

Engagement with UN mechanisms: Universal Periodic Review

Online webinar, 1 December 2020

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

Agenda

14.00-14.10 Welcome

Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Legal and Policy Officer, Equinet

Birgit Van Hout, Regional representative at UN Human Rights – Europe, OHCHR

14.10-14.30 Opening session

- **Short general introduction to UN engagement mechanisms**

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

Marie-Dominique Parent, Deputy Regional Representative at UN Human Rights – Europe, OHCHR

- **Question and Answers**

14.30-14.50 Focus session I– Universal Periodic Review

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

14.50-15.00 Comfort break

15.00-15.45 Focus session II- Equality Bodies in action

- **Engagement tutorial**

Mona M'Bikay, Executive Director UPR Info

- **The experience of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights**

Beáta Babačová, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights

15.45-16.10 Questions and Answers

16.10-16:15 Closing

Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Legal and Policy officer, Equinet

Our speakers

Birgit Van Hout

Europe Regional Representative, UN Human Rights Regional Office for Europe in Brussels

Birgit Van Hout is the Regional Representative for Europe leading the UN Human Rights Regional Office for Europe in Brussels since 2017. Previously, she worked to advance human rights, the rule of law, democracy and equality in Guatemala, Timor Leste, Bosnia, Central Asia, Palestine, Venezuela and Togo with various departments of the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. She holds an LL.M., a M.A. in International Politics, and a postgraduate degree in International Human Rights Law.



Marie-Dominique Parent

Europe Deputy Regional Representative a.i. UN Human Rights Regional Office for Europe in Brussels

Marie-Dominique Parent has 24 years of experience in the field of human rights and international cooperation, including 17 years based in Africa and Asia. Previous positions included Deputy Representative at OHCHR in Cambodia, Regional Director for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa of Penal Reform International (PRI) and head of PRI Paris Office. She consulted for GIZ in Bangladesh and the Paralegal Advisory Service in Malawi and accompanied the UN Sub-Committee on the Prevention of Torture in its mission to New-Zealand. Marie-Dominique Parent has worked on human rights in the criminal justice, economic and social rights issues in development contexts, non-discrimination and the rule of law.



Gianni Magazzeni

Chief UPR Branch, Human Rights Council and Treaty Mechanisms Division, OHCHR, Geneva

Gianni Magazzeni has been the chief of the UPR Branch in Geneva since May 2017. He has previously worked as Chief of the Americas, Europe and Central Asia Branch in the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division and Chief of the National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section of the OHCHR in Geneva.

His experience in the United Nations is very rich and varied, both in Geneva and oversees in various missions all over the world.



Mona M'Bikay

Executive Director UPR Info

Mona M'Bikay joined UPR Info in September 2017 as the new Executive Director. She is a human rights lawyer with 20 years of working experience acquired at both national (Swiss Federal Office of Justice and Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Law Firms and Administrative Tribunal in Geneva) and at international level (UN OHCHR, Regional Office for Southern Africa, UNDP Bangladesh, Rights and Development Consultancy).

Her expertise includes human rights and sustainable development, gender equality, democratic governance, rule of law, business and human rights and public international law. She has a vast experience developing capacities of various national partners to advocate for the respect of human rights.



Beáta Babačová

Legal expert for external relations, Slovak National Centre for Human Rights

Beáta Babačová works as a legal expert for external relations at the Slovak equality body. She is mostly responsible for monitoring human rights and equal treatment. She regularly reports on these matters to various international bodies. She also acts as a communication guru, project designer and fundraising whiz. She helps to develop various advocacy and policy initiatives aiming at eliminating inequalities, especially those enacted by laws. Before joining the great team at the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, she worked at top-tier law firms in Slovakia as well as major non-governmental organizations abroad, including British Red Cross.



Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu

Legal and Policy officer, Equinet

Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu works as a Legal and Policy Officer at Equinet. Among others, she is the coordinator of the Equality Law Working Group and is in charge of Equinet's disability portfolio. Jone holds a PhD in Law by 3 Spanish Universities. Her thesis focused on multiple and intersectional discrimination and EU law. She has worked both in academia and national CSOs, as well as pan European organisations including the EU Fundamental Rights Agency or the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination.

Jone has coordinated and authored several publications on equality and non-discrimination & spoken at numerous webinars and conferences.



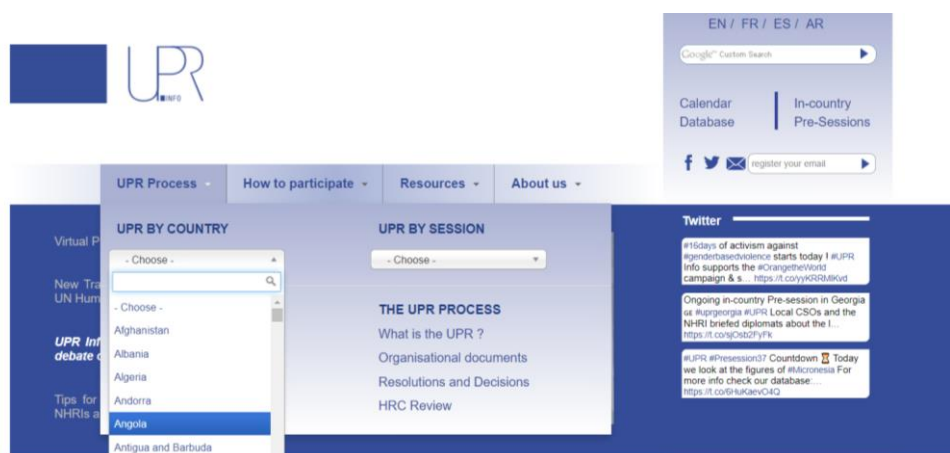
Reading list

UN engagement mechanisms

- [Table comparing all UN bodies](#) that monitor human rights
- [Civil Society Handbook](#) on how to work with the UN Human Rights Mechanisms
- Guidance on how to [follow-up on recommendations](#) from human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies, UPR, special procedures)
- Link to the page with all the [thematic UN special rapporteurs](#), many of them who work on the rights of specific groups
- [Tutorial](#) to learn how to engage with **UN special procedures**
- Learn more about the [UN Human Rights Council](#)
- Information regarding [how to access UN human rights mechanisms](#) – when you need accreditation, when you don't
- European Disability Forum guide on [how to engage with CEDAW](#)

UPR

- UPR [Practical Guidance](#)
- [Tutorials](#) on how to engage with the UPR system
- UPR Tips:
 - for [NHRIs and NGOs](#)
 - for [Parliaments](#)
- Updated information about the [UPR cycle status by country](#)



- Step by step [tutorial](#) of all the phases to engage with the UPR as an NHRIs (for those EBs that have a mixed mandate or for everyone to understand common steps in a deeper way).



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

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

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