Zrt v. Hungary (2 February 2016)**

The ECHR ruled that a self-regulatory body and an Internet news portal were not liable for the offensive online comments of their readers. More information is available [here](http://www.humanrightseurope.org/2016/02/hungary-court-ruling-on-liability-for-vulgar-and-offensive-online-comments/).

* **Application n°7186/09 - Di Trizio v. Switzerland (2 February 2016)**

Discrimination on the ground of sex in the calculation of a disability allowance in Switzerland. The summary of the case is available [here](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/app/conversion/pdf?library=ECHR&id=003-5288196-6577219&filename=Judgment%20di%20Trizio%20v.%20Switzerland%20-%20discrimination%20in%20the%20calculation%20of%20a%20disability%20allowance.pdf).