

DRAFT AGENDA

Two years after #MeToo, what next? Equality bodies combatting sexual harassment @ work

23 - 24 October 2019

LOCATION:

23/10/2019 : La Tricoterie, Rue Théodore Verhaegen 158, 1060 Brussels

24/10/2019 : Bedford Hotel & Congress Centre, Rue du Midi 135, Brussels, Belgium

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

Two years after the international outburst of the #MeToo movement, which unveiled countless stories and instances of sexual harassment in the workplace and beyond, Equinet and the UN Human Rights Regional Office for Europe are organizing a roundtable and conference on the role and potential of equality bodies designing and implementing policies to eradicate sexual harassment.

While political discussions and general awareness-raising on sexual harassment in the workplace have consistently increased in the past two years, progress needs to be made in preventing and systematically tackling the issue. As a new European strategic document for gender equality is under preparation in the post-#MeToo era, preventing and responding to sexual harassment must be a priority for the new European Commission.

Because they are mandated by EU law to assist victims of sexual harassment in the workplace and to promote gender equality, **national equality bodies are highly relevant actors** to ensure effective implementation of anti-harassment laws and policies. They do so through direct assistance to victims, but also through collecting data on sexual harassment, conducting research and surveys to help identify gaps, setting-up codes of conduct in the private and public sector, building partnerships with civil society and social partners, issuing recommendations to policy-makers, training and campaigning.

Equality bodies have been further recognized as central national institutions across the EU for assisting victims of discrimination and harassment, through the adoption of an EC Recommendation on standards for equality bodies. Therefore, equality bodies should be considered as essential partners and stakeholders when leading the work to tackle sexual harassment in Europe.

This conference will aim at highlighting the centrality and relevance of equality bodies for effectively designing and implementing anti-harassment laws and policies. **Local, national and European policy-makers are invited to participate in this event**, to unpack the considerable potential held by equality bodies as well as the many challenges they face when tackling sexual harassment in the workplace.

The conference will be preceded by a reception and roundtable held the day before, on 23rd October, where high level representatives from civil society and international organisations will discuss the post-MeToo era in Europe.

PARTICIPANTS

While this awareness-raising conference is **mainly addressed to European, national and local policy-makers**, it is also open to the **wider public** (civil society, social partners, academics, etc.) and to **equality bodies** from all over Europe.

ROUNDTABLE & RECEPTION

23 October – La Tricoterie (Rue Théodore Verhaegen 158, 1060 Bruxelles)

18:30 -19:00	Welcome drinks
19:00 – 20:30	<p>Roundtable discussion: The post-#MeToo era in Europe</p> <p>Jeanne Ponté – Initiator of the #MeTooEP movement Dagmar Schumacher – Director, Brussels Office of UN Women Joanna Maycock - Secretary General, European Women’s Lobby Chidi King – Director, Equality Department, International Trade Union Confederation Anaida Dibra – President, Professional Women International Brussels Angela Marcos Figueruelo – Case handler on sexual harassment, European Ombudswoman</p> <p>Moderated by Birgit Van Hout, UN Human Rights Regional Representative for Europe (OHCHR)</p>
20:30 – 22:00	Reception & cocktail dinner

CONFERENCE

24 October – Bedford Hotel (Rue du Midi 135, 1000 Bruxelles)

08:30 – 09:00	Welcome & Registration
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OPENING SESSION

09:00 – 09:15	<p>Opening address</p> <p>Anne Gaspard - Equinet Executive Director Birgit Van Hout – UN Human Rights Regional Representative for Europe (OHCHR)</p>
09:15 – 09:45	<p>Keynote on the link between gender discrimination and harassment, and the root causes of sexual harassment</p> <p>Dubravka Šimonovic – UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences Questions & Answers</p>
09:45 – 10:00	<p>Testimony: Seeking help to my equality body when facing sexual harassment (Andriani Papadopoulou and Ioannou Georgia)</p>

SESSION 1

Cases of sexual harassment – Stories from equality bodies

10:00 – 10:15	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brief overview of legislation on sexual harassment in Europe - Difference of mandates for sexual harassment among equality bodies - Impact of #MeToo? - Challenges faced by equality bodies: under-reporting, legal gaps, resources... 	Member of Working Group on Gender Equality
10:15 – 10:45	<p style="text-align: center;">Cases handled by Equality Bodies</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Staff members tell stories of cases and how they've handled them</i></p>	<p>Sandra Bouchon (tbc) - Defender of Rights (France)</p> <p>Laima Vengale-Dits - Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson (Lithuania)</p>
10:45– 11:00	Questions & Answers	
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break	
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Testimony: Sexual harassment: the disability perspective (Zara Todd)</i>	

SESSION 2

Monitoring sexual harassment – Equality bodies collecting data

11:45 -11:55	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of studies, surveys and reports issued by equality bodies on sexual harassment in the workplace - Impact of #MeToo? - Challenges faced by equality bodies: data missing, resources... 	Member of Working Group on Gender Equality
11:55 – 12:25	<p style="text-align: center;">Presentation of surveys and reports</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Collecting data on sexual harassment: methodology and challenges</i></p>	<p>Zuzana Pavlickova - Slovak National Center for Human Rights (Slovakia)</p> <p>Robin Büttner – Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (Germany)</p>
12:25 – 12:45	Questions and Answers	

12:45 -13:45 Lunch

SESSION 3

Taking action against sexual harassment: Diversity of actions from equality bodies

13: 45 – 14:00 **Energizer: Equality bodies campaigning against harassment**

14:00 – 15:00	Examples of projects/actions led by equality bodies to optimally tackle sexual harassment in the workplace			
	<p>Niovi Georgiade - Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights - Cyprus – <i>Code of conduct for public service</i></p>	<p>Tbc – United Kingdom – <i>Recommendation to policy-makers</i></p>	<p>Begoña Suárez - Spain - Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities – <i>Virtual Gender Equality School</i></p>	<p>Marijke Weewauters – Belgium – Institute for Equality Between Women and Men - <i>Getting involved in the drafting of the ILO Convention</i></p>

SESSION 4

Tackling sexual harassment: The way forward

15:00 -15:15 **Testimony: What stories of sexual harassment can teach us (Sara Hassan, tbc)**

15:15 – 16:00	This session will be dedicated to reflect on what is the way forward for better tackling sexual harassment in the workplace in Europe, and what role can equality bodies play.	
	<p>Panel discussion Improving the prevention and handling of sexual harassment in the workplace in Europe, and the role of equality bodies</p>	<p>European Commission – What strategy to tackle sexual harassment in Europe?</p> <p>Permanent Representation (Germany) tbc – European and national improvements for effective policies against sexual harassment</p> <p>Liesbet Stevens – Belgian Institute on Equality between Men and Women</p> <p>Biljana Brankovic – GREVIO (Council of Europe)</p> <p>Lieve Verboven – ILO</p>
16:00-16:15	Questions and answers	

CONCLUDING SESSION

16:15– 16:30 Chair of Equinet