**Equinet Members’ Bulletin – Network Updates
January 2017**

**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** (Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org/ 0032 2 212 31 80).

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

# Equinet 2017 Work Plan & 10th anniversaryCalendar of Activities

**NEXT EVENTS**

The full list of 2017 Equinet events is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Events-2017).

Registration for the following events is already open:

* **Seminar -** [**Equality bodies tackling discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Equality-bodies-tackling-discrimination-against-persons-with) (9-10 March, Zagreb, Croatia)
**Deadline:** Tuesday 14th February
* **Training Event -** [**Communicating Equality II: Social media for equality bodies**](http://www.equineteurope.org/Communicating-Equality-II-Social-Media-Training-for-Equality-Bodies) (4-5 April 2017, Dublin, Ireland)
**Deadline:** Tuesday 8th February

**EQUINET 2017 CALENDAR**

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| http://www.equineteurope.org/local/cache-vignettes/L150xH163/arton990-62f87.png?1484317752Equinet celebrates its 10th birthday this year! As a celebratory gesture, we have put together a 2017 calendar highlighting the work of national equality bodies across Europe, including casework examples from 12 Equinet members.The calendar is available in PDF [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Calendar-2017). Copies will be sent to your equality body in the coming weeks! |

**10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AND AGM**

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| The 10th Equinet anniversary conference, as well as the celebrations, will take place on **Tuesday 10th October 2017** in Brussels.It will be followed by our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Equinet Board Elections on **Wednesday 11th October**.More information to follow soon! K:\Activities\2017\Events\AGM and 10-year conference\Save the Date visual\MEMBERS 10th anniversary Save the Date EXTERNAL.png |

Our indicative calendar of 2017 activities is attached to this email (**ANNEX I**).

# Equinet External EvaluationDeadline: Friday 27th January 2017

**- Email sent to the Heads of equality bodies & Equinet contact persons on Thursday 5th January -**

Equinet will once again carry out the **annual independent external evaluation of the year’s work** and of the activities of our Network. This is a regular key process to learn from our Members’ experience and stakeholders’ feedback to help improve our future work.

[**Transform Management Consultancy**](http://www.trans4mgt.com/)'s John Tierney (UK) has been selected as the expert evaluation consultant to undertake this comprehensive evaluation of Equinet’s activities. Transform has designed a short questionnaire for Equinet's Members and for our key stakeholders.

This evaluation presents us with a great opportunity to gather feedback from our membership and other partners, to help identify room for improvement and to let our community have their say about matters that may concern them. Your input to this evaluation is crucial in helping us reflect on our Strategic Plan 2015-2018, now two years into its life, as well as to gather feedback on several other areas and new initiatives.

Therefore, we would be very grateful if you would take a moment to complete a short questionnaire before **27th January 2017**.

**The questionnaire can be accessed** [**here**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/survey-taken/?sm=n9K48sMzhWoGjIqTncx_2B_2FtfZo8980xVXModgBv3QKPy0KmciRdXP4J_2B8JDyeI4iP7HPDNavZ7B1XIvrSHlh9jQ_3D_3D)**.**

Completing it should take no longer than approximately 10 minutes. Your responses will be treated confidentially by our evaluation contractor, Transform, who, as previously, will eventually present Equinet with the key findings, but never attributed to their author.

We thank you in advance for your responses and your valuable cooperation as part of this important evaluation process.

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

# Closing Equinet Accounts 2016 – Last chance to submit Members’ Expense Claims 2016Deadline: Wednesday 25th January 2017

**- Email sent to the Equinet contact persons on Thursday 12th January -**

All expense claims related to Equinet events in 2016 need to reach the Equinet Secretariat by **Wednesday 25 January** at the latest. All claims received after this date will be disregarded as Equinet Accounts 2016 will be closed.

Also, in 2017, Equinet will put in place an improved procedure to book travel and to claim expenses. More details to come soon. As a result, in 2017 all expense claims will need to be logged into our system at the latest one month (30 working days) after the end of the event it concerns. Any claim received late will be disregarded (it will not be possible to log the expense anymore).

Hopefully, this should facilitate costs processing, financial monitoring, reporting and reimbursements.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON**: Yannick Godin, Finance and Administration Officer (Yannick.godin@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 82)

# Equinet Executive BoardUpdates

The elected Executive Board is responsible for the overall management of the network and constitutes the strategic leadership of Equinet.

In late 2016, **Elisabeth Lier Haugseth,** former Head of Law Department of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and an elected Equinet Board Member, was appointed new Ombud for Consumers of Norway. Equinet warmly congratulated Elisabeth on this appointment!

End December 2016, **Kosana Beker**, also an elected Equinet Board Member, left her position as Assistant to the Commissioner for Protection of Equality in Serbia.

In this context, Elisabeth and Kosana both formally resigned as Equinet Board Member as they left their position within their national equality body (Member of Equinet), according to Equinet statutes and Board Elections procedures. We thank them both for their essential contribution to the work of Equinet and wish them all the best for the future!

In January 2017, following these resignations, two new Equinet members joined the Equinet Executive Board: **Tena Šimonović Einwalter** (Deputy Ombudswoman, Office of the Ombudswoman) and **Kirsi Pimiä** (Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Finland). They were appointed as new Board Members for the remainder of the Board’s mandate (until the AGM 2017) following acceptance of the Equinet Executive Board invitation to join (board meeting decision of 8th December 2016 in accordance with Equinet Statutes). Warm welcome and congratulations to Kirsi and Tena!

From January 2017, the composition of the Equinet Executive Board is the following:

* **Evelyn Collins (Chair)**, Chief Executive, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland
* **Sarah Benichou**, Head of ‘Access to Rights and Discriminations’ Unit, Defender of Rights, France
* **Anna Błaszczak**, Deputy Director of the Department of Equal Treatment and Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Commissioner for Human Rights, Poland
* **Patrick Charlier**, Co-Director, Unia (Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities), Belgium
* **Sandra Konstatzky**, Deputy Director, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria
* **Kalliopi Lykovardi**, Deputy Ombudsman, Greek Ombudsman, Greece
* **Kirsi Pimiä**, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Finland
* **Petr Polak**, Head of the Division of Equal Treatment, Public Defender of Rights, Czech Republic
* **Tena Šimonović Einwalter**, Deputy Ombudswoman, Office of the Ombudswoman, Croatia

The next Equinet Board meeting will be held on 16th March 2017. The next Board Elections will be held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 11th October 2017.

**EQUINET CONTACT PERSON**: Anne Gaspard, Executive Director
(anne.gaspard@equineteurope.org – Tel: 0032 2 212 31 82)

# Social Media CampaignMeet the Equality Bodies!

**-Email sent to Equinet Contacts, Board members and members of the Working Group on Communications on Wednesday 11th January-**

Following the launch of our European Directory of Equality Bodies at the 2016 Equinet AGM, we wish to continue work on raising awareness about the work of our individual members, this time via social media.

Every week, one of our member equality bodies gets to tweet through the [Twitter account @equineteurope](https://twitter.com/equineteurope), which aims to present the work of Equinet and its members through a mix of experiences and opinions from across Europe. Through the stories of the various curators, you will discover more about the day-to-day work of equality bodies and how they tackle discrimination in their country.

In **ANNEX II** (in attachment), you will find further information about how we are planning to run the campaign. This includes a calendar listing the weeks where we would like to have a member take over the profile.

If you have a big event/publication launch or something else happening during the year and you really want to take over our account at that time, let me know and I’ll reserve that week for you (although for now, we don’t forsee you having more than one week in the year, so as to give all our members a chance to participate).

You can already follow the work done by our Norwegian colleagues last week [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Norway-Equality-and-Antidiscrimination-Ombud).

More information about the campaign is available [on our website](http://www.equineteurope.org/-Meet-the-National-Equality-Bodies-MeetNEBs-).

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

# Reminder: Equinet Seminar – Equality Bodies tackling discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilitiesDeadline for registration: Tuesday 14th February

On **9th and 10th March 2017,** Equinet and the Croatian Office of the Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities are co-organising a **capacity-building seminar on Equality bodies tackling discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities**. The event will take place in **Zagreb, Croatia** *(venue to be confirmed)*.

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

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.

More information about the seminar, as well as the draft agenda, are available on [our website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Equality-bodies-tackling-discrimination-against-persons-with).
Equinet members can register to this event through [this link](https://form.jotform.com/70032514772954) until **Tuesday 14th February**.

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

# Reminder: Equinet Training EventCommunicating Equality II: Social Media Training for Equality BodiesDeadline for registration: Wednesday 8th February

On **4th and 5th April 2017**, Equinet will organise a second training session on social media use for equality bodies. It will take place in Dublin, Ireland.

The training will be provided by Mahtab Khan and Adam Stokes of [eyewitnessapp.com](https://eyewitnessapp.com/). It will focus on the needs of those bodies who use social media on a regular basis or who wish to start doing so. It will also be useful if you have the intention of (or have already) carried out social media campaigns to promote awareness of the equality body itself, or a given area of discrimination.

More information about the training event is available on [our website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Communicating-Equality-II-Social-Media-Training-for-Equality-Bodies).
Equinet members can register to this event through [this link](https://form.jotform.com/70161695899977) until Wednesday 8th February.

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

# Equinet Working Paper on StandardsToolbox for Equinet members & Social media kit

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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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**Toolbox for Equinet members & Social media kit**

On Monday 16th January, an email was sent to all heads of equality bodies and Equinet contact persons. This communication aims to encourage Equinet members and suggest guidelines for promoting the Working Paper and its content. In particular, two documents were sent:

* A **toolbox for Equinet members on “implementing standards for equality bodies”.** It aims to support your equality body in promoting the Working Paper and advocate for the concrete implementation of Standards for equality bodies at national level. Several equality bodies for instance already translated the paper in their national language, enabling them to use it more widely as a reference document in their national context.
* A **social media kit for members**, to support your organisation in raising awareness about the Working Paper and the need for strong standards for national equality bodies.

Both documents are available in **ANNEX III** and **ANNEX IV**.

**Translation**

The Working Paper is now available in **English, French, Czech, Dutch, German, Serbian and Slovak**. 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** in English, French, Czech, Dutch, German, Serbian and Slovak [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Working-Paper-on-Developing-Standards-for-Equality-Bodies).

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

# Equinet Working GroupsUpdates

**WG COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES**

* The Working Group will meet in Vienna on **21 March**, hosted by the **Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment**. Please [**register here**](https://form.jotform.com/70184837513963) by 10 February 2017.

**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 will discuss issues of religion and belief in 2017, updating the report they produced in 2011 ([A question of faith – religion and belief in Europe](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-Law-in-Practice-Religion)).
* Further to this, WG members will also receive a short (0,5 day) training on building strong equal pay cases, based on the [Handbook on ‘How to build a case on equal pay’](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Handbook-How-to-build-a-case-on-equal-pay) produced by the Gender Equality Working Group.
* The working group has finalised the discussion paper on fighting discrimination on grounds of race and ethnic origin (their main output from 2016) and it will be published in the coming weeks.
* Jayne Hardwick, the moderator of the WG until December 2016 has now left the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Great Britain. Equinet and the WG would like to thank her for all her contribution and dedication. We are currently in the process of nominating the next moderator of the working group.

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

**WG GENDER EQUALITY**

**Moderation of the WG Gender Equality**

As of 16 January 2017, the Equinet Working Group on Gender Equality will be moderated by two members. Long-time moderator Theresa Hammer from the Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment will be joined by Nathalie Schlenzka of the German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA). Nathalie joins Theresa in this role in order to secure continuity for the Working Group throughout 2017, and will enrich the network’s activities in 2017 with her extensive experience as a researcher with expertise in gender equality as well as questions of integration.

A big thank you to Nathalie for taking on these additional duties, and to FADA for supporting this important work in strengthening both the Working Group on Gender Equality and Equinet as a whole!

**Ongoing work**

* An outline of the Equinet report on Gender Equality in Education by our new WG co-moderator Nathalie Schlenzka has been circulated to our colleague **Katarzyna Wilkolaska from the Polish Commissioner for Human Rights**. Thank you Katarzyna for volunteering to contribute to and shape this important output of the group this year! Once the outline has been reviewed by Katarzyna, Theresa and the Equinet secretariat, it will be circulated to the rest of the working group for comments ahead of our first meeting, giving you the opportunity to comment yourselves and express any interest in taking responsibility for drafting any particular chapter. The outline and responsibilities will be discussed at our first meeting.
* **Watch out for:** the Equinet Secretariat will, following consultation with our co-moderators Theresa and Nathalie, send out an e-mail to the working group members with a **call for trainers** to design and conduct the planned training on How to build a case on equal pay this year.

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

**WG POLICY FORMATION**

* The draft **Perspective on Youth Discrimination** was sent to the Working Group members for comments. The deadline for sending feedback to Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org is **Friday 27th January.**
* 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.

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

**Watch out for:**

* The **tentative date** (pending confirmation from the Council of Europe)for the next meeting of the Platform is currently **28 March 2017**.
* An **online platform** for information sharing between the platform members should be set up by this date. If anyone is interested in receiving access to this closed online platform, please get in touch with me!

Equinet submitted a [contribution](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Response-to-the-European-Commission-s-public-consultation-on-the-First) to the public consultation on the European Pillar of Social Rights, following our member the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. The results of the consultation will be discussed at a conference in Brussels organized by the European Commission on Monday 23 January 2017.

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

# Save the date! Next Equinet Meetings

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| **January** | **February** | **March** |
|  |  | **9th & 10th March**Seminar – [Equality bodies tackling discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equinet-Seminar-Equality-bodies-tackling-discrimination-against-persons-with) *Zagreb, Croatia***16th March**Equinet Board Meeting*Brussels, Belgium (TBC)***21st March**WG Communication - 1st meeting*Vienna, Austria* |
| **April** | **May** | **June** |
| **4th and 5th April**Training event – [Social media training for equality bodies](http://www.equineteurope.org/Communicating-Equality-II-Social-Media-Training-for-Equality-Bodies)*Dublin, Ireland* | **3rd May (TBC)**Strategic Meeting on Standards (on invitation)*Brussels, Belgium***4th May**Conference – Positive Duties*Brussels, Belgium* |  |
| **July** | **August** | **September** |
|  |  |  |
| **October** | **November** | **December** |
| **10th October**Conference and celebrations – Equinet 10th anniversary&**11th October**Annual General Meeting and Board Elections*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, please contact Jessica Machacova, Equinet Membership and Policy Officer (****Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org****).**

# Updates from Equinet members

**Germany - Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA) publishes preliminary findings of survey on discrimination against homosexual and bisexual people**

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| JPEG - 42.3 kbK:\Communications\Logos\MEMBERS LOGO\Germany\logo_germany.jpgThe [Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA)](http://www.equineteurope.org/Federal-Anti-Discrimination-Agency) in Germany uses so-called Thematic Years to raise awareness about certain topics of discrimination. The theme for 2017 is ‘Equal Rights for every Love’ and focuses on the rights of LGBT people.FADA has just published the preliminary results of a survey focusing on the perceptions of mainstream society in relation to homosexual and bisexual people. The full survey results will be available in spring 2017More information about the preliminary results and the survey are available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Germany-Survey-on-Discrimination-against-homosexual-and-bisexual-people). |

**Latvia - Latest news on the work of the Ombudsman’s Office of the Republic of Latvia on the rights of persons with disabilities**

The Ombudsman’s Office of the Republic of Latvia recently undertook **3 important activities in the field of the rights of persons with disabilities**:

* Research on Accessibility of higher education institutions for people with disabilities
* Conference “Accessibility of Inclusive Education”
* Award ceremony for non-governmental organizations for supporting people with disabilities

More information about each of the research, conference and award ceremony are available in the article written by the Ombudsman’s Office of the Republic of Latvia on the [Equinet website](http://www.equineteurope.org/Rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-news-from-the-Ombudsman-s-Office-of-the).

**Norway – Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud publishes report to the UN CEDAW Committee**

The [Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-and-Anti-Discrimination-Ombud-LDO) has recently published a report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In the report, the Ombud describes the main equality challanges in Norway, including harassment, violence, digital violence and rape. A main focus of the report is how stereoptypes and narrow gender roles affect the realisation of fundamental rights for women and girls. The remaing equality challenges in Norway are the hardest and requires considerable political mobilization.

More information is available [here](http://www.equineteurope.org/Equality-and-Anti-Discrimination-Ombud-LDO).

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

# European Commission – Call for Proposals - Action grants to support national or transnational projects on non-discrimination Deadline: 21st March 2017

On 17th January 2017, the European Commission will open a call for proposals for action grants to support national or transnational projects on non-discrimination.

In this call, the Commission wishes to support activities which tackle at least one of the following groups at risk of discrimination: racial or ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, older/younger people, religious minorities and LGBTI people. With over 2 Million euros dedicated to the latter, particular priority will be given to awareness raising and dissemination projects in the Member States with particular needs and lower levels of social acceptance of LGBTI people.

**Cooperation of national authorities, equality bodies and non-governmental organisations is strongly encouraged!** More information is available [here](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/rec/topics/rec-rdis-disc-ag-2016.html).

# European CommissionRoma Integration Measures in the Member States – Anti-discrimination

**-Communication sent by the European Commission-**

In line with the [December 2013 Council Recommendation on Effective Roma Integration Measures in the Member States](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013H1224(01)&from=en), on 20 December 2016 the **yearly reporting exercise of the EU Member States to the European Commission has been launched**. Member States will report their measures both under the Council Recommendation and under their National Roma Integration Strategies or set of policy measures. The National Roma Contact Points will coordinate this exercise among the national stakeholders and will **report to the European Commission by 20 March 2017**.

As you may know, the Council Recommendation refers to the measures for the promotion of the practical enforcement of [Directive 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32000L0043) and to strengthening the role of the Equality bodies.

Therefore, the European Commission in cooperation with Equinet would like to involve you directly in the reporting exercise. Some of you already contributed last year. For this year's exercise we have revised the questions in cooperation with Equinet to better fit them to your areas of activities.

In January 2017, you will be contacted by the European Commission, DG Justice and Consumers, with the request to reply to the questions (**ANNEX V**) via an online reporting tool. We count on your cooperation and appreciate the opportunity to send your position directly to the European Commission.