

10 Equinet
European Network
of Equality Bodies
2007-2017

Calendar 2018



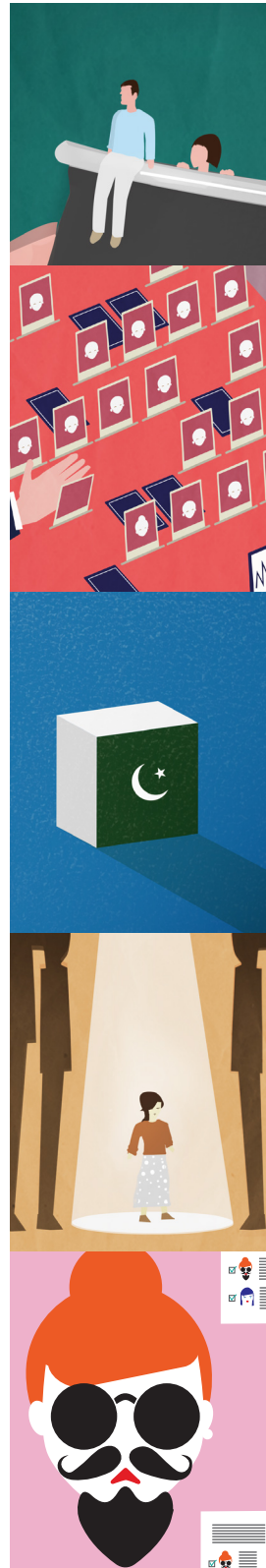
Equinet European Network of Equality Bodies

Equinet, European Network of Equality Bodies was set up in 2007 as a membership organisation for equality bodies. It now brings together 46 equality bodies from 34 European countries, including all EU Member States.

Equality bodies are public organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and promoting equality. They are legally required to do so in relation to one, some, or all of the grounds of discrimination covered by European Union (EU) law – gender, race and ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability.

Equinet promotes equality in Europe by supporting and enabling the work of national equality bodies. It supports equality bodies to be independent and effective as valuable catalysts for more equal societies.

Equinet aims to enhance the strategic capacity of its members and to develop the skills and competences of their staff. Equinet contributes to the European equality agenda by conveying an expert voice of equality bodies, and enhance their recognition and strategic positioning in relation to all stakeholders at European level. Finally Equinet serves as a knowledge and communication hub on equal treatment.



COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROTECTION OF EQUALITY

Serbia

When Maria applied for voluntary health insurance, she received a proposal that was significantly more expensive than the one she had seen advertised. It turns out that the original offer was for a man, which meant that men pay lower insurance premiums than women. Maria filed a complaint with the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality. The Commissioner decided that the insurance company was discriminating against women. Insurance premiums for men and women should be equal and anti-discrimination regulations must be respected. The insurance company complied with the issued recommendation and has now harmonised its rules on voluntary health insurance.



JANUARY

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27 Holocaust Remembrance Day

GREEK OMBUDSMAN

Greece

Spyros was a student at the Greek Police Academy. He was expelled in 2006 due to the fact that he was diagnosed with Hepatitis B. When he filed for readmission, his application was rejected, merely citing the fact that the student suffers from a chronic condition. The Ombudsman pointed out that this decision was unlawful and discriminatory. It did not contain specific reasoning as to why the applicant was unfit to carry out his duties. Following the Ombudsman's intervention, the application was re-examined and the request for readmission was granted.



FEBRUARY

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- 11 International Day of Women and Girls in Science
- 20 International Day for Social Justice

FEDERAL ANTIDISCRIMINATION AGENCY (FADA)

Germany

Stefanie worked as a probationary official at a university. A permanent position at her university was confirmed to her via email. However, after informing her director that she was pregnant, the offer of employment was withdrawn. When she found out that there is legal protection against this kind of discrimination, Stefanie turned to FADA to complain. FADA sought an amicable arrangement by negotiating with the dean, the commissioner for women's affairs and Stefanie's boss. Stefanie was finally offered a new permanent position at the university at another faculty. Stefanie was really happy to be going back to work at the university.



MARCH

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- 1** Zero Discrimination Day
- 8** International Women's Day
- 21** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

COUNCIL FOR THE ELIMINATION OF ETHNIC AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Spain

Estrella wanted to go shopping while she was visiting Bilbao. In a sports shop, she was accused of stealing some leggings, and was made to undress to show that she wasn't wearing them under her trousers. This made her very upset and humiliated. She thought that she was treated in this way just because she was Roma. Estrella went to get help at the Council's National Support Service for Victims of Racial or Ethnic Discrimination. They gave her advice about her rights and helped her to file a complaint. Months later, a court convicted the security guard who stopped her and ordered him to pay a fine for false accusation.



APRIL

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8 International Day for Roma

29 European Day of Solidarity between Generations

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

UK - Northern Ireland

Gareth wanted to buy a cake depicting the Sesame Street characters Bert and Ernie below the motto 'Support gay marriage'. This was to mark Anti-Homophobia Week in 2014. The bakery refused because they didn't agree with the message on it, saying it went against their religious convictions. With the support of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Gareth went to court to seek redress for discrimination. The County Court found that the bakery had discriminated against Gareth directly on the grounds of sexual orientation, religious belief and/or political opinion contrary to the law. The Court of Appeal upheld that decision in October 2016 and the Supreme Court will consider an application for leave to appeal the case to that court this year. The courts' judgements have made it clear that commercial businesses providing services to the public cannot discriminate on any of the grounds covered by anti-discrimination legislation, and the publicity the case has received has highlighted this message.



MAY

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- 5 European Independent Living Day
- 17 International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Bulgaria

Tanya and some 3,500 Bulgarians have tumours that need expensive treatment. As opposed to travelling abroad for therapy, they wanted to have this treatment at home. However, the necessary equipment, specialists and funding were lacking.

They filed a complaint to the Commission for Protection against Discrimination who ruled that the Minister of Health discriminated against them on the ground of "disability". Following the Commission's decision, the treatment of these patients is now paid by the state health insurance system. Three hospitals in Bulgaria now offer modern methods of radiosurgery.



JUNE

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20 World Refugee Day

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OMBUDSPERSON

Lithuania

When Lina and Tomas' daughter Milda was born, Tomas decided to stay at home to mind her. Unfortunately, according to Lithuanian laws, only mothers could receive a child care allowance. Tomas asked the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman to help him. Thanks to the Ombudsman's recommendation, the practice was changed so that Tomas and other fathers can spend time at home with their children. Now depending on the mother's or father's preferences, child care allowance can be paid to either of them.

COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Cyprus

Dinos, a father of four wanted to be able to look after his newborn child, but did not have paternity leave to do so. This is unfair as fathers should also be given time at home with their children. He contacted the Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights who concluded that it is important to promote a more balanced distribution of family obligations and promote work-life balance, thus also securing the equal treatment of men and women in employment. Following the Commissioner's recommendations, in July 2017, the Parliament of Cyprus approved new legislation on paternity leave.



JULY

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23 International Parents Day

28 World Hepatitis Day

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (EHRC)

UK-Great Britain

The Home Office used an aptitude test as a qualifier for promotion. A report on test pass rates found that employees over 35 years of age or from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely to fail. A number of employees brought indirect discrimination claims. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court, funded by the EHRC and the Public and Commercial Services Union. The Court found that, under the indirect discrimination provisions, members of a disadvantaged group don't have to show the reason why a provision, criterion or practice puts them at a disadvantage when compared with others, merely that it does so.



AUGUST

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12 International Youth Day

EQUALITY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION OMBUD

Norway

Hanne, a new mum, contacted the Norwegian equality body after the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) made her sign as “dad” when applying for maternity leave with her wife. The Ombud wrote to NAV, who claimed changing the forms was complicated, and might take a couple of years. The Ombud wasn’t satisfied with this answer and requested a meeting. A month later NAV announced that they would start changing their forms within a few weeks, so that co-mothers will no longer be made to sign as dads when they have children.



SEPTEMBER

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21 International Day of Peace

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSWOMAN

Croatia

Ivan (52) was transferred to a lower paid job during company restructuring. He and his colleagues of similar age complained to the Ombudswoman, who concluded it was age discrimination, since the same happened to workers older than 50 in a much larger percentage than the younger ones. Following her recommendations, the company transferred the 50+ workers to higher paid jobs and conducted management education on anti-discrimination.



OCTOBER

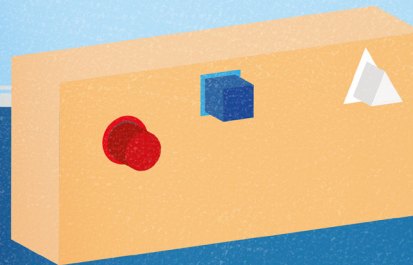
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- 1 International Day of Older Persons
- 17 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- 18 World Values Day
- 25 European Day of Justice

SLOVAK NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Slovakia

Abdul was enrolled and due to start pre-school in Slovakia. Abdul's mum is from Slovakia, and his dad is from Pakistan. Some parents in the school complained about Abdul being in their children's classes, and so the school wouldn't allow him to attend anymore. Every child has a right to get an education. The Centre initiated a meeting between representatives of the State School Inspection, representatives of the pre-school and Abdul's mum. Following the meeting, Abdul was allowed back to school and the director had to publicly apologize to his mum.



NOVEMBER

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- 3** European Equal Pay Day
- 9** International Day against Facism and Antisemitism
- 20** Transgender Day of Remembrance
- 25** International Day to End Violence against Women

OFFICE OF THE NON-DISCRIMINATION OMBUDSMAN

Finland

Olivia and Kaarina, 8-year old twin sisters were so happy when they got accepted to a special music school. The happiness was quickly wiped away when local authorities decided that one of the sisters, who uses a wheelchair and goes to school by taxi, wouldn't be driven to her new school, although the school ride is almost the same.

The municipality referred to rules stating that the municipality does not arrange school transport to special schools. The twins' mother got help from the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman. During negotiations with the municipality, municipal authorities were reminded of non-discrimination law, the obligation to make reasonable accommodation and the principle that equality does not mean the same rules for everyone. Olivia may now attend music school together with her sister.



DECEMBER

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3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities

10 Human Rights Day

18 International Migrants Day



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Equinet members:

Commissioner for the Protection from Discrimination, **Albania** | Austrian Disability Ombudsman, **Austria** | Ombud for Equal Treatment, **Austria** | Unia (Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities), **Belgium** | Institute for Equality between Women and Men, **Belgium** | Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** | Commission for Protection against Discrimination, **Bulgaria** | Office of the Ombudsman, **Croatia** | Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, **Croatia** | Ombudswoman for Persons with Disabilities, **Croatia** | Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Ombudsman), **Cyprus** | Public Defender of Rights – Ombudsman, **Czech Republic** | Board of Equal Treatment, **Denmark** | Danish Institute for Human Rights, **Denmark** | Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, **Estonia** | Ombudsman for Equality, **Finland** | Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, **Finland** | Commission for Protection against Discrimination, **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)** | Defender of Rights, **France** | Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, **Germany** | Greek Ombudsman, **Greece** | Equal Treatment Authority, **Hungary** | Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, **Hungary** | Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, **Ireland** | National Office Against Racial Discrimination, **Italy** | National Equality Councillor, **Italy** | Office of the Ombudsman, **Latvia** | Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, **Lithuania** | Centre for Equal Treatment, **Luxembourg** | National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, **Malta** | Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, **Malta** | Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms (Ombudsman), **Montenegro** | Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, **Netherlands** | Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, **Norway** | Commissioner for Human Rights, **Poland** | Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality, **Portugal** | Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment, **Portugal** | High Commission for Migration, **Portugal** | National Council for Combating Discrimination, **Romania** | Commissioner for Protection of Equality, **Serbia** | National Centre for Human Rights, **Slovakia** | Advocate of the Principle of Equality, **Slovenia** | Council for the Elimination of Ethnic or Racial Discrimination, **Spain** | Equality Ombudsman, **Sweden** | Equality and Human Rights Commission, **UK – Great Britain** | Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, **UK – Northern Ireland**

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