

Tackling age discrimination: Stepping Up our Engagement with Youth 1-2 March 2021

CONCEPT NOTE & AGENDA FOR ONLINE WORKSHOP

In Cooperation with the European Youth Forum

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The [EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027](#) calls for special attention to be given to those risking marginalisation based on potential sources of discrimination and strives to contribute to the eradication of all forms of discrimination of youth. **Young people experience inequality, individual and structural discrimination on the ground of their age, as well as multiple discrimination** based on other personal characteristics such as gender, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability. Despite the barriers faced by young people in accessing their rights, EU equality legislation does not adequately cover age-based and multiple discrimination. Equality bodies are mandated to assist victims of discrimination and raise awareness of rights. However, the capacity of equality bodies to assist youth victims of discrimination and to raise awareness of rights is often limited by their mandates, under-reporting and lack of casework, and absence of data¹.

The work of youth organisations is crucial to raise awareness of rights amongst young people, empower them to recognise and stand up against discrimination and address the relevant institutions to seek legal or other appropriate remedies. Equally, by reason of their various competences and expertise, **equality bodies play a central role in promoting equality and in fighting discrimination experienced by young people in many fields.**

Previous Equinet research² in the area suggests that links between equality bodies and young people should be strengthened. This would help **equality bodies to better understand what equality in practice means to young people, involve young people and their organisations** in developing and sharing good practices, as well as raising awareness of rights under equal treatment legislation with initiatives specifically designed for young people. **Providing young people with a better understanding of equality and the tools available to them to tackle the discrimination they face is also crucial for them to advocate for their rights are protected, respected and fulfilled.**

In 2018, a [seminar organised by Equinet together with the European Youth Forum \(YFJ\)](#) produced a [list of actions](#) that can be taken to **establish stronger collaboration between equality bodies and young**

¹ [Perspective: Equality Bodies Combating Discrimination Against Young People](#) (2016)

² *Ibid* and [Discussion Paper: Fighting Discrimination on the Ground of Age](#) (2018);

people. Next to Legal Actions (Litigation) and Policy Making, Communication remains a main area where more cooperation is needed. This workshop acts as a follow-up to that seminar, providing a space for equality bodies and youth organisations to continue to strengthen their cooperation. Additionally, this workshop will feed into **finalising the Handbook on Stepping up Engagement with Youth** currently being drafted by Equinet’s Working Group on Communication.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

This online event will bring together youth civil society representatives and equality bodies to identify best ways to cooperate around our common goal of furthering equality in society. Ultimately, we aim to **build links between youth organisations and national equality bodies to fight discrimination together.**

In particular, the workshop will bring together national equality bodies and youth organisations to:

- Explore ways to strengthen collaboration, especially on communication, in order to better promote equality and tackle age-based and multiple discrimination both on and offline;
- Discuss the communication work of equality bodies, focusing on opportunities and obstacles related to inequality of and discrimination against young people;
- Identify best practices for improved promotion of equality.

The workshop conclusions will help to finalise Equinet’s upcoming Handbook on Stepping up our Engagement with Youth.

DRAFT AGENDA

1 March	
10:00	Opening address & technical reminder <i>Facilitator: Marija Pantelic</i>
1. Building Bridges: Equality Bodies & Youth Organisations	
10:10	The role of equality bodies to tackle discrimination against young people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Valérie Fontaine, Advisor for partnerships and public relations, Defender of Rights, France and Equinet Executive Board Member</i> Q&A
10:40	Equality in practice for young people: What is the state of play & why is it key for youth organisations to be involved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Flavia Colonnese, Policy and Advocacy Manager, European Youth Forum</i> Q&A
11:00	BREAK

2. Promoting Equality Together

11:15	<p>Young people may face discrimination on the basis of their age, but youth is not a homogeneous group and age is not the only element that defines them. This session highlights different ways in which we can cooperate and communicate better to tackle both age-based and multiple discrimination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Campaigning for equality using the multi-faceted realities of ageing <i>- Estelle Huchet, Membership & Campaigns Officer, Age Platform Europe</i> ● Gender-based representation in decision-making <i>- Edmond Apap, Senior Officer Projects, National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, Malta</i> ● Be Heard on CERD! Youth Consultation on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination <i>- Fidelma Joyce, Civil Society Engagement Manager, Irish Human Rights & Equality Commission & Valery Molay, Climate Justice and Training Officer, National Youth Council of Ireland</i> <p>Q&A</p>
12:00	BREAK

3. Group Discussions: How to work together to promote equality?

12:10	<p>We will briefly meet back in plenary to give you an overview of the group discussions. This is your opportunity to discuss how to work together to promote equality. Please consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you already cooperate with a youth organisation/equality body: <i>How did you put that cooperation in place? What makes it difficult? What makes it successful? Have you addressed the intersectional perspective?</i> ● If you do not yet cooperate with a youth organisation/equality body: <i>What are the obstacles to cooperation? What do you need to start working together? How have you worked with other organisations on equality from an intersectional perspective?</i>
12:45	Feedback from group sessions
13:00	Close

2 March

10:00 **Welcome & technical reminder**
Facilitator: Marija Pantelic

4. Cooperating and Communicating with Young People

10:05 **What does it mean to be a Youth Ambassador for Rights?**

- *Marie Pele & Charlyne Eymonot, Youth Ambassadors for Rights (JADE), France*

10:15 **Presentation of the main findings from Handbook on Stepping up our Engagement with Youth**

- *Ana Tretinjak, Office of the Ombudswoman, Croatia & Mintautė Jurkutė, Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, Lithuania*

5. Group Discussions: Improving the Handbook

10:35 Small groups to discuss the main sections of the Handbook:

1. **State of Play: legislation & data**
(facilitated by Sarah Cooke O'Dowd, Communication Officer, Equinet)
2. **Cooperation for Equality: partnering with young people & mainstreaming**
(facilitated by Zlatana Maletic, Communication Adviser, Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Serbia)
3. **Communicating Equality: how to focus on youth**
(facilitated by Ana Tretinjak, Communication Officer, Office of the Ombudswoman, Croatia)

11:15 **BREAK**

6. Ways Forward

11:30 Equality bodies and youth organisations work towards the same goal: tackling age based and multiple discrimination, and building a fairer society where everyone can enjoy their rights regardless of their background or personal circumstances. What can we do to better coordinate our efforts?

In 2018 Equinet and European Youth Forum identified [ideas for cooperation](#). The question now is, how can we turn these into actions? This session will look at possible ways forward to keep building on our cooperation.

12:15 **Final Thoughts**

- *Paulina Jalaksova, Board member responsible for youth rights, European Youth Forum*
- *Julia Konowrocka, Policy Officer, Equinet*

12:30 Close