**
Dear Equinet Members,**

This Members’ Bulletin gathers **the main Equinet internal updates, with a view to provide you with a clearer overview of Equinet activities**. 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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### **PART 1: EQUINET UPDATES**

# Call for proposals: Equinet paper on positive duties*Making Europe More Equal: a Positive Duty?*Deadline: Sunday 10th April 2016

Equinet is commissioning a **research paper on positive and equality duties in Europe**. Positive duties go beyond the positive action defined in the EU Equal Treatment Directives, and the research will seek to map out current practices and measures implemented.

The use of positive duties (such as compulsory pay audits or equality plans) and equality duties (such as a duty on all public sector organisations to have due regard to equality in all their functions) has gained prominence in recent years. They offer a novel approach to securing more equal societies by going beyond the reactive anti-discrimination model, yet introducing binding requirements on duty bearers.

The Equinet study **will build on existing research on the topic and it will examine the advantages, challenges and possible shortcomings of positive duties and equality duties**. This will be complemented by an analysis of good practices and comparisons between the different existing systems.

The study will conclude with recommendations offering ideas for equality bodies to use and spread the use of these tools.’

**More information and terms of reference are available** [**here**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Call-for-Proposals-An-Equinet)**.**

**Please do not hesitate to disseminate this information to relevant experts. For more information, please contact Katrine Steinfeld (****Katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org****).**

# Call for applications: Equinet is looking for an expert on social media useDeadline: Friday 8th May 2016

Equinet is **looking for an expert on social media use to develop a training module on improved social media use for equality body communication experts**. The training module will be developed in cooperation between the contractor/expert and the Equinet Secretariat. Apart from advanced social media use, it will also look at **how to deal with the challenges of communicating values**, particularly how to deal with online **hate speech** on equality bodies’ social media channels, without limiting the right to freedom of speech. The training session will take place **in the autumn 2016**.

**We would be grateful if you could disseminate the call for applications to your relevant contacts. More information as well as the terms of reference can be found** [**here**](http://equineteurope.org/Expert-on-Social-Media-use-We-want)**.**

# Overview of Equinet recent engagement with EU policy makers

**Recent meetings with EU policy makers**

Since the beginning of the year, Equinet Chair Evelyn Collins (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland), together with members of the Equinet Secretariat, has met with a number of **European policy makers in order to highlight the work of Equinet planned for 2016**, to communicate the learning from the work of equality bodies on different topics and shed light on their particular relevance to specific policies and activities being planned or pursued at European level.

Equinet representatives met with the different units from the European Commission:

* Non-discrimination Policies and Roma coordination Unit (D.3 - DG Justice and Consumers)
* Cabinet of Vĕra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality
* Gender Equality Unit (D.2 - DG Justice and Consumers)
* Equality Legislation Unit (D.1 - DG Justice and Consumers)
* Fundamental rights and rights of the child (C.1 - DG Justice and Consumers)
* Disability and Inclusion (C.3 - DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion)
* Cabinet of Frans Timmermans, First Vice President of the European Commission, Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights

More information about these meetings are available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-engagement-with-European).

**Equinet contribution to the European Commission consultation on the review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020**

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH221/arton631-941ce.pngIn December 2015, the European Commission launched a public consultation on the mid-term review of the [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:en:PDF). It aims to “assess the progress made” under the Strategy and “identity gaps to be addressed at EU level to ensure the full and equal participation of people with disabilities”. Equinet used this opportunity to promote the findings and conclusions of the Perspective [“Realising rights – Equality bodies and people with disabilities: supporting the review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020”](http://www.equineteurope.org/Realising-Rights-Equality-Bodies) which was prepared by the working group on policy formation in 2014.In the contribution, Equinet: * Highlighted the necessity to put a **stronger focus on reasonable accommodation**, **stereotypes** and **stigma** associated with persons with disability and **lack of awareness of rights**.
* Called on a **clear mandate on disability in and beyond employment and adequate resources allocated to equality bodies**.
* Suggested that the renewed European Disability Strategy should identify **the importance of the work of equality bodies** to the effective implementation of the Strategy.
* Recalled the importance for the Council of the EU to move forward on the **adoption of the Equal Treatment/Horizontal Directive** in order to ensure a full protection of people with disabilities in and beyond employment at EU level.
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# Save the date: Equinet & Equality and Human Rights Commission roundtable event (20th April 2016, Brussels)

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|   (Click to enlarge picture)On **20th April (13:30-15:00)**, Equinet and the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/) are co-organising a **roundtable event at the European Parliament in Brussels**. The event is hosted by the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D). It will address the issues of **work-life balance, pregnancy and parenthood related discrimination** at national and EU levels. It will gather Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and representatives of national equality bodies.MEPs Mary Honeyball (S&D, UK), Marie Arena (S&D, Belgium) and Jean Lambert (Greens, UK) already confirmed their participation. More information about the event is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-EHRC-roundtable-event-The).The event is public. The registration process will start as soon as possible. Check the webpage for the last updates ! **Please feel free to send this invitation** [**to your national MEPs**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/map.html)**. In case you need more information, please contact** **jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org****.**  |

# Equinet seminar on accessibility and reasonable accommodation – 4th and 5th April 2016, ViennaFinal agenda available

On 4th and 5th April 2016, Equinet and the [Austrian Disability Ombudsman](http://www.behindertenanwalt.gv.at/) are organising the **seminar "Accessibility and reasonable accommodation" in Vienna, Austria**. The seminar will take stock of the experiences of equality bodies on accessibility and reasonable accommodation. It will also build their capacity in understanding, promoting and ensuring reasonable accommodation and accessibility.

**Registration to the seminar are now closed. The final agenda of the Seminar is available** [**on the Equinet website**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Accessibility-and)**. A summary as well as materials and presentations of speakers will be made available in the course of April 2016.**

# Updates: Cooperation Platforms involving Equinet - Council of Europe – ENNHRI – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

In October 2013, Equinet, the Council of Europe (CoE), the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) took the decision to establish [common platforms for cooperation](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Thematic-Platforms-for-Cooperation-) on four pressing topics.

1. **COOPERATION PLATFORM ON ADVANCING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS**

The last meeting of the ECOSOC Cooperation Platform was held on 28th January in Strasbourg.

More information about the next meeting of the platform will be communicated in the coming weeks.

**Equinet contact person:** Katrine Steinfeld, Equinet Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org).

1. **COOPERATION PLATFORM ON RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS AND ASYLUM SEEKERS**

The second meeting of the Asylum and Migration Cooperation Platform was held in Vienna on 15th and 16th February 2016. The summary will be published soon [on the Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Thematic-Platforms-for-Cooperation-).

**Equinet contact person:** Jessica Machacova, Equinet Project Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org).

1. **COOPERATION PLATFORM ON ROMA EQUALITY**

The next meeting of the Roma Equality Cooperation Platform will be held in Sofia on **25-26 April 2016**, preceding the CAHROM meeting scheduled for 26-29 April.

**Equinet contact person:** Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org).

1. **COOPERATION PLATEFORM ON HATE CRIME**

**The FRA working party on hate crime will be held on 28th and 29th April in Amsterdam**. Members of the Platform will receive an invitation in the coming weeks.

**Equinet contact person:** Sarah Cooke O’Dowd, Communication Officer (Sarah.CookeODowd@equineteurope.org).

# Save the date! Next Equinet Meetings

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| **Working Groups** | **Tuesday 22nd March** | WG Equality Law *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Thursday 21st April** | WG Gender Equality *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Capacity-building events** | **Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th April** | Seminar on Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation *(Vienna, Austria)* |
| **Thursday 19th and Friday 20th May** | Seminar on Education and Gender Equality *(Prague, Czech Republic)* |
| **Governance** **Meetings** | **Wednesday 15th June** | Board meeting *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Conferences and other Equinet events** | **Wednesday 20th April** | Equinet-EHRC Roundtable on Work-Life Balance *(European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Thursday 16th June (TBC)** | Equinet Conference “Strengthening European equal treatment legislation and its implementation” *(Brussels, Belgium)* |

### **PART 2: EQUINET MEMBERS**

# Updates and new initiatives

* **International Women’s Rights Day 2016 – Equality bodies’ initiatives**

On the occasion of the International Women’s Rights Day 2016, Equinet gathered the last publications and materials issued by equality bodies on gender equality and women’s rights:

* Infographic by the **Defender of Rights** (France): [here](http://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/fr/actualites/8-mars-2016-la-defense-des-droits-des-femmes-c%27est-toute-l%27annee-pour-le-defenseur-des) - in French
* Video on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** (Great Britain): [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAWeNmMqeag)
* CEDAW Shadow Report by the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** (Great Britain): [here](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/cedaw-shadow-report-legal-aid-reforms-and-womens-access-justice)
* Event of the **Institute for Equality of Women and Men** (Belgium): [here](http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/fr/calendrier/sexisme_ordinaire_et_si_on_en_parlait) - in French
* Report of the **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights** to the CEDAW Committee: [here](http://www.mensenrechten.nl/berichten/college-presenteert-rapport-over-mensenrechten-van-vrouwen-nederland-aan-cedaw) - in Dutch
* Final conference of the project on sexual and moral harassment by the **Commissioner for Citizenship and Gender Equality** (Portugal): [here](https://www.cig.gov.pt/2016/03/conferencia-final-do-projeto-assedio-sexual-e-moral-no-local-de-trabalho-9-mar-lisboa/) - in Portuguese
* **European Action Week against Racism – Equinet social media campaign**

To celebrate the **European Action Week against Racism**, Equinet is running a social media campaign from **14th to 21st March**. Every day, we are promoting anti-racism initiatives led by Equinet members.

The promoted campaigns can be found on the Equinet [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/EquinetEurope/) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/equineteurope) pages and [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/).

* **9th March 2016 - Visit of the Norwegian Ombudswoman in Brussels**

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|   (Click to enlarge picture)The new Norwegian [Ombud for Equal Treatment](http://www.ldo.no/), Hanne Bjurstrøm, was in Brussels last week to meet with important partners at EU level. Equinet was very pleased to have the opportunity to meet the new Ombud and accompany her throughout the day.The Ombud met with several key parners, including the Cabinet of Vĕra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. More information is available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Norway-s-new-Ombud-for-Equal).  |

* **Austrian Disability Ombudsman – Marking 10 years of anti-discrimination for people with disabilities in Austria**

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH129/arton811-53efe.pngOn 14 and 15 January 2016, the [Austrian Disability Ombudsman](http://www.behindertenanwalt.gv.at), Erwin Buchinger, and his Office as well as the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs, with the active involvement of the Federal Chamber of Labour and the Office for Opportunities & Benefits of the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB), hosted an expert meeting on key equality issues for persons with disabilities and the further development of this agenda at the ÖGB Events Centre in Vienna. More information and relevant materials are available [on the Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Marking-10-years-of-anti).  |

# Equinet members’ requests

* **Ombudsman Office of the Republic of Latvia – Request on dwelling services (deadline: 29th April 2016)**

“The [Ombudsman Office of the Republic of Latvia](http://www.tiesibsargs.lv/lv/sakumlapa) has initiated an examination regarding rights to disconnect or to not ensure/provide in dwellings such services as heating, water supply, sewerage and waste removal.

 Currently the legal framework in Latvia under certain circumstances permits to suspend service delivery and for example to leave a person without water or heating during the winter if the person has not paid for the received services or has failed to fulfill other obligations set by the service provider.

Thereby the Ombudsman Office of the Republic of Latvia would be grateful to receive any information - good practice, legal norms or experience from your country about rights or prohibition to disconnect or to not ensure in dwellings such services as heating, water supply, sewerage and waste removal.

**Please provide the answers to these questions:**

**1. Does your national legislation permit to disconnect the services in dwellings which are associated with living, in particular: water, sewage, heating, waste removal?**

**2. Please provide the information, which dwelling services and in which cases can be disconnected?**

Please specify the norm/ norms which allow it (if possible, please, copy the English language version of the norm as an answer).
Please specify the norm/ norms which forbid it (if possible, please, copy the English language version of the norm as an answer).

**The Ombudsman Office of the Republic of Latvia would be grateful to receive the information till April 29, 2016. Please send information to legal Adviser of our Office Mrs. Ieva Arklone:** **ieva.arklone@tiesibsargs.lv****.****”**

### **PART 3 – EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS’** **REQUESTS**

# ILGA-Europe - Call for submissions: OSCE Hate crime report 2015Deadline: as soon as possible

*Message from Michael Cerulus, Senior Policy & Programmes Officer at ILGA-Europe*

ILGA-Europe is preparing the annual submission to the OSCE/ODIHR hate crime report, on hate crime incidents of 2015. We received less submissions from you last year, so we hope to increase the number again this year. ODIHR told us that the quality of our reports is continuously increasing, so let's keep it up!

All NGOs can submit reports. You can choose to do this directly to OSCE/ODIHR, but ILGA-Europe will also prepare a comprehensive submission on incidents that happened in 2015, on all countries that we have information on.

As a result, you are kindly asked to let me know as soon as possible whether you want to contribute to this submission (michael@ilga-europe.org). I will then contact you to prepare this together and to see whether you wish to be listed as a co-submitter along with ILGA-Europe. In any case, we should have all your input by Monday 18 April 2015.

The country-by-country information you have will be precious. As this is a yearly report, only incidents reported in 2015 can be considered. I'm attaching to this message the ODIHR's note on how to prepare your submission, as well as an example of a submission, prepared in 2015 by our Hungarian member organisation Háttér, which can be used as a template to report cases **[ANNEXES 1 AND 2]**. We used a similar template the last two years.

Thanks a lot for your help,

**Michael Cerulus
Senior Policy & Programmes Officer
ILGA-Europe**
michael@ilga-europe.org

#  European Commission - Call for proposals on gender equality

The European Commission published **two calls** in relation to gender equality and women’s rights:

1. **Daphne call -** **Action grants to support national or transnational projects on multi-agency and multi-disciplinary cooperation to respond to violence against women and/or children, and on tackling underreporting** (deadline: 1st June 2016)

**The priorities of this call for proposals are:**

* to encourage victims and witnesses to report violence against women and/or children to the relevant authorities and institutions, thus ensuring their access to the support they are entitled to receive, taking account of and signposting existing mechanisms such as child and women's helplines, women's refuges, interagency and multidisciplinary children's houses, etc.; and/or
* to develop and implement multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary cooperation (at national, regional or local level) that enables relevant professionals to effectively collaborate to prevent and respond to violence against women and/or children.

More information about the call is available [here](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/calls/2015_action_grants/just_2015_rdap_ag_en.htm).

1. **Action grants to support transnational projects to promote good practices on gender roles and to overcome gender stereotypes in education, training and in the workplace** (deadline: 27th May 2016)

**The priorities of this call for proposals are:**

* to address the stereotyping of educational and career choices and to promote gender equality in education, training and career guidance;
* to attract women into male-dominated sectors or occupations, and conversely to attract men into female-dominated sectors or occupations;
* to challenge stereotypical assumptions about the roles of women and men in the labour market, including in leadership positions, and to change behaviours and practices that hamper equality;
* to ensure that work practices promote gender equality, and do not reinforce stereotypes, gender segregation or inequalities.

More information about the call is available [here](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/calls/2015_action_grants/just_2015_rgen_ag_role_en.htm).

**Should you be interested in applying for these grants and are looking for partners among other equality bodies, please contact** **Katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org****.**