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**EQUINET MEMBERS’ BULLETIN #41
Network Updates**

**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 Membership and Policy Officer** (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org / 0032 2 212 31 80).

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### **PART 1: EQUINET UPDATES**

# Reminder: Equinet Information Form 2017Deadline: Monday 12th December 2016

**- Email sent to the Heads of equality bodies and Equinet contact persons on Wednesday 9th November -**

Every year, the Secretariat sends its members a request to update our **list of Equinet contact persons** and representatives in the four Equinet’s Working **Groups**.

The information form aims to collect information from **all Equinet member organisations** for the year 2017 on the following, as nominated and approved by the head of your equality body:

1. The main **Equinet contact person** in your equality body;
2. Staff expert/s nominated as (continued or new) **Equinet Working Groups members**

This exercise is important as it ensures that our records are up to date and that Working Group members in your organisation receive all the relevant communication and materials.

Moreover, this is also an opportunity to review the planned activities of each Working Group and select which are of highest relevance for your organisation and who would be the most appropriate person to participate in them.

The Equinet 2017 information form is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Working-Groups-). We kindly ask you to fill it in, sign it and return it by **Monday 12th December** to Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 80).

# Equinet Perspective & Conference on intersectionality (7th December 2016, Brussels, Belgium)

**Equinet Perspective - "Innovating at the intersections. Equality Bodies tackling intersectional discrimination"**

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH211/arton964-09591.png?1480340410 The issue of intersecting grounds is a recent focus for anti-discrimination and equality work. It is underdeveloped in theory, policy and practice, despite being a key challenge to the future of equality and non-discrimination. This Equinet Perspective aims to set out the contribution of equality bodies to intersectionality issues, as well as suggesting ways forward for further developing this work in the future.This Equinet Perspective is based on the contribution of **23 equality bodies** from 21 European countries, as well as a roundtable discussion of **Equinet’s Working Group on Policy Formation** and the input of **Equinet’s Working Group on Gender Equality**. It was authored by **Niall Crowley, independent expert**. |

The Perspective is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Perspective-Innovating-at-the-Intersections-Equality-Bodies-tackling).

**Equinet Conference “Diverse, Inclusive and Equal: Innovating at the Intersections of Gender Equality”, Wednesday 7th December 2016, Brussels, Belgium**

On Wednesday 7th December 2016, Equinet is organising the conference "Diverse, Inclusive and Equal: Innovating at the intersections of gender equality". The event will be hosted by the Belgian Institute for the Equality of Women and Men in Brussels.

The final agenda of the conference is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Register-to-the-Equinet-Conference-Diverse-Inclusive-and-Equal-Innovating-at). Presentations as well as a summary will be made available after the conference.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSONS**: Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org - Tel. 0032 2 212 3180) & Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (Katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85)

# Equinet Handbook: How to build an equal pay caseAvailable online

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH213/arton958-31533.png?1479486656This Handbook, prepared by members of **Equinet’s Working Group on Gender Equality**, aims to be a practical and useful tool for anyone who works on equal pay cases, guiding you to existing resources, data, partners and arguments that have been successful in the past.The handbook is structured to help case-workers in equality bodies, lawyers or other legal professionals to build their case, but the resources contained therein should support and inform anyone looking to gain insight into the challenges and opportunities in litigating for equal pay. In addition, the handbook contains useful and hands-on information for anyone interested in and working on equal pay. |

**The Handbook is available on** [**our website**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Handbook-How-to-build-a-case-on-equal-pay)**.
Hard copies will also be made available during the Equinet conference on Intersectionality (7th December 2016, Brussels, Belgium)**

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON**: Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85).

# Equinet Factsheet and Compendium of Good Practices Integration of Migrants, Asylum Seekers and RefugeesAvailable online

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH220/arton953-e14cc.jpg?1479374333 The factsheet and compendium of good practices aim to summarise the contribution of equality bodies to the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Europe.Their integration is key to ensuring inclusion and equality for all in Europe. It is also an important area of equality bodies’ work as part of their mission of promoting equality and combating discrimination.It is based on a survey which was sent to the Equinet membership in April 2016. The **factsheet** analyses the main findings of the survey and provides recommendations and ways forward. The **compendium of good practices** selects relevant examples given by the contributors in areas such as casework and complaints, awareness raising and promotion. It will be updated on a regular basis. |

**The factsheet and compendium of good practices are available on the** [**Equinet website**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-publishes-factsheet-and-compendium-of-good-practices-on-integration-of)**.**

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 80).

# Equinet Evaluation LabFinal documents available

In 2015, Equinet launched the **Evaluation Lab**. This two-year project aims to build on the findings of the 2013 paper “Processes and indicators for measuring the impact of equality bodies” and provide a platform for expert staff members of equality bodies interested and experienced in the topic.

The **objectives** of the project were the following:

* Discuss the findings and proposals of the 2013 paper.
* Equip equality bodies with better knowledge and tools to evaluate their work.
* Pave the way for further developing the evaluation work being done by equality bodies.

10 Equinet members participated in the project. It was supported by Niall Crowley, independent expert and Equinet Expert Advisor to the Board.

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| C:\Users\jema\Downloads\EVALUATION LAB BOOKLET.png**Evaluation Lab Booklet**The booklet aims to gather and summarise the findings and resources produced during the project and to share the knowledge generated among all Equinet members. **Common indicators for equality bodies**The 2013 Equinet publication on offers a menu of thirty-seven possible indicators that equality bodies could use. This menu was used as a basis by the Evaluation Lab members, who agreed on 7 indicators every equality bodies could use, no matter what their size, mandate, powers and resources are. |

We encourage you to use both the booklet and the common indicators in your daily evaluation work. If you wish to do so, please do not hesitate to let us know and to contact the Equinet secretariat (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org) to give your feedback!

The **Evaluation Lab Booklet** and the **Common Indicators** are available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Evaluation-Lab-Final-booklet-available).
The summary of the three meetings of the Evaluation Lab, as well as presentations and other resources, are available on the [Equinet Members’ Area](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Equinet-Evaluation-Lab-).

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 80).

# Equinet 10th anniversary2017 Calendar – Call for StoriesDeadline: 12 December 2016

Equinet will celebrate its **10th Anniversary in 2017** with a number of initiatives throughout the year. One of these will be a **calendar** which will highlight the work of our members, focusing in particular on their support to victims of discrimination, as well as the grounds of discrimination themselves.

The aim is to identify **12 ‘stories’ from across our membership**, which can personify **different types of discrimination cases and the equality bodies’ response to them**. Each story will be accompanied by some basic visuals to support the story.

Eg. Heinz, who lives in Germany, was convicted of being homosexual during the 1960s, when this was illegal. The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency has fought to change legislation so that he is no longer considered a criminal. Heinz is looking forward to celebrating this upcoming change in the law!

In order to develop this calendar, we are calling upon members to identify:

* **A case** that your organisation dealt with that either represents a typical discrimination case in your country, or a more singular but striking case that you helped them overcome.

**Answer the following questions**:

* + Who is the person? (name if possible, nationality, age or any other characteristics that might have made them a victim of discrimination)
	+ What was the problem?
	+ How did you support them?
	+ What was the final outcome?
* Imagine you had to explain the case to a child and then summarise the basic information as requested above **(aim for 60 words max!)**.
* If you have more detailed information on this case available online, we can provide a link so that people can read more about it.

**Please send your short case stories to us by 12 December**. For the calendar, we will chose **12 stories that cover all the grounds of discrimination**, and ideally that come from a geographical perspective across our membership. Please note that we will be happy to gather more stories, which will be included in a section on our website and highlighted on social media throughout the year. So even if your story doesn’t appear in the calendar, we will still be happy to share it!

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Sarah Cooke O’Dowd, Communication Officer (sarah.cookeodowd@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 84).

# Equinet Chair, Evelyn Collins, participates in ENNHRI General Assembly27th & 28th October 2016, Zagreb, Croatia

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH200/arton948-96c8b.jpg?1478536620Equinet Chair Evelyn Collins recently participated in the General Assembly of the [European Network of National Human Rights Institutions](http://ennhri.org/) (ENNHRI) and spoke about the need for standards for equality bodies, as well as the discriminatory impact of counter terrorism measures in Europe.It was a great opportunity to stress the importance of Equinet cooperation with ENNHRI and to meet some of our common members, which due to their mandate are not only Equality Bodies, but also National Human Rights Institutions.Evelyn Collins also presented the [Equinet Working Paper on Standards](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Working-Paper-on-Developing-Standards-for-Equality-Bodies) and highlighted their interactions with the Paris Principles. Evelyn’s full statement is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/IMG/pdf/ec_speaking_points_ennhri_standards_at_27.10.16_final.pdf).  |

ENNHRI members discussed their support and solidarity for the [Polish equality body and NHRI, the Commissioner for Human Rights.](http://www.equineteurope.org/Commissioner-for-Human-Rights) Considering recent developments in Poland which could negatively impact on the Commissioner for Human Rights’ vital role to promote and protect human rights, [a statement](http://ennhri.org/ENNHRI-renews-support-for-Poland-s-Commissioner-for-Human-Rights) was released on 28 October 2016, stating ENNHRI’s strong support for the Commissioner for Human Rights in its work to promote and protect human rights in Poland.

More information is available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Chair-participates-s-at-ENNHRI-General-Assembly).

# Public Consultation - European Pillar of Social RightsJoint call by Equinet and ENNHRIDeadline: Wednesday 14th December

ENNHRI and EQUINET jointly call on their respective members to contribute to a public consultation on the European Social Pillar of Rights, as was agreed at the **Council of Europe-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET cooperation platform on economic and social rights on 10 October 2016 in Belgrade**.

The European Commission wants to involve EU Member States’ authorities, social partners and citizens in shaping the **European Pillar of Social Rights**. The consultation on the European Social Pillar is open until the end of December 2016 and can be accessed [here](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/towards-european-pillar-social-rights_en) until 31 December.

The European Pillar of Social Rights should build on, and complement, the EU social acquis in order to guide policies in a number of fields essential for well-functioning and fair labour markets and welfare systems. The principles proposed do not replace existing rights, but offer a way to assess and, in the future, to better the performance of national employment and social policies.

You are invited to answer the [full questionnaire](http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/towards-european-pillar-social-rights_en) on behalf of your institution.

Following on from the [**Equinet perspective Equality Bodies Contributing to the Protection, Respect and Fulfillment of Economic and Social Rights**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-Bodies-contributing-to)(2016), Equinet holds that action by equality bodies on mainstreaming equality in public policy, especially economic and social policy, can infuse economic and social rights with an ambition to achieve equality. Equality bodies experience a number of complaints in the fields of access to employment, housing, pensions, social insurance systems, and family unity, fields **where the non-discrimination aspect could fruitfully be strengthened**. Given the stress placed on social protection mechanisms, Equinet reiterates the need to ensure non-discriminatory access to social and economic rights in all field.

If you do not have the capacity to answer the questionnaire, but you feel that some specific issues should be addressed, please share them with us by **14 December at noon**, as Equinet will be responding to the consultation based on the network’s previous work in this field.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85).

# Equinet Working Paper on StandardsEnglish, French, Czech and German versions availableDissemination and call for translation

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| Overview - PDFIn June 2016, Equinet officially launched its **working paper on developing standards for equality bodies**. This Working Paper is the result of discussions that took place in the framework of the **Equinet Cluster on Standards** in 2015, as well as contributions and comments provided by Equinet members.It seeks to establish positions that equality bodies could promote, negotiate and advance vis-à-vis European and national administrations in the establishment of standards for equality bodies at European level and their implementation at national level.  |

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**Dissemination**

The Working Paper, as well as a visual briefing summarising its key messages, are available [on the Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Working-Paper-on-Developing-Standards-for-Equality-Bodies). We would be grateful if you could disseminate it to your relevant contacts in order to ensure maximum impact of our messages.

**Translation**

The Working Paper is now available in **English, French, Czech and German**. (Soon to come in Dutch and Serbian).

If your organisation would consider its translation it in your national language, please get in touch with **Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy** (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org).

Read and download **the Working Paper** [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Working-Paper-on-Developing-Standards-for-Equality-Bodies) (EN, FR, CZ and DE).
Materials of the 16th June **Conference on strengthening the effectiveness of European equal treatment legislation** are available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Strengthening-the-effectiveness-of-European-Equal-Treatment-Legislation) (a summary of the event will be published soon).

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 83).

# Equinet Seminar – Fighting Discrimination on Grounds of Race & Ethnicity9th and 10th November 2016, Budapest, HungaryPresentations available

Equinet, together with the Hungarian Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, organised a one and a half day capacity-building seminar for equality bodies’ staff members about fighting discrimination based on the grounds of race and ethnic origin. The meeting took place in Budapest on 9-10 November 2016.

The presentations delivered during the Seminar are available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Fighting-discrimination-on-grounds-of-race-and-ethnic-origin). A summary of the event will be made available soon.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON**: **Silvana Röbstorf**, Policy and Communication Assistant, Silvana.Roebstorf@equineteurope.org (Tel: 0032 2 212 31 86)

# Equinet ClustersStrategic LitigationQuasi-Judicial BodiesNext meetings

**Equinet Cluster on Strategic Litigation:** Monday 12th December, Brussels, Belgium

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 83).

**Equinet Cluster on Quasi-Judicial Bodies:** Friday 16th December, Brussels, Belgium

Registration is open [here](https://form.jotform.com/63012299006954) until Friday 2nd December.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85).

# Equinet Working GroupsUpdates

**WG COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES**

* The Working Group met in Bratislava on **21 November**, hosted by the **Slovak National Centre for Human Rights**.
* **Ann Kathrin Sost (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, Germany)** outlined FADA’s work on using communication to change legislation, focusing on their work to change Paragraph 175 in German law so that men convicted of homosexuality in the past could be rehabilitated.
* **Marco Buemi (Italian expert)** described the outcomes of the European project PRISM - *Preventing, Redressing and Inhibiting Hate Speech in New Media.* The awareness raising aspect of this project was very important, so we looked at how they communicated on hate speech in particular.
* **Päivi Ojanperä (Ombudsman for Equality, Finland)** questioned the role of equality bodies in social media, and highlighted the importance of value-based counter speech to combat hate speech in society.
* Finally, the WG members went through the **draft Manual on Social Media for Equality Bodies** (developed after the social media training in October 2016), and suggested a number of changes and areas where they could give examples from their work. We aim to have the manual finished before the Christmas holidays.
* A summary of the meeting will be made available on the internal section of Equinet’s website at the beginning of December. Our next meeting will take place in the new year and will continue to look at **how to include values in our communication work**.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Sarah Cooke O’Dowd, Communication Officer (sarah.cookeodowd@equineteurope.org– Tel: 0032 2 212 31 84).

**WG EQUALITY LAW**

* The working group met on **22 September in Riga, at the Office of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia.**
* Two working group members, from the **Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman in Norway** and from the **Office of the Public Defender of Rights in the Czech Republic** shared two interesting cases from their practice at national level.
* Members received an update about the state of the monitoring project aiming to identify a relevant case or cases in order to bring a **third party intervention on behalf of Equinet to the European Court of Human Rights.**
* The working group looked at the draft of the [**Equinet paper on Fighting Discrimination on Grounds of Race and Ethnic Origin**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Fighting-discrimination-on-grounds-of-race-and-ethnic-origin) and discussed the steps needed to finalise it.
* The Equinet paper was used as a basis and disseminated at the **Equinet Seminar in Budapest on Fighting Discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity (9-10 November)**.
* Following the seminar the Equinet paper will be finalised before the end of the year.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 83).

**WG GENDER EQUALITY**

* Equinet’s working group on gender equality met **in Malta on Friday 4 November, hosted by the National Commission for Promotion of Equality (NCPE).**
* The [**Equinet Handbook on how to build a case on equal pay**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Handbook-How-to-build-a-case-on-equal-pay) is available online, and the working group is developing a **training for equality bodies’ staff** on how to use the handbook to build your case.
* The working group discussed the outcomes of the [**Equinet Perspective on Intersectionality**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Perspective-Innovating-at-the-Intersections-Equality-Bodies-tackling), including potential areas of capacity building for equality bodies that could be followed up in 2018.
* The **Equinet 2017 Work Plan** was discussed, and the working group is preparing its own inputs, including the preparation of an outline for the Equinet report on Gender Equality in Education by our **German colleague Nathalie Schlenzka from FADA**. The working group is also evaluating its efforts at gender mainstreaming in the work of Equinet.
* The working group was informed of the priorities of the upcoming **Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union**, and mapped the extent of interest in the Equinet project on combatting violence against women and gender based violence which will be launched in 2017.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85).

**WG POLICY FORMATION**

* The **Perspective on Youth Discrimination** is currently being drafted. Thank you very much to the members who contributed to the questionnaire!
* The next meeting will take place at the beginning of 2017. It will focus on the preparation of the **Equinet conference on the integration and inclusion of migrants** and the **Equinet factsheet on the European Commission LGBTI List of Actions**.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 80).

# 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 Platform was held on **10th October in Belgrade, Serbia**, hosted by the Serbian Commission for the Protection of Equality. The platform partners discussed the European Commission’s initiative to introduce a European Pillar of Social Rights and its relationship to the Council of Europe’ Social Charter, as well as building capacity on the use of indicators in the monitoring of human rights and equality.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Katrine Steinfeld, Policy Officer (katrine.steinfeld@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 85).

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 is available [on the Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Thematic-Platforms-for-Cooperation-). Equinet just published [a factsheet and a compendium of good practices](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-publishes-factsheet-and-compendium-of-good-practices-on-integration-of) on the integration of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Jessica Machacova, Membership and Policy Officer (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 80).

1. **COOPERATION PLATFORM ON ROMA EQUALITY**

The last meeting of the Operational Platform for Roma Equality (OPRE) was held on 7th and 8th June in Athens, Greece. A [joint statement on evictions of Roma people](http://www.equineteurope.org/Press-Release-Stop-Evictions-of-Roma-and-Travellers) was published in June 2016.

Equinet’s upcoming paper on **Fighting discrimination on grounds of race and ethnic origin** contains examples of work to further equality for Roma and will be shared with OPRE partners.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Tamás Kádár, Head of Legal and Policy (tamas.kadar@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 83).

1. **COOPERATION PLATFORM ON HATE CRIME**

For now, in order to maintain this platform, it is up to us to at least exchange information on our work on hate crime and hate speech. Therefore, please send FRA (elena.balzarini@fra.europa.eu ) information on your activities, meetings, studies and publications in the field of combating hate crime and hate speech, which you think could be interesting for the other Platform members.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON:** Sarah Cooke O’Dowd, Communication Officer (sarah.cookeodowd@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 84).

# Save the date! Next Equinet Meetings

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| **Governance** **Meetings** | **Thursday 8th December** | Board meeting *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Conferences and other Equinet events** | **Wednesday 7th December** | Conference on intersectionality and gender equality *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Clusters** | **Monday 12th December** | Cluster on Strategic Litigation *(Brussels, Belgium)* |
| **Friday 16th December** | Cluster on Quasi-Judicial Bodies *(Brussels, Belgium)* |

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

**If you need the feedback of Equinet members on specific questions, or if you would like to share updates with them regarding your work at national level, please contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Membership and Policy Officer (****Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org****).**

# Equinet members’ requests

**Unia (Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities), Belgium – Social housing and knowledge of national housing**

Unia is asking for information in your national legal system relating to the provision of social housing:

*Is the knowledge of the national language mandatory for tenants of social housing?
If so, are there possibilities of appeals or remedies at national or international level?*

**Please send your answers or possible questions to Emilie Van Laer (****Emilie.VanLaer@unia.be****) and Imane El Morabet (****Imane.ELMORABET@unia.be****) as soon as possible.**

# Updates from Equinet members

**First Regional Forum of South-East Europe equality bodies – 16th November 2016, Belgrade, Serbia**



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| 15069025_671933979630002_7453784041231009848_oThe aim of the “First Regional Forum of South-East Europe Equality Bodies” organized by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality is to establish an effective model of regional cooperation between equality bodies of different countries in this region, geared towards promoting activities aimed at human rights protection and equality.Anne Gaspard (Equinet Executive Director) participated and deliver an opening address on behalf of Equinet – European Network of Equality Bodies, underlining support for this regional cooperation initiative. |

A [statement on cooperation between South East Europe equality bodies](http://www.equineteurope.org/IMG/docx/statement.docx) was signed by Equinet members in that region:

* [Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination](http://www.equineteurope.org/CommissionerforProtectionfromDiscrimination), **Republic of Albania**
* Human Rights Ombudspersons, Bosnia and Herzegovina
* [Gender Equality Ombudswoman](http://www.equineteurope.org/Gender-Equality-Ombudsperson), Republic of Croatia
* [Ombudswoman for Persons with Disability](http://www.equineteurope.org/Ombudswoman-for-Persons-with), Republic of Croatia
* [Ombudswoman](http://www.equineteurope.org/Office-of-the-Ombudsman), Republic of Croatia
* [Commission on Protection against Discrimination](http://www.equineteurope.org/Commission-for-Protection-against%2C482), Republic of Macedonia
* [Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms](http://www.equineteurope.org/Protector-of-Human-Rights-and), Montenegro
* [Commissioner for the Protection of Equality](http://www.equineteurope.org/Commissioner-for-the-Protection-of), **Republic of Serbia**

**Find more information about the event on the** [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/The-First-Regional-Forum-of-South-East-Europe-Equality-Bodies) **and the website of the** [Serbian Commissioner for the Protection of Equality](http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/en/international-day-of-tolerance-regional-conference-2016/)**.**

**Institute for the Equality of Women and Men, Belgium – Insurers are not allowed to discriminate against transgender people**

The Belgian Institute for the Equality of Women and Men went to court with Madam X., who was born male and underwent sex reassignment surgery in 1997. Since then she has gone through life as a woman without any problems, until she wanted to take out hospitalisation insurance. The insurance company only wanted to agree to taking out an insurance policy with her if there was a specific exclusion in the policy that related to her trans identity. The judge in the first instance ruled that this condition discriminates against transgender people. More information about the case is available [on the Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Belgium-Insurers-are-not-allowed-to-discriminate-against-transgender-people).

**Centre for Equal Treatment, Luxembourg – 10th anniversary of the legislation on equal treatment – Monday 28th November**

The Centre for Equal Treatment from Luxemburg is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the national equal treatment legislation and its related creation. The celebration will take place on Monday 28th November in Luxembourg. Anne Gaspard, Executive Director will attend and will deliver a keynote address on behalf of Equinet and our Members.

More information is available [here](http://cet.lu/en/).

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

# Civil Society Organisations - European Coalition to end violence against women and girlsFactsheet online

The European Coalition to end violence against women and girls has launched a factsheet in support of the EU signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, the Istanbul Convention.

The Coalition is led by the European Women’s Lobby. It made up of more than 25 civil society organisations. Equinet, European Network of Equality Bodies is an observer within the Coalition, and will be focusing on the work that equality bodies carry out to tackle violence against women [throughout 2017](http://www.equineteurope.org/spip.php?action=telecharger&arg=2557&type=application.vnd.openxmlformats-officedocument.wordprocessingml.document).

More information, as well as the factsheet, are available on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/EU-ratification-of-the-Istanbul-Convention-A-vital-opportunity-to-end-violence).

# PublicationEquality & Rights AllianceIreland: An analysis of the introduction of socio-economic rights as a discrimination ground

The Equality & Rights Alliance has long espoused the introduction of a socioeconomic status ground into Irish employment equality and equal status legislation. The introduction of such a ground is immediately suggested by the wide range of discrimination experienced on this socio-economic status ground. This experience covers, in particular, the key fields of employment, education, housing and accommodation, and health. This discrimination has deepened and been exacerbated by the economic and financial crisis and the deepening poverty that has been a result of how this crisis has been managed.

The report is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Ireland-An-analysis-of-the-introduction-of-socio-economic-status-as-a).

# Call for ContributionsInproof - Template for successful models of awareness-raising on the rights of persons with disabilities (Art. 8 UNCRPD)Deadline: Wednesday7th December

[Inproof](http://www.inproof.eu/) (international project office) is an organisation assisting especially social profit organisations with European project funding and project execution & evaluation. We also evaluate work programmes of (European) organisations. We are now also working on an assignment for the Council of Europe, based on Art 8 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The intention is to find successful models of awareness-raising on the rights of persons with disabilities.

These could be policies, strategies, actions such as campaigns, methods, collaboration models, etc... Which have proved to be successful. They may come from any Member State of the Council of Europe and should be initiatives launched by the authorities or in close cooperation with them. That's why we are contacting you, as you group many public networks and agencies working on equality.

The intention is to find out which are the elements which make up a good model of raising awareness on the issue and to combat prejudices and stereotypes. The examples should also inspire other Member States to launch similar initiatives.

The models which will be selected, will feed into a publication of the Council of Europe next year to all 47 member states, as it will contribute to the Strategy of the CoE on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This will provide great visibility to the organisations/authorities in question.

Inproof calls on Equinet members to share good practices on the issue. They would be grateful if you could send back the attached template (ANNEX 1) by **Wednesday 7th December** to katrijn.dekoninck@inproof.eu.