



SEMINAR co-hosted by EQUINET and the European Commission, in partnership with EESC

Tackling discrimination and ensuring dismissal protection for carers in Europe: strengthening links between equality bodies and labour inspectorates

17-18 October 2018

**LOCATION: EESC (17 Oct) and hotel Thon EU (18 Oct)
Brussels, Belgium**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

In the context of the Work-Life Balance Initiative adopted by the Commission on 26 April 2017, the European Commission identified as one of the actions to improve the design and gender balanced take-up of family related leaves and flexible working arrangements. One of the issues identified is discrimination related to pregnancy and parenthood on the labour market. Indeed, effective dismissal protection is crucial, including the periods surrounding pregnancy and maternity/family leave, for women and men. Some reports show that workers still face unfavorable treatment in their workplace and report a lack of information and support in many Member States. The seminar is organized by Equinet and the European Commission, in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee, and draw on the needs and experiences of national equality bodies in order to better support persons experiencing discriminatory dismissal in cooperation with stakeholders such as for instance labour inspectorates, but also other actors such as trade unions. The seminar is an opportunity to exchange experiences and good practices among equality bodies and other stakeholders on the labour market.

PARTICIPANTS

This seminar is addressed to **equality bodies' staff members and labour inspectors dealing with pregnancy and maternity discrimination, dismissal protection and family related leaves in the context of work-life balance**. It allows for participation with different professional backgrounds, including **legal, policy, and communication**. Participants will follow different workshops according to their area of expertise.

AGENDA

17 October (EESC, Jacques Delors Building)

14:00 – 14:30 Welcome & Registration

OPENING SESSION

Chair: Fabian Luetz – European Commission

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| 14:30 – 15:00 | <i>Opening addresses</i> Ingrid Bellander-Todino – European Commission Kalliopi Lykovardi (tbc) - Equinet |
| 15:00 – 15:30 | <i>Keynote on current gaps and case work on dismissal protection</i> Franka van Hoof and Raphaële Xenidis - European Network of Legal Experts |
| 15:30 – 15:45 | Coffee break |

SESSION 1

Access to the labour market for carers: questions on status at interview stage

Chair: Moana Genevey – Equinet

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| 15:45 – 17:00 | Discrimination in job announcements and interview questions | <p>Nathalie Schlenzka - German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency</p> <p>Didier Henrard - Belgian Labour Inspectorate</p> <p>Cinzia Sechi - ETUC and Loredana Taddei – CGIL, Italy</p> |
| 17:00 – 17:30 | Questions & Answers | |
| 19:30 | Social event | |

18 October (Thon hotel EU)

SESSION 3

Addressing pregnancy discrimination

Chair: Greet Vermeylen – European Commission

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| 09:00 -09:15 | <p>Welcome address - Economic and Social Committee</p> <p>Recap of the first day</p> | <p>Erika Koller – EESC Rapporteur on Work-Life Balance</p> <p>European Commission</p> |
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| 09:15 – 09:45 | Surveys and cases on pregnancy discrimination | Hildegard Van Hove - Belgian Institute on Equality between Women and Men Bjarke Oxlund - Danish Institute of Human Rights Katie Oldfield - IFF Research, Great Britain | |
| 09:45 – 10:00 | Questions and Answers | | |
| 10:00 – 10:15 | Coffee Break | | |
| SESSION 4 Unfair dismissals and dismissal protection: case studies Chair: Tamas Kadar – Equinet | | | |
| DISCUSSION GROUPS | | | |
| Participants will be split in discussion groups and discuss a case study together. If possible, the composition of groups will consist of equal numbers of equality bodies and labour inspectors from the same geographical regions. This facilitates the mutual learning in order to apply it in practice | | | |
| 10:15 -10:30 | Dismissal protection: issues and concrete examples | Equinet | |
| 10:30 – 12:00 | DISCUSSION GROUP 1 | DISCUSSION GROUP 2 | DISCUSSION GROUP 3 |
| 12:00 -13:00 | Lunch | | |
| SESSION 5 Unfair dismissals and dismissal protection: ways forward Chair: Tamas Kadar – Equinet | | | |
| 13:00 – 13:45 | Reporting back from session 4 | | |
| SESSION 6 Cooperating at national level: equality bodies and labour inspectorates Chair: | | | |
| 13:45 – 15:15 | Cooperation on inspections: an open discussion | Kalliopi Lykovardi – Greek Ombudsman - Sotirios Charmantas – Greek Labour Inspectorate / Margarida Vieira – Portugal CITE Beáta Babačová – Slovak National Center for Human Rights | |
| 15:15 – 15:30 | Coffee Break | | |
| CONCLUDING SESSION | | | |
| 15:30 – 16:00 | European Commission – Karen Vandekerckhove (tbc) SLIC Equinet – Anne Gaspard | | |