

EQUINET SEMINAR

Equality bodies tackling discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities

Thursday 9th and Friday 10th March 2017

LOCATION: Zagreb, Croatia (venue TBC)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

Discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities touches upon many areas of life. Despite the ratification of the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) by 27 EU Member States and the European Union itself, challenges in legislation and practice remain for persons with intellectual disabilities.

Several national and international reports highlight these challenges, such as [legal capacity](#), [political participation](#), [the right to independent living](#), or the [specific situation of women with intellectual disabilities](#). Specific reports and data focusing on persons with intellectual disabilities in Europe are however rare.

The majority of Equinet members have a mandate to address **discrimination on the ground of disability**. In 2014, the Perspective [“Realising Rights. Equality bodies and people with disabilities. Supporting the review of the European Union Disability Strategy 2010-2020”](#) revealed that 7 of them undertook specific activities to engage persons with intellectual disabilities in their work. This includes for instance delivering self-advocacy training, producing awareness raising tools about their rights and engaging with non-governmental organisations advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities.

Given the specific situation of persons with intellectual disabilities and the numerous challenges they face on the ground of disability and on other grounds of discrimination, there is a strong potential and demand from Equinet membership to build their capacity in this area.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Seminar is **building individual capacity of equality bodies’ staff members** to address discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities.

In particular, **the Seminar aims to:**

- Help equality bodies with **understanding and clarifying the main concepts** related to discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities.
- Provide them with **practical guidance** on how to address discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities from a **legal, policy and communication perspective**.
- Stimulate and support **peer learning**.

PARTICIPANTS

This Equinet seminar is dedicated to an audience of approximately **45 equality bodies’ staff members dealing with disability issues**. It allows for participation with different professional backgrounds, including **legal, policy and communication**. Participants will follow different workshops according to their area of expertise.

DRAFT AGENDA

THURSDAY 9th MARCH

08:30 – 09:00 Welcome & Registration

OPENING SESSION

09:00 – 09:20 *Opening addresses*
Evelyn Collins, Chair of the Equinet Executive Board and Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
Anka Slonjsak, Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities, Croatia

SESSION 1

Setting the scene - Main definitions and challenges faced by persons with intellectual disabilities

09:20 – 09:50	Discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities: main challenges	Senada Halilcevic Vice-President of Inclusion Europe and Self-Advocate
09:50 – 10:20	The EU and international legal framework	Oliver Lewis , Executive Director at Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (<i>TBC</i>)
10:20 – 11:00	Questions & Answers	
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break	

WORKSHOPS

Parallel workshops on legal, policy and communication issues

Participants are kindly asked to choose one workshop according to their area of expertise when registering to the event.

Workshops	LEGAL WORKSHOP Legal assistance to persons with intellectual disabilities	POLICY WORKSHOP Advocating with and for persons with intellectual disabilities	COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP Addressing underreporting and reaching out to persons with intellectual disabilities
11:30 – 12:30	Presentation: Strategic Litigation and discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities	Presentation: FRA's projects on the rights of persons with intellectual disabilities	Presentation: Fighting stereotypes against persons with intellectual disabilities
	Speaker: Oliver Lewis , Executive Director at Mental Disability Advocacy Centre	Speaker: Martha Stickings , Social Research Officer at EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)	Speaker: <i>TBC</i>
12:30– 13:30	Lunch Break		
13:30 – 15:30	Discussion 1: How to use the CRPD in legal assistance to persons with intellectual disabilities?	Discussion 1: Advocating with persons with intellectual disabilities: cooperation with self-advocates and DPOs	Discussion 1: Using Easy-to-Read tools to address underreporting

	Facilitator: Oliver Lewis , Executive Director at Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (<i>TBC</i>)	Facilitator: Senada Halilcevic , Vice-President of Inclusion Europe and Self-Advocate	Facilitator: Soufiane El Amrani , Easy-to-Read Editor at Inclusion Europe (<i>TBC</i>)
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break		
16:00 – 18:00	Discussion 2: Legal capacity of persons with intellectual disabilities: equality bodies' practices	Discussion 2: Contributing to legislative change for persons with intellectual disabilities: equality bodies' practices	Discussion 2: Reaching out to persons with intellectual disabilities: equality bodies' strategies
	Facilitator: Martha Stickings , Social Research Officer at EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)	Facilitator: Branka Meić , Advisor, Office of the Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities, Croatia	Facilitator: Zuzana Pavlíčková , Legal Expert for External Relations at Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, Slovakia
17:45	End of the first day		
Evening	Social event		

FRIDAY 10th MARCH

SESSION 2

Discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities: intersections with the grounds of gender and age

09:00 – 09:30	Discrimination against women with intellectual disabilities	José Smits , Secretary General of the Board of Inclusion Europe and ANED Country Expert for the Netherlands (<i>TBC</i>)
09:30 – 10:00	Children with intellectual disabilities and access to education	Biljana Janjic , Program Associate, Serbia Regional Office, Disability Rights International
10:00 – 10:30	Questions & Answers	
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Participants will be split in two discussion groups and will rotate after one hour.

11:00 – 13:00	DISCUSSION GROUP 1 Discrimination against women with intellectual disabilities Facilitator: José Smits (<i>TBC</i>)	DISCUSSION GROUP 2 Children with intellectual disabilities and access to education Facilitator: Biljana Janjic
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CONCLUDING SESSION

13:00 – 13:15	Anne Gaspard , Equinet Executive Director Anka Slonjsak , Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities, Croatia
13:15 – 14:15	Closing lunch

