

Engagement with UN mechanisms webinar: Universal Periodic Review

Tuesday 1 December 2020, 14.00-16.00 CET

Concept note

Equality bodies, through their various competences such as data collection, casework and research, possess a unique insight into the state of equality and discrimination, as well as the legal and policy gaps in their country. Their knowledge and skills can be particularly valuable to UN human rights mechanisms when assessing the situation in their country. However, their diverse status and diverse capacities, coupled with their traditional roots in and focus on EU law, might make it difficult for equality bodies to find the best way to contribute to the UN system.

The aim of this webinar is to progressively provide Equinet members with the tools to engage with UN mechanisms. The following proposal is based on the responses provided by 35 equality bodies that answered to the needs-assessment survey circulated amongst Equinet members in May/June 2020. These answers have shaped the content focus, showing a clear support to focus on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR); as well as the method (practice focused), format etc.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this capacity-building webinar is to provide equality bodies with tools and knowledge to report to UN mechanisms. The webinar is organized in cooperation with relevant partners from OHCHR and civil society organizations that have existing training experiences on the issue.

The webinar aims to:

- Enable equality bodies to more effectively engage with UN mechanisms where appropriate and increase their impact in the promotion of equality and non-discrimination in Europe and in their respective countries;
- Help bring more visibility to equality bodies in the United Nations system and foster better cooperation between equality bodies and UN experts and representatives

PARTICIPANTS

The webinar will be aimed at equality body staff responsible for engaging with international mechanisms, with prior legal knowledge but not necessarily regarding the UN system.

METHOD

The webinar will feature presentations, Q&A sessions and an exchange of best practises from NEBs. The programme will combine

- introductory knowledge to UN engagement mechanisms, with supporting learning references provided beforehand,
- an exchange of questions and answers regarding the reading materials, as well as
- the possibility to hear from an equality body that has previously engaged with some of the mechanisms.

A dynamic webinar will provide an opportunity to actively engage with partners and the possibility to come up with a practical manual for engagement in the near future.

Platform: ZOOM MEETINGS

DRAFT AGENDA

14.00 Welcome & housekeeping

Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Equinet

14.05 Opening Session

14.05 Short general introduction to UN engagement mechanisms

Focus on the differences between the mechanisms, analysing (1) ways to engage (2) impact (3) opportunities and (4) requirements

OHCHR

14.20 Short Q &A. NEB participants are encouraged to share their experiences with engagement with UN mechanisms.

Moderated by *Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Equinet*

14.30 Focus Session 1 – Universal Periodic Review

14.30 Introduction to the UPR

Gianni Magazzeni, Chief of the Universal Periodic Review Branch at the Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, OHCHR

14.45-14.55 Comfort Break

14.55 Focus Session 2 – Equality Bodies in action

14.55 Short engagement tutorial

Mona M'Bikay, Executive Director UPR Info

15.20 The experience of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights

Beáta Babačová, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights

15.30 Questions & Answers

15.40 NEB participants are encouraged to share their experiences with UPR engagement and ask questions to the speakers.

Moderated by *Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Equinet*

16.15 Closing