**Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices**

**AGENDA**

**21 March 2017, Vienna, Austria**

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| **Venue:** | **Useful contacts on the day:** |
| [Federal Chancellery](http://archiv.bka.gv.at/site/3327/Default.aspx), Ballhausplatz 1, 2nd FloorRoom 225,1010 Wien | **Elke Lujansky-Lammer:** + 43 664 81 45 154**Sarah Cooke O’Dowd**: +32 484 771053**Katrine Pettersen:** +47 94018856 |

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| **Monday, 20 March 2017 – Social Event** |
| 20:00 | *Antidiskriminierungsrevue* by the [Hope Theatre Nairobi](https://www.facebook.com/Hope-Theatre-Nairobi-495722083779828/), Kosmostheater |
| 22:00 | Dinner/Drinks at Glacis Beisl, Museum Quarter, Breite Gasse 4  |
| **Tuesday, 21 March 2016: Working Group Meeting** |
|  9:00 – 9:30 | **Welcome*** *Sandra Konstatzky, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria*
 |
| 09:30 – 11:00 | **Equality bodies – Mediatisation and the challenge of media society** *Lilly Korpiola, media strategist, author and media scholar*Skype presentation followed by Q&A session |
|  11:00 -11:30 | **Coffee break** |
| 11:30-13:00 | **Developing a Communication Toolkit on Values for Equality Bodies**Following up on our publication ‘[Valuing Equality](http://www.equineteurope.org/Using-values-to-create-a-more)’, we wish to develop a toolkit together with [PIRC](http://publicinterest.org.uk/) on how to practically use values in your communication. Please prepare the following questions in advance of the meeting:* What are the key barriers and challenges you face in communicating about equality and non-discrimination?
* What are your key needs in order to better overcome these challenges?
* Have you any examples of values-based communication that you would like to be included as a good practice? Or have you analysed any communication you’ve done as to how to make it more values-based?
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| 13:00 – 14:00 | **Lunch break** |
| 14:00-14:45 | **Partnerships for Equality*** *Katrine Gaustad Pettersen, Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, Norway*

The Norwegian Ombud has recently worked with a women’s shelter for the 16 days of action against gender based violence. They have also been working on parental leave awareness with a big employer’s organization and the Norwegian branch of an international firm. Katrine will share with us how the communication went on these campaigns and lead a discussion on your experiences of communication and partnerships. |
| 14:30 – 15:15 | **Equinet Communication**To mark the 10th anniversary of Equinet, there will be a conference and celebratory event in Brussels on 10 October. What do you think it should include? How can we use it to promote the work of our members to a wider public? We want your input! Apart from that, it would also be great to hear about your feedback so far on the #MeetNEBs campaign. For those of you who have already done it, what comments do you have? Any tips for those still to carry it out? |
| 15:15 – 15:30 | Summary of meeting and close |

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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**SHORT SUMMARY**

* Lilly Korpiola spoke to us about the **challenges for equality bodies in a changing media society** and how to deal with those challenges. Equality bodies are the guardians of democratic values and should aim to influence, rather than just inform the media. For this you need a media strategy that has a ‘head, heart and hands’ approach (rational level, empathy, action). We need simple positive narratives, that include images and stories. We should work with ambassadors to amplify our messages. Create community on and off line using values based messages linked to universalism and benevolence.
* The **key barriers and challenges** equality bodies face in communication include:
	+ **Current climate:** how to promote equality and rights in current climate of political, social and economic uncertainty?
	+ **Lacking authoritative voice:** how to build and compound ourselves as an authoritative source?
	+ **Complacency:** make people aware what protected discrimination is, that it can happen to anyone and how we can support them. We have to let them convince themselves by providing appealing messages with images and stories.
	+ **Balancing communication:** different grounds are received in different ways by the public. Even within a ground such as disability, some disabilities are easier to communicate on than others (eg. Wheelchair access vs. needs for people with intellectual disabilities). How should we deal with easier/more complicated issues or strategically promote one over the other? If your organisation has other mandates, how to promote communication on one role over other?
	+ **Language:** how can we make the issue of equality popular in the media (use easy to understand language, avoid jargon)?
	+ **Accessibility:** how to reach out to hard to reach audiences (older people, minorities, disabled people etc) with limited resources?
	+ **Hierarchy:** sometimes getting approval for our communication takes too long due to number of people having to look at it. How can we be quicker and more effective to tackle issues while they are still hot?
	+ **Creating community:** we need to support and empower people and create community. How can we do that and encourage people to act as equality ambassadors on social media?
* Their **needs** are in order to better overcome these challenges are:
	+ Tips on developing your equality body as an **authoritative voice** that is well respected.
	+ **Strategy on how to promote all grounds of discrimination**, especially for less well perceived topics such as ethnicity or religion.
	+ Clever strategy (with visuals and stories) to **talk to the majority** (creating emotion) and combat hate of minority
	+ **Data**! Need information to be able to convince press of importance of equality.
	+ Suggestions for **easy to understand** concepts that avoid using jargon, thus avoiding ‘allergy’ to equality.
	+ Ideas on how to make approval channels **quicker for crisis communication**.
	+ **Hands-on workshop** where we create social media strategies and create counter speech together, including finding allies.
* Videos/Ideas for 10th anniversary
	+ **Construct a narrative of European values, including numbers of cases**, making people aware that discrimination happens everywhere.
	+ **Draw out how it looked 10 years ago for different groups of people and how it has or hasn’t changed** (positive developments & stagnation – Roma good example for latter)
	+ **Who is our audience**? Do we want to push for something? Or just strengthen the platform and reinforce values that people have in middle European class.
	+ **Cases**: suggestions on strong legislation changing cases from Denmark, UK, Serbia, Germany that can be used as examples of our members’ work.

**DETAILED NOTES**

We started the morning with a welcome by Sandra Konstatzky of the Austrian [Ombud for Equal Treatment](http://www.equineteurope.org/Ombud-for-Equal-Treatment), who gave an overview of their work. One of the communication highlights mentioned was the ‘[case of the month](http://www.gleichbehandlungsanwaltschaft.at/site/8170/default.aspx)’ which is uploaded on their website every month (in German). This gives an overview of the work of the Ombud and is used regularly by journalists and even universities for exams. A particular challenge that the Ombud faces at the moment is how to make use of social media, especially how to do it properly and how to do it effectively in a hostile environment. Looking forward to getting some good tips from the social media training organized by Equinet in April.

**Equality bodies – Mediatisation and the challenge of media society**

***By Lilly Korpiola***

*(See presentation for additional details)*

Equality bodies are the **guardians of democratic values** and your role in this current post truth society is very important. The playground where you have to project these values has changed dramatically and the shift from an information society to a media society has been very quick. In this media society, it is important to understand collective sentiments and solidarities – our ability to read and verbalise collective sentiments is key! A leader who can verbalise collective emotions can gain momentum. Indeed, values linked to benevolence and universalism are being tried in this post truth, Trump era.

**How does current media logic operate?** Media is no longer the traditional institutional media. Social media has provided a back door to wider media attention, thus bypassing traditional gate keepers. Trump wants to bypass traditional media as he doesn’t want to share the space with them, hence his numerous tweets. Taking note of this, if your equality body wants to influence people, you have to have a strong social media presence and have a strong personal presence (consider heads speaking directly via social media).

People who feel threatened go into fight or flight mode. Uncertainty across the West has led to fear for many, so we need to put out a strong message that people can cling to.

**Head, heart and hands:**

* Head – rational explanation of what is happening;
* Heart - expressing empathy, understanding collective sentiment, calming down the people;
* Hands – what we have been doing so far and what we will do. When people are frightened, they need to understand that things will keep going on and we provide a future and vision for them.

Media can create solidarity. Certain media events have a transformative power in society. Our presence in media should be strategic. **Informing is not enough – we need to influence!**

Mass media has been around for a long time – currently moving towards digitalization. 30 per cent of jobs will disappear through automatization. Security threats will come through new technologies. Over 2 billion people connected to FB. Words are disappearing. Images are massive. Instagram is growing rapidly. Images go straight to brain – emo-sphere. **Mobile first, visual first!**

**Democracy and media**: we have a strong civil society; market sector; public sector; media. Equality bodies lie between civil society and public sector, so hard to communicate clearly from our point of view. Media was the 4th pillar, but slow journalism is no longer appreciated. People want to consume news very fast. Media is no longer a neutral independent actor. Media sphere is in crisis.

**Working with ambassadors**: Strong civil society is vital. Equality bodies shouldn’t be on their own in the corner - we must be vocal and project our voice in the media sphere. Find voices in all sectors of society who can be your spokesperson. Companies in Finland are happy to promote our equality theme.

**Universal affects vs culturally bound**: interest/excitement, enjoyment, surprise vs. shame/humiliation, disgust, distress, fear, anger/rage – latter is winning in media. They sell negative news. Good news doesn’t sell so much. We need to be precise about the narrative we are projecting. Consider simple positive narratives, and include images and stories that are very appealing.

For equality bodies, social media is a new platform. For example, there have been 59 per cent more complaints in Estonia thanks to social media! It is useful to target specific audiences, targeted campaigns that we couldn’t do it in the past. Multiplier effect – reach civil society – they can promote your work for you (ambassadors).

**Core values in western democracy** – values being activitated become infused with feeling. When someone’s values are threatened, then emotion arises. Social media has provided a venue for people to act instantly. People can defend their values by themselves. They don’t need unions or political parties to defend their point of view anymore. Anger was not an appropriate emotion to be voiced in the past, but social media has allowed people to express emotions that they wouldn’t use face to face.

**Benevolence** is about preserving, enhancing and strengthening the welfare of those near us, such as family and primary groups (in-group). In middle east or India – bbout 20 people in in-group, while in EU its only about 4. Benevolence is threatened in EU. **Universalism** is about understanding , appreciating and protecting the welfare of larger society and world or nature. Less people willing to defend liberal values now. People who propagate hate speech are often very worried about their closest people. Behind each angry person is someone who is afraid. Need to bring forward safety and security.

**Hate speech:** Weakening sense of security, need to protect one’s own in-group. Benevolence towards one’s own and hate towards the other. People don’t think about the consequences of their political choices; reactionary mechanisms take control when values and feeling of security are threatened. So it is important for us to show empathy and empowerment. We are living a Western winter (compared to Arab spring) – our values will be less important to those who feel threatened.

Hate speech is carried out by three main groups

1. Individuals who are scared or offended, want to let bad feelings out. When we moderate these people on social media, we just show empathy and that cools them down.
2. Organised hate groups and counter communities with their own channels of influence – follow moral panic. They exaggerate. Need to use head, heart and hands to combat them. Use dialogue; clear argumentation; right information; moderation.
3. Information warfare: can be manipulated by non-human actors such as bots and trolls. Genuine looking profiles with fabricated opinions. Here you need strong moderation, quick legal action when criteria for persecution, hate speech and harassment are met.

There is currently a blurring between reality and media representations of reality and between fact and fiction. You need to understand your position in this society. If you have raw material (ie. Data) to share, then they can push the media agenda based on your findings.

Influencing social media through hashtags…how you name and claim different topics is very important (social media coding). **Know your discussions, know the hashtags!**

**If you want to influence now: go mobile and use images.** Then try to understand the media generations in EU – 5 media generations: +50 are radio, television. Young people are social media. Need to target all people via different types of media. Element of surprise combined with media content is important. **Strategic planning and understanding can do a lot!**

**Tackling hate speech & engagement on social media:** resourcing and time. Benefits of spending a lot of time on social media. We usually spend a lot of time talking to our supporters while haters talk to their supporters. What are the benefits of human interaction vs resources on social media? Constantly need to look for ambassadors, get people to support and defend our ideas. Objective: get 5 people to get on board as volunteer ambassadors!

People want a **community**: Create a sense of solidarity and community in both worlds (online and offline).

DIHR/Denmark: Carried out a mapping of tone on social media from 2 main news outlets – every 7th comment was very hateful/stigmatization. Afterwards did a survey among 3000 people – over half of them refrain from discussing and participating online due to hate speech. There is a dilemma –we are facing so much hate but moderation is missing. In some Nordic countries they have strategies on this, but in Denmark, they fear that us participating could be us curbing free speech – Need rules of moderation! If we exclude the angry people, they become more radicalized!

Freedom of speech is one of our essential values. We shouldn’t have double standards. What is the difference with free speech and moderation? Work closely with police as they should take a role as the moral standard. Finland has hate speech unit in the police force. Need to get politicians to understand that we need presence of law and order, also in mediatized world.

**Equality bodies are vulnerable if they have to fight this battle by themselves. Find your allies and work together, otherwise we will be crushed. Do campaigns!**

Coding on social media – how to condense the message! We need to wake up and not lose the momentum. Remember your narrative – what is the story in your country?

What does Lilly think about a campaign between Equinet and members? Important to have a general strategic campaign plan, but localisation is very important. Search engines want things that are transnational, so if we launch something at the same time in 5-10 countries it could be picked up. Have similar language and then add local versions. Algorithms are interested in us then and therefore are pushed to all news agencies. If you can make headlines in 5 countries, that is really good!

**Requests feeding from first session:**

* Would be good to have supervision and conceptual discussion supervising our media work – giving concrete feedback on our campaigns.
* Need for info on coding and how to do it properly (eg. what is a good hashtag etc)
* Need to have tangible examples, how they are tackled, how to deal with it.
* With limited resources, how do we have a plan to tackle hate speech in post truth landscape?

FRA struggling with media landscape. Want to explore how to establish dialogue with people, want to reach out to audience directly. In an upcoming meeting on 31 May, will have many experts there (including Equinet through the Secretariat): psychologists, experts on algorithms, experts on advertising from companies, EEAS – east stratcom strategy – Fact checkers, they debunk stories in the EU. Ministries of Interior are also working on this and will present info from CZ. This meeting will result in a publication available for all entitled something like “Communicating rights and values. Connecting people”.

**Communication Toolkit on Values for Equality Bodies**

We asked members to identify the **key barriers and challenges** they face in communicating about equality and non-discrimination and what their **needs** are in order to better overcome these challenges

**Austria**

Level of information about discrimination is very low but how can we reach out to the people? People can’t be convinced by us - they have to be convinced by themselves. We have to tell them stories with images. We should work with our cases of the month so that people can discuss them and then they will come to the values that we want them to know about. We need to get discussions going to be able to lead that ourselves.

Tools: Will try to develop a short movie. We have an equality app with info about equality body, interactive tool they can use to report discrimination, can get advice from equality body – can only really use it if you recognize that you’ve been discriminated against.

**Slovenia**

Just setting up equality body following EC infringement procedures, so they have legal ground but no budget yet. Our challenge is how to get money but also have discussions on equality. Public expects a lot from us as new body. President has picked up on our letter for more funds and now social media is talking about it. There is a proposal for more money, but we need a campaign to make sure that this gets passed. Last year we couldn’t deal with lots of cases as we didn’t have the lawyers – media sold this issue and now people aware that without money we can’t take cases.

Tools: Putting our own work into international context – we can highlight that they are working on equality too – point out good news from other countries to support our own causes. Equinet members will support the campaign for money if possible!

**Scotland**

1. political landscape – equality is reserved by GB parliament but levers to achieve it are devolved to Scotland. Westminster parliament not very friendly toward equality (funding etc is complicated). Scottish government is friendly but doesn’t have funding. Demand for us is increasing, no longer have a helpline so can’t support public as we want to.
2. We can’t really campaign, although short focused campaigns work very well eg. tie campaign to reduce homophobia in schools, 1 in 5 to reduce discrimination on disability.
3. Complacency – make people aware what protected discrimination is and how we can support them. Shouldn’t take it for granted!
4. Scottish government trying to develop long term strategies – race strategy until 2030, but what will we look like next year? Currently EHRC has serious funding issues – need more!

**Denmark**

Quite good funding and a political mandate to promote equality, so we have a good base. Different topics will make messages harder to deliver. Disability is a ‘good’ topic – politicians and citizens understand there’s a problem and we have a lot of backing. On Gender: everyone thinks that we are doing a great job, so not willing to listen to the stories on equal pay, glass ceiling; sexism etc. On ethnicity: in political climate, it’s hard to communicate as we have huge problems. Lots of discrimination even in 2nd and 3rd generation – not a lot of understanding about that. Need to work on political and society level on ethnicity discrimination. Equality is difficult to communicate on as we don’t have a lot of data to get the press interested.

**Croatia (Disability)**

We want to challenge people on how they look at persons with disability. There are different categories of people with disabilities, and while people in a wheelchair might be given support, people with intellectual disabilities and psychosocial issues are not so easily dealt with. We have 12 people working exclusively on disability, ombudswoman working in 2nd term of office and well situated amongst politicians, public and journalists. Need to make use of this. Communication has been quite neglected. Now trying to develop regional presence – different generations are hard to reach eg. older age is not necessarily easy to reach digitally. Hard to get around to having a strategic focus on communication.

**Portugal (Migration)**

Need to reach out to a broader audience with online communication. Our experience – FB posts – ones with most likes are talking about refugee crisis, also reception of citizens arriving from Greece. We have a protocol with the police and this year we’ll provide training to 1000 police on our issues. This week, carrying out actions in 4 public schools across country with play on equality, there will be artists doing murals with kids. On Data: we have an observatory on migration, they compile stats and bring out annual report on outputs on migrant integration.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Ombud, equality body, national preventive mechanism. Very broad mandate so really hard to deal with everything. People not aware that discrimination can happen to anyone. Social and economic issues in our country means that people are discriminated on a daily basis but not aware. Working on awareness raising with OECD and UNPD. Twitter not used in BiH (only by NGOs) – so no point working on that as they already have knowledge. FB – don’t have resources to do it properly. Campaign last year on LGBTI together with NGO received hateful comments eg. Why are you spending thousands on LGBTI rights but elderly people are looking for food in trash? How should we combine these issues? Currently working with Save the Children for online application for young roma – have trained them to input the info. Our department for children’s rights is working on that.

**Serbia**

Social media: the institution has its Twitter and FB accounts and uses its own YouTube channel. The challenge is how to spread the message in a society where 50 per cent of the population doesn’t use the Internet. Usually people using social media are already mostly aware of equality and antidiscrimination issues but the challenge is reaching out to others. That is why the institution uses traditional media outlets in order to send out the message. The institution has developed the *Handbook for Journalists: Fighting for Equality (*[*link to publication in Serbian*](http://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/%D0%9F%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%80%D1%83%D1%87%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA-%D0%B7a-%D0%BDo%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BDa%D1%80e-%D0%B8-%D0%BDo%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BDa%D1%80%D0%BAe-%D0%91o%D1%80%D0%B1a-%D0%B7a-%D1%80a%D0%B2%D0%BDo/)*),* aimed at combating discrimination among media professionals and improving reporting standards. A summary of [ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 15 on Combating Hate Speech](https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/activities/GPR/EN/Recommendation_N15/REC-15-2016-015-ENG.pdf), adopted in 2015, is included in the Handbook and is very useful. The institution implemented training programs for the members of the police force throughout Serbia who underwent training workshops on fighting discrimination and achieving equality. These trainings were held with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia with success. This year a string of training seminars with the civil servants working at the local level was initiated so as to educate local self-government employees as to what discrimination is and how to prevent it. This awareness raising is important since civil servants sometimes do not even know that they are discriminating against a client. There is a plan to establish a national level Training Academy for Civil Servants that would offer different training courses for those either already working or about to start working for the state administration and the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality will offer training courses on anti-discrimination and equality for civil servants so that they become familiar with definition and types of discrimination and equality which will ultimately help them avoid it in their work. In addition, we have established Annual Media Award for journalists who promote tolerance and equality in their reporting. This media award is awarded in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Serbia. We are in the final phase of developing a Guidebook for developing a Code of Conduct for Employers. Human rights stories do not sell well through media, something we are all faced with, that is why we have to fight for our media space.

**Hungary**

Our main barriers are from political and social situation in Hungary – non-discrimation and equality is not a popular topic. Discrimination is something that is against ‘me’ but if I discriminate against someone, that’s impartial. Eg. Roma population, gender discrimination, segregation of roma children – in our comms, it’s hard to reach those people who are practicing discrimination. They are coming from socioeconomic crisis and we have to find correct methods and tools to reach them. Resources missing to reach everyone. We try to use social media, we have FB, try to reach opinion leaders through newspapers/radio/mainstream media, but they are not interested in our equality issues. Try to spread stories rather than theoretical ideas, thus show that discrimination is a very broad.

**Lithuania**

We have issues with human resources, political tension, people don’t know us and don’t know exactly what we do so ask questions that are not relevant. Language: we have to fight to be in the media (unpopular issue of equality) – people who are discriminated against aren’t supportive of other discrimination issues (LGBTI not supportive of disability for example). How to find the language that doesn’t produce “allergies” ie. How to talk about gender equality with using those words. How do you all fight this issues?

**Greece**

Recently the Ombudsman had its mandate extended to private sphere. Trying to communicate new role and also make differentiation with overall role of Ombud institution. We have to talk about a variety of issues. We talk about strategic cases and how we dealt with them, but maybe we talk on too many levels. Don’t have a targeted communication strategy. Need to develop a strategy for social media. Have done our work so far based on chance. Need to be quick, but has to be approved, so how can we join discussion in real time? **->** In **UK** was traditionally press releases (which take time to prepare and agree). Now use one quote tweets which are picked up by media and thus give immediate reaction. They don’t generally need approval!

**Ireland**

Our biggest challenges is building and compounding ourselves as an authoritative source. Not a ‘rent a quote’ – want to be a resource for journalists and portray broader message through communications. Part of building that is direct media engagement, sitting down with journalists and explaining them what we do. Often get pigeon holed as ‘social affairs’ and now explaining to editors/journalists to explain our role and function, and how are work can provide them with stories.

On cases – having access to contacts with real people and journalists is something we’re focusing on a lot. Have now built up social media presence on twitter - we connect with civil society that way. Ireland high use of social media, but it’s self-selecting and have to avoid talking in an echo chamber – trying to reach out in terms of consultations – went to prisons, ploughing championships, rural areas on CEDAW – need to think in broader ways! 2014 legislation – public sector duty have to have proactive regard to equality and HR issues. Trying to build awareness of that and get publicly funded bodies to see their role from equality point of view. Common challenges on resources for us as others but lots of inspiration from others!

**Slovakia**

Political uncertainty, people don’t feel safe because of migration – right wing rise. Fake news – people in their own bubble and see others as bad. Weave FB and Twitter and there are different responses to different issues. We get positive feedback on employment for disability but not on roma integration for example. Need to show truth about numbers of people coming into Slovakia as lots of untrue facts circulating.

**Albania**

How to be really independent? Only 2 employees working on communication, including registering complaints, informing people, doing open days, promoting our work physically. Only FB, Commissioner uses our account. We would like to work with CoE project on social media issues. In June we have government elections so need to investigate hate speech. Also some people with disability can’t vote in Albania so need to help support them.

* FRA did some work on report on [mental disabilities](http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2009/fundamental-rights-persons-intellectual-disabilities-and-persons-mental-health-problems)
* Croatia: did a lot of work on voting rights and now everyone despite legal capacity can vote which is not the case for all! Had system in place for voters from prison, but not social care homes. Now have set this up and good data on people voting from such institutions. Also, polling stations that are inaccessible imply that people can go to homes to allow people to vote that way – could be a practical way to give vote!

**Estonia**

Language is clearly important – when we use words like gender equality, intersectionality there is an immediate block. Need to describe everything in very simple words. Get more media enquiries now that we are able to answer. Our annual budget is even less than in Slovenia (173,000 euros). We talk about equal challenges not equal rights. Values in Estonia have been there for a long time and we’re just repeating it. Lots of activists think that values are not appropriate (childish) but they already know it. Estonia has high social media usage, but certainly doesn’t mean that people know anything about discrimination or basic rights. Other challenges: how to react to hate speech. If we do react, we give another media space to this hate speech. Every time we react, it get a lot of attention in social media, so only react in extreme situations (politicians) and we have also got criticism for not reacting more often. Not planning to prepare a strategy on communication. Simple cases get the attention anyway, but how do we raise awareness on more complicated cases – trying to explain that in very simple words now. No one on communication especially, only four people working in equality body.

**Germany**

We are well off as regards communication compared to others. A few years ago we aimed just to be seen as necessary. Now we are seen as a threat by many people, so we can really stand our ground and explain what equality is all about. The suggestion to show empathy towards haters is seen critically – rather have a matter-of-fact approach. More importantly, we need to get people to feel empathy towards others (eg refugees). One way is story telling. Another is data – survey last year: One representative survey and one 18000 people survey where individual experiences with discrimination could be explained. This will be summarized in our next report to parliament in June this year, but we are also trying to extract personal stories out of it. Generally: Social media, though not reaching the whole society, can be a good platform to support and empower people and create a community and thus tackling hate speech together.

**Finland**

This values based discussion has been taking place over past 5 years in WG Communication. Want to move forward to do something concrete on this. These core values are the reason we’re here. Trying to deal with haters/organized hate groups. Strong counter community that we’re trying to combat. I need us to have a full day hands-on workshop where we create social media strategies and create counter speech together, including finding allies etc. We are only seen as opposing bodies that don’t do anything. We need to calm the people/fake news down. Equality and justice has been so good in Finland and now things are getting scary. We have to keep the motivation and have the feeling that it’s not so overwhelming. Need to feel good about our work and feel important and listened to! Need practical advice, working together to come up with these ideas. We need to have a clever strategy to talk to the vast majority, and combat the hate minority very well.

**Norway**

Considering we need visuals and mobiles first , how can we take that on? Can we help each other to make that transition and create emotion?

**Action: Only bout 8 equality bodies present have communication strategies, slightly less on social media. Would be great to share these amongst members to inspire each other**

**Partnerships for Equality. Experiences, successes and lessons learned in Norway**

***By Katrine Gaustad Pettersen, Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud***

Project 1 – Happy marriage version – Stop femicides. Partnership with Ombud and shelter house movements head quarter. Annual campaign as part of 16 days on VAW. Goals were to get people to speak out against VAW and the other towards government on what they can do to stop femicides. Each year different topic:

1. asked for analysis to identify weaknesses in public services. Different public services don’t talk to each other, so emergency room won’t necessarily talk to police.
2. Organised meetings at local level to talk to each other.
3. Electronic monitoring of perpetrators and more effective prosecution – this is only done when restraining orders have been broken so often that they went to that level.

As regards communication, have webpage, FB, twitter, political meetings, political advocacy, regional shelter house meetings (hold meetings at shelter house itself so sometimes women will tell their story their – invite broadly, including local authorities, police, Emergency Rooms, children’s custody services), extensive media coverage.

Include video – difficult topic to communicate. Want to show horror and how bad it is, but still approachable. Often not physical but psychological violence – works well because you can easily relate to her. Able to get a good deal with a film company because of the cause! She was portrayed powerfully rather than as the victim. Didn’t want to offend people who had suffered but wanted to empower them.

We saw a large increase people in people calling on us, and we hadn’t done enough preparation for them beforehand. Should have prepared better and worked closer with shelters and police!

20% of murder cases (20 cases) are femicide – but not many murders in the first place – so don’t have more murders than other countries. We were already working on VAW but we got state funding on this issue so were able to work on this which is not in the core of our mandate. Good partnership with civil society. Were a professional partner with shelter houses.

Parent Project: Worked with Norway’s biggest employers organisation Virke with the aim of reducing pregnancy discrimination & getting more dads to participate in paternity leave. Had 5 elements in campaign:

1. Survey to document discrimination
2. Information to expecting parents and pregnant women
3. Trainings and workshops for employees and unions
4. Best practice guide for employers
5. Colls campaign to reach politicians and broader audience

Survey was a great idea so that numbers could speak for themselves. Also good to give training to unions and employer associations as they are not doing a good job at present and need to improve. Wanted to use credibility of partners such as Virke to reach their audience. Used famous Norwegian cartoonist to reach out to new audiences. Didn’t do enough videos at the time – FB algorithms favour videos so spend your money on that!

[Website](http://www.ldo.no/forebygg/i-arbeidslivet/inspirasjon) with check list, explanations was set up. Virke gave us videos, gave us businesses to video etc. At same time we had communication campaign, but they felt really uncomfortable with us communicating on this. We were sticking to the truth based on the survey and they said we were exaggerating. They pulled out after 2 days of the campaign – they wouldn’t promote our work anymore. But don’t think they’ve closed the door completely. They came back after a year in order to create a collection of measures that their businesses can use. We need a flagship business to highlight having an attractive working place.

However couldn’t agree on methodologies. Firm wanted list of measures they could consider. We wanted a workshop where both parts looked at challenges and possible solutions together. Then they backed out again. 1 week later came out with dad friendly policies without us. Our communication team felt kind of betrayed. Organisations are obsessed with their image, so we could use them as a good practice, but they don’t want to be seen with us as the ‘police’.

**EHRC, UK** – [power to the bump](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/power-bump) campaign – informing pregnant women about their rights. Following a survey, it was shown that 54000 people or ¾ workforce had some sort of discrimination. Working with 3rd parties getting info out there. 1 year anniversary recently celebrated with [100 companies signing up to a pledge](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/100-businesses-pledge-working-forward-pregnancy-and-maternity-rights-work). Made a positive campaign towards companies with messages. Now moved into legislation – flexible working time, carers etc

Lessons learned:

* Firms want to be seen as good employers. They are comfortable being our good examples but not because we pointed to them.
* Trying to build long time partnerships when launching a campaign is too late. Start beforehand. Try to avoid burning bridges, but if your goals are well presented, it should be ok.
* Don’t give away your best ideas before they commit. Lower your expectations when partnering up. Maybe your results will be better if you stay in the shadows.
* We can’t only be talking to civil society, need also to talk to social partners. Equinet role to engage more on EU level with social partners and diversity charters?

Could be worth working with the [Diversity Charter](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/diversity/charters/index_en.htm) – collaboration between companies, NGOs etc. partners meet frequently .

Estonia works with trade unions organisation against gender pay gap. Also work with entrepreneur organisations. They created a union against the gender pay gap but union was not yet as successful as hoped. As regards engagement with entrepreneurs and social partners – we previously had company name in cases that we highlighted. Then we started to make more general opinions and don’t mention company name - very well received, especially as we’re not always sure that our decision is absolutely fair. Journalists can still find companies to make stories in the media. Sometimes court decision go against our views. Eg. we and labour inspectorate found discrimination, court found there was no discrimination as she acted like ‘a pregnant woman’.

Austria: had 2 workshops with judges. Would never demand it but they were happy to get it

**Request for (ideas for) videos for Equinet (10th anniversary)**

**Denmark: video used to change disability legislation.** Had been working on getting discrimination on **disability** included for past 6 years. Political momentum never came. In December we launched 5-6 videos from people who had experienced discrimination – eg. blind person who couldn’t come in to restaurant with dog, kid in education. Social media manager did a story with tv charateristics – massively shared on social media. Teamed up with disability orgs and then media started calling to get info. At same time, disability team were lobbying politicians to get something changed. In beginning of February, all of a sudden Minister for Social Affairs called to say there will be a general ban on discrimination against disability. Then there was a debate in parliament who were all referring to our videos. Shows power of identification. They were the real people and real stories (will get more details during Social Media Training in April!)

Serbia: law for civil servants with discriminatory cases for retirement – law was revoked – **women can now retire at same time as men.** Majority older women – gender and age covered, but would need to create video.

**UK**: 2 cases that could be included in videos

* [Doug Pauly in High Court in England](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/wheelchair-spaces-buses-must-be-priority-court-rules) – took bus company to court as they didn’t prioritise wheelchairs over buggies – now they need to offer spaces automatically to disability. This idea has now moved to US as the fleet should be changed there.
* Scotland: [discrepancy in payments as a relative or foster child](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/legal-work-scotland/legal-work-scotland/scottish-legal-articles/human-rights-children-kinship-care). Vulnerable families ended up being most affected – we made sure that those payments wouldn’t be unequal.

Video at high court includes vox pops with people on street, with Pauly – includes instant reaction - since then been included in videos which we continue to use. Serves as warning to general service providers. Have been done internally but if we wanted higher quality, we’d have to go external.

Would be good to **construct a narration of European values**, including the numbers of cases across Europe, and how many cases there are on different issues. Make people realise that discrimination is not only happening in their own country! Need some estimation of numbers.

[Is Britain fairer?](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/britain-fairer) includes key questions – top line stats, drilling deeper to get great examples. Clear themes are emerging, some more starkly than others.

Try to **draw out how it looked 10 years ago for different groups of people and how it has or hasn’t changed.** In each country **Roma discrimination** has not changed at all!!! Their equal treatment in society hasn’t changed. Young people with disadvantages. Not only differences and changes but also suggest where things have stagnated!

**Who is our audience? Do we want to push for something? Or just strengthen the platform and reinforce values that people have in middle European class.** We shouldn’t only be important for marginalized groups but middle class should value our values, so maybe good to reinforce our commonalities with them. Not self-evident for them. If there is a possibility to make general public aware that their rights are supported by our work is good. [Irish marriage equality campaign](http://www.marriagequality.ie/) worked strongly on middle class values – not built on LGBTI individuals. Talked to average person and got them to speak out on behalf of others – more identification potential. This could bring out the empathy more. Messages have to address the general fears. Equinet audience is more NGOs and governments – we have to include a common message!!