

# Women in Poverty: Breaking the Cycle

## Online Roundtable

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT

Gender inequalities and poverty are intrinsically linked, and form part of a vicious cycle. Because of gender inequalities, women have access to fewer resources, less-paid and more precarious jobs, if they manage to access the job market at all. Poverty leads women to more frequent instances of violence and discrimination, including in access to justice or access to healthcare. Depending on various criteria (age, ethnic origin, disability, etc.) some women have even higher risks to live in poverty and to experience discrimination.

Because of their mandate and the scope of their work, equality bodies can often help identifying the specific needs and injustices suffered by various groups of women in poverty. Therefore, they can assist them when they are victims of unfair treatment. But for doing so, they need to be better informed of the issues faced by these women and to engage in a constructive dialogue with them.

In line with the Beijing Platform of Action, which seeks to address the needs and efforts of women in poverty, Equinet will organize a roundtable to create an online space for discussion between women in poverty and equality bodies. The main objectives of this roundtable will be to:

- Identify the specific injustices and inequalities faced by various groups of women in poverty
- Identify potential actions that equality bodies could undertake with Equinet and organisations of women in poverty to address these injustices and inequalities.

### PARTICIPANTS

This roundtable is addressed to equality bodies and civil society organisations working with women in poverty, in Europe.

# Agenda

## Opening Session

10:00 – 10:05 *Opening address & technical reminder*

10:05 – 10:20  
**Keynote**  
**Cristina Rovira, Oxfam**

## Launching session: Perspectives of Poverty and Gender Inequalities

*Moderator: Moana Genevey, Equinet*

Women coming from various organisations will present how poverty and gender inequalities are linked from their specific perspective, and what are the challenges they face. They will do so by presenting an example and basing their presentation on an image they will show to the audience.

Equality bodies will also present their work and how it could be relevant for assisting and supporting women in poverty.

10:20 – 11:05 **Perspectives from:**

- **María del Carmen Filigranas - Director of FAKALI, Federation of Gypsy Women's Associations**
- **Pirkko Mahlamäki – European Disability Forum Women's Committee**
- **Nahed Samour - Muslimische Frauen, Germany**
- **Anne-Sophie Parent - AGE Platform Europe**
- **Lucy Polo - Por Ti Mujer**
- **Jessica Nguyen - European Women's Lobby**

11:05 – 11:15 **Reaction and summary from Marija Babovic, European Anti-Poverty Network Working Group on Gender Equality**

11:15 – 11:25 **Beatriz Gimeno, Spanish institute of Women and Equal Opportunities - Work and mandate of equality bodies: what they are and why they can help women in poverty**

11:25 - 11:30 **Wrap-up and concluding comments – Moana Genevey, Equinet**

## Building bridges: Group Discussions

15:00 – 16:30	<p>In groups composed of equality bodies, Equinet Secretariat and women self-advocates, discussions will engage on how to build bridges between equality bodies and women in poverty. Discussions in the groups will be open and informal.</p> <p>The two themes of the discussion groups will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>How can EBs be more accessible/reachable to women in poverty?</b> (moderated by <b>Ana Lite</b>, from the Spanish institute of Women and Equal Opportunities)</li><li>• <b>What are the specific and common needs of women in poverty and how can EBs meet them?</b> (moderated from <b>Nathalie Schlenzka</b>, from the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, Germany)</li></ul>
---------------	---

## Our speakers

### Ms Cristina Rovira Izquierdo

**Inequality Programme advisor at Oxfam Intermón Inequality Strategic theme, Spain**

Cristina Rovira is an Inequality Programme advisor at Oxfam Intermón Inequality Strategic theme, based in Barcelona. Over the past two years, she has been co-author of Oxfam's research on women's precariousness at work in Europe and currently coordinates Oxfam's community around its global programme on Women's Right to Dignified Work. She works with Oxfam teams, especially from the Sahel region and Maghreb, to promote multidimensional inequality analysis, research and programmatic reflections.



She holds a bachelor in Political Sciences (Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona) and a Masters in Gender, Policy and Inequality from the London School of Economics. She has been contributing to the youth associative movement in Catalonia over the last years, working together with youth movements across the Mediterranean to open up spaces for youth participation.

### Ms María del Carmen Filigranas

**Director of FAKALI, Federation of Gypsy Women's Associations, Spain**

Woman, Gypsy activist. Degree in Psychology from the University of Seville. She has a Master's Degree in Social Sciences and Social Intervention from the Pablo de Olavide University. In addition, she is a social and ethnic mediator with populations at risk of exclusion specialized in the Roma Population within the framework of the ROMED European Project.



With a trajectory of more than 15 years in the gypsy associative movement, she is vice president of the Association of University Gypsy Women of Andalusia and Director of FAKALI, the Federation of Gypsy Women's Associations. Trainer and coordinator of multiple inclusion projects for Roma women and children.

*Mujer, activista Gitana. Licenciada en Psicología por la Universidad de Sevilla. Posee un Máster en Ciencias Sociales e Intervención Social por la Universidad Pablo de Olavide. Además, es mediadora social y étnica con poblaciones en riesgo de exclusión especializada en Población Gitana en el marco del Proyecto Europeo ROMED.*

*Con una trayectoria de más de 15 años en el movimiento asociativo gitano es vicepresidenta de la Asociación de Mujeres Gitanas Universitarias de Andalucía y Directiva de FAKALI, la Federación de Asociaciones de Mujeres Gitanas. Formadora y coordinadora de múltiples proyectos de inclusión para mujeres e infancia gitana.*

### Ms Pirkko Mahlamäki

#### **Executive Committee Member of the European Disability Forum, Finland**

Ms Pirkko Mahlamäki, MA, MLL, secretary general of Finnish Disability Forum since 2000, former policy officer and current executive committee member of European Disability Forum, representing EDF in the board of European Women's Lobby 2016-2020 and in EWL executive. She has been involved in campaign work since 1995. Member of Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal of Finland. She was Advisor member of Finnish delegation to UN Ad hoc committee preparing International Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. She continues to work for mainstreaming of disability and of gender issues and promoting rights of persons with disabilities and gender equality in national, Nordic, European and international networks, and for joint civil society activism in promotion of human rights and fundamental freedom. She has worked in projects to improve situation of women with disabilities, violence prevention, victim support and increasing awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights issues for girls and women with disabilities. She has worked to promote independent living solutions for persons with disabilities.



### Ms Nahed Samour

#### **Senior Researcher at the Law & Society Institute, Faculty of Law at Humboldt University Berlin, Germany**

Nahed Samour is senior researcher at the Law & Society Institute, Faculty of Law at Humboldt University Berlin. She has studied law and Islamic studies at the universities of Bonn, Birzeit/Ramallah, London (SOAS), Berlin (HU), Harvard and Damascus. She was a doctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History in Frankfurt/Main. She clerked at the Court of Appeals in Berlin, and held a Post Doc position at the Eric Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights, Helsinki University, Finland and was Early Career Fellow at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, Göttingen Institute for Advanced Study. She is Junior Faculty at the Harvard Law School, Institute of Global Law and Policy.



She is member of the **Aktionsbündnis muslimischer Frauen** (action association of Muslim women, Germany) and associate expert of the Center for Intersectional Justice, Berlin. She has widely published on religion, race and gender.

### Ms Anne-Sophie Parent

#### **Former Secretary General of AGE Platform Europe, Belgium**

From Sept. 2002 to June 2020 Ms. Parent was Secretary General of AGE Platform Europe (AGE), a self-advocacy network of some 100 organisations representing some 40 million seniors across Europe in 27 EU Member States, Norway and Switzerland.

Ms. Parent continues to advocate for equality in old age for both women and men. She has joined the Older Women's Network Europe and is involved in some AGE Task Forces. Anne-Sophie is in particular keen to continue to promote gender equality in pension systems and to combat age discrimination in financial services. She remains involved in the Financial Services Users' Group (FSUG) set up by the European Commission and chairs the Advisory Board of the Assisted Ambient Living Joint Programme. She represents AGE in the Euro Retail Payment Board to voice older persons' concerns since this group was established by the European Central Bank in 2014.



Complementing her involvement in AGE, Anne-Sophie Parent has been Secretary General of the European Covenant on Demographic Change since 2016 (volunteer position). This large network brings together subnational public authorities, non-for-profit and profit actors who wish to join forces to promote age-friendly environments in Europe and combat ageism.

### Ms Lucy Polo Castillo

#### **Funder of the NGO Por Ti Mujer, supporting migrant women in the Valencia region, Spain**

Nacida en Santa Lucía (Atlántico -Colombia), Lucy Polo es Licenciada en Psicología con especialidad en Psicología Infantil por la Universidad del Norte en Barranquilla (Colombia) y Diplomada en Inmigración y Derecho por la Universidad de Valencia. Ha realizado numerosos estudios e investigaciones sobre la violencia en conflictos armados (Colombia) y la violencia de género, especialmente las violencias que sufren las mujeres inmigrantes. Trabajó durante 13 años en el Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, organismo dependiente del estado, donde ocupó la Dirección de Recursos Humanos durante sus últimos 2 años. Durante 3 años fue Coordinadora de Programas Sociales en tres municipios del Departamento Atlántico (Colombia).



Es fundadora de la Asociación Por Ti Mujer, donde compagina la presidencia con trabajos de prevención, atención e intervención con mujeres inmigrantes de la Comunidad Valenciana. Además, es Coordinadora del proyecto "Huertas Urbanas en Clave de Género" y de la Escuela de Empoderamiento de la entidad. También, Lucy Polo es presidenta de la Red de Apoyo a la Mujer Inmigrante Víctima de la Violencia de Género (Red AMINVI), Presidenta de la Federación de Entidades por Codesarrollo y la Cooperación (Fedacod) y Vicepresidenta de la Red de Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe en España. Es representante en Valencia de la ONG "Paz y Desarrollo". Siguiendo directrices

de la Dirección Nacional, implantó en la Comunidad Valenciana la Plataforma CEDAW Sombra País Valencià.

A nivel europeo, forma parte de la “Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants” (Plataforma para la Cooperación Internacional para Inmigrantes Indocumentados-PICUM) y es miembro de la dirección y representante en España de la “European Network of Migrant Women” (Red Europea de Mujeres Migrantes).

A nivel mundial, Lucy Polo forma parte del Women’s Major Group, cuyo papel es asegurar la participación pública efectiva de los grupos no gubernamentales de mujeres en los procesos de políticas de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible, Post 2015 y cuestiones ambientales, y es miembro de la Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la paz y la Libertad (WILPF, por sus siglas en inglés). Lucy Polo es referente en Valencia y España por su trabajo en favor de los derechos de las mujeres inmigrantes

### Ms Jessica Nguyen

**Junior Policy and Campaign Officer at the European Women’s Lobby, Brussels**

Jessica joined the EWL Secretariat in September 2019, working on women’s socioeconomic rights, including advocacy on the MFF 2021-2027, EU recovery plans and gender budgeting. Currently Jessica also coordinates EWL’s engagement in the Generation Equality Action Coalition on violence against women and girls. She also supported EWL’s engagement with the UN for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.



### Dr Marija Babovic

**Co-chair of EU Inclusion Steering Group of European Anti Poverty Network**

Dr Marija Babovic is co-chair of EU Inclusion Steering Group of European Anti Poverty Network. She is professor at the University of Belgrade, and Director of Programmes of SeConS – Development Initiative Group, the member organization of EAPN Serbia. Her main area of research is socio-economic development with particular focus on social inclusion, mobility, inequality, with focus on gender equality. She has over 20 years of experience in research on social changes, gender equality and social inclusion of diverse vulnerable groups, such as Roma, forced migrants, unemployed, people under risk of poverty, population living in rural areas.



## Ms Beatriz Gimeno

### **Director of the Spanish Institute of Women, Spain**

Degree in Semitics Philology. Co-founder of FELGTB (National Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transsexuals), the most important Spanish LGBT association, in which she has been also Secretary General and President. As President, she was in charge of leading the political campaign and all the negotiations that finally concluded with the adoption of the 2006 Equal Marriage Act and of the 2007 Gender Identity Act.



She gives multiple lectures and training courses on feminism, gender, sexuality or LGBT rights, as well as collaborate as a guest lecturer at various Gender Masters. She has published hundreds of articles in all kinds of generalist and specialized publications; in major national newspapers and specialised journals on gender, sexuality and feminism. As a writer she has published several books of poetry and narrative, but above all feminist essays.

She has been a Member of the Assembly of Madrid from 2015 to 2020 and currently since January 2020 Director of the Institute of Women.

*Licenciada en Filología Semítica. Cofundadora de la FELGTB (Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Bisexuales y Transexuales), la más importante asociación lgtb española. Fui Secretaria General y después Presidenta en esta organización. Como Presidenta fui la encargada de dirigir la campaña política y todas las negociaciones que finalmente concluyeron con la aprobación en el 2006 de la ley de Matrimonio igualitario y en el 2007 de la Ley de Identidad de Género.*

*Imparto múltiples conferencias y cursos de formación sobre feminismo, género, sexualidad o derechos lgtb, así como colaboro como profesora invitada en varios Masters de Género. He publicado cientos de artículos en todo tipo de publicaciones generalistas y especializada; en los principales diarios nacionales y en revistas especializadas en género, sexualidad y feminismo. Como escritora he publicado varios libros de poesía y narrativa, pero sobre todo ensayo feminista.*

*He sido diputada en la Asamblea de Madrid desde 2015 a 2020 y en la actualidad desde enero 2020 Directora del Instituto de la Mujer.*

## Further reading

[Gender and Poverty in Europe – EAPN Briefing note](#)

[Raising their Voices against Precariousness: Women’s Experiences of In-work Poverty in Europe – Oxfam report](#)

[Intersectionality at a Glance in Europe – Center for Intersectional Justice Factsheet](#)

[Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action](#)

[A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#)



## Equinet, European Network of Equality Bodies

Equinet is a membership organisation bringing together 49 equality bodies from 36 European countries including all EU Member States. 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.

Equality bodies are champions for the core EU value of equality and defenders of the right to non-discrimination. They are public organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and contributing to an awareness of rights and a societal valuing of 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. By engaging closely with policy makers and partners at EU and international level, Equinet promotes the work of equality bodies through relevant publications, as well as participation at conferences and other meetings.

**For more information, please see our website: [www.equineteurope.org](http://www.equineteurope.org)**

**Check the directory of Equality Bodies for a list of Equinet members:**

<https://equineteurope.org/what-are-equality-bodies/european-directory-of-equality-bodies/>



## Spanish Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities (IWEQ)

The Spanish Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities (IWEQ), an autonomous body attached to the Ministry of Equality through the State Secretariat for Equality and Against Gender-Based Violence, works to support progress of women in all areas of society since 1983. It is specifically entrusted to foster gender equality and the equal participation of women and men in all areas of public life, in particular in political, economic, cultural and social life, and to foster and implement gender mainstreaming. The IWEQ is also the National Equality Body under the Gender Equal Treatment Directives (the 2010/41 on self-employed persons, the 2006/54 Recast directive, and the 2004/113 Goods and services directive). Among specific functions carried out by the IWEQ as such are: to receive and channel, in the administrative order, discrimination complaints on the ground of sex, independently assisting victims of discrimination on how to proceed with their claims; to prepare and publish reports, studies and formulate recommendations on gender equality. The IWEQ, within the scope of its competencies, also collaborates with non-governmental state-level organizations, public or private entities and international organisations dedicated to gender equality issues.

**For more information, please see our website: <http://www.inmujer.es/>**