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| **MEETING SUMMARY****Equinet Cluster on Research & Data CollectionFirst meeting** |
| **Tuesday 20th June 2017 (09:30 – 15:30)** |
| **Unia/Equinet Offices (Salle Ligne)**Rue Royale 138, 1000 Brussels, Belgium |
| **Background & objectives**The Equinet Cluster on Research & Data Collection is a two year project aiming to provide a platform for around **15 staff members of equality bodies** **responsible for research and data collection**. The Cluster will meet **twice in 2017 and twice in 2018**. The aim of **first meeting of the Cluster** was to:* Identify the scope and work plan of the Cluster
* Discuss experience and main challenges related to research and data collection

**Documents & complementary information**More information, as well as background documents are available on the [Equinet Members’ Area](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Cluster-Research-and-Data-Collection-).For any questions concerning the cluster, please contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Membership & Policy Officer (jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org)  |

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| **Session 1****Setting the scene: defining research and data collection** |
| **Facilitator:** Anna Chabiera, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, Poland |
| This sessions aimed at:- identifying the **different ways** in which participants engage with research and data collection,- clarifying the **focus of the Cluster** by agreeing on a common definition of research and data collection. |

* The session started with a **tour de table**, where participants gave a short introduction to how they and their respective equality body **engage with research and data collection**. The tour de table showed **great variety** in the ways the different bodies work with these issues, including in-house studies, commissioned research, analyses of own cases and statistics for annual reports.
* The meeting then moved on to discuss the more particular **focus of the cluster**. The facilitator suggested the following definition of research for the purpose of the cluster:

A process encompassing: choosing a topic, preparing a concept and tools, data collection, analyses combing sociological and legal approach, writing a report and doing communication work in order to achieve aims such as providing data and arguments for governance based on knowledge regarding equal treatment, raising awareness on discrimination issues and in long term contributing to social change in attitudes towards diversity.

* It became clear that there is a need for a definition of research that includes data collection, but that data collection again could be divided in two main categories, namely internal and external *(Internal: E.g. analyses of own cases, External: Information from other organs or research bodies)*.

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| **Session 2****Main challenges related to research and data collection** |
| **Facilitator:** Rainer Stocker, Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA), Germany |
| **This session aimed to:**- Discuss **key challenges** participants experience when engaging with research and data collection,- Identify challenges which can be **addressed by the Cluster.** |

The facilitator invited the participants to share **the challenges** they encounter in their daily work with research and data collection. The challenges were divided in three main categories; **Methodological, structural and other.**

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| **Structural challenges** |
| * Access to data
* Cooperation with private and public professional agencies, researchers and so on
* Insufficient resources (both economic and human)
* Mandate of the equality body
* Leadership priorities
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| **Methodical challenges** |
| * Working with marginalized groups and small populations - how to reach them
* Political opposition undermining research methods
* Lack of comparable data
* Gaps and differences in official available statistics
* Sensitive information
* Asking for discrimination on other ground than age and gender is illegal in many countries
* Data protection and sensitive information
* Identities are complex, for example when it comes to race and ethnicity, example: how to define them for research purpose and how to get a significant sample
* Reach the potential respondents in small groups
* How to develop good methods with limited resources
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| **Other challenges** |
| * Challenging finding good topics of research that are both relevant and have possible funding
* Impact and follow up of research
* How to make research visible and accessible for those it concerns
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| **Session 3****Identifying and overcoming research and data gaps** |
| **Facilitator:** Andrew Harding, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Great Britain |
| This session focused on:- **Identifying existing data gaps**,- Discussing **innovative ways** to overcome them. |

The facilitator gave a two-parted presentation, followed by discussions in the group. The first part concerned **identifying data gaps,** and the other one some ways such **gaps can be tackled.**

**Some reasons for research and gaps:**

* Incredibly complex data landscape
* Underreporting
* Unpublished data
* Discontinued or changing national surveys
* Issues with self-reporting, blind spots and subject gaps (especially around specific kinds of people at risk)
* Sample size issues
* Sensitive information

**Some suggestions of how to overcome these problems:**

* Make evidence a key part of your process, and get involved in the relevant communities
* Report specific data gaps wherever possible, especially in executive summaries
* Influencing the data landscape and filling data gaps are important inclusions in long term strategy. Allocate resources to them if possible.
* Influence others: Where is the issue important enough to tackle yourself
* Support development of data collection

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| **Concluding session****Ways forward**  |
| **Facilitator:** Jessica Machacova, Equinet Secretariat |
| This session aimed to -discuss and set an indicative timeline for the implementation of the Cluster’s proposed work plan, –discuss the Concept note - *The state of equality in Europe - Equality bodies’ perspective* |

**Cluster Ways Forward:** The next meeting will take place in November/December 2017. There was interest for having an additional meeting in 2018, so that there will in total be 4 meetings in the cluster (instead of 3 as initially planned). The participants were very much interested in inviting external speakers, for example to learn more about new and cutting edge ways of doing equality research, and how to use statistics in discrimination cases taken before the courts.
*A proposal of work plan will be sent to the Cluster members over the summer.*

**Suggested Equinet report “*The state of equality in Europe*”:** JM presented the scope, methodology and timeframe for the suggested report. The participants were positive to the idea of the report. However, the participants suggested a longer timeframe, and that if the report is to be published in 2019, the report should concern 2015-2017, to be able to have the necessary data available. Further on, the participants were skeptical to the idea of comparing data from different equality bodies, because there are many differences in how and what the equality bodies gather information about.*An updated research proposal will be sent for comments in September 2017.*

**The meeting closed at 15:45.**

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| **PARTICIPANTS** |
| **First name** | **Family name** | **Equality Body & Country** |
| **Andre** | **Callus** | National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)Malta |
| **Anna** | **Chabiera** | Office of the Commissioner for Human RightsPoland |
| **Nikola** | **Grujić** | Commissioner for Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia |
| **Karin** | **Günther** | Equality OmbudsmanSweden |
| **Andrew** | **Harding** | Equality And Human Rights CommissionGreat-Britain |
| **Natália** | **Juráková** | Slovak National Centre for Human Rights |
| **David** | **Kovič** | Advocate of the Principle of EqualitySlovenia |
| **Mihai** | **Lilea** | National Council for Combating DiscriminationRomania |
| **Elke** | **Lujansky-Lammer** | Ombud for Equal TreatmentAustria |
| **Nena** | **Nenovska Gjorgjievska** | Commission for protection against discriminationFYRO (Macedonia) |
| **Elena** | **Stabouli** | Greek Ombudsman |
| **Rainer** | **Stocker** | Federal Anti-Discrimination AgencyGermany |
| **Bogdan** | **Stolojescu** | National Council for Combating DiscriminationRomania |
| **Marina** | **Urbanikova** | Office of the Public Defender of RightsCzech Republic |
| **Cécile** | **Ventola** | Defender of RightsFrance |
| **Hannah** | **Vermaut** | UniaBelgium |

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| **APOLOGIES** |
| **Baki** | **Hyuseinov** | Commission for Protection against Discrimination |
| **Almedina** | **Karic** | The Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| **Nikolina** | **Patalen** | Office of the Ombudsman |
| **Bogdan** | **Stolojescu** | National Council for Combating Discrimination |
| **Stoyan** | **Tchalachkanov** | Commission for Protection against Discrimination |