

Equality Bodies & Freedom of Movement of EU Workers: Training summary

On the morning of **17 March 2021**, [Equinet](#), the European Network of Equality Bodies, organised an online training, with representatives of the European Commission (EC), European Labour Authority (ELA) and ECAS - Your Europe Advice (YEA). **The training was organised within the work of Equinet's Freedom of Movement Cluster** and brought together mainly experts of equality bodies working on the protection of the equal treatment of mobile EU workers under [Art. 4 of Directive 2014/54/EU](#).

The primary **objective** of this training was to connect interested equality bodies and external partners working on the topic of freedom of movement, in order to improve the capacity of equality bodies to provide effective protection against discrimination of Union workers and members of their families.

During the training we focused on:

- Increasing equality bodies' knowledge of freedom of movement case law and recent policy developments;
- Providing practical guidance and sharing good practices on the implementation of Directive 2014/54/EU;
- Building links and establishing cooperation with EU partners, providing information and assistance services in the freedom of movement area.

Presentations given throughout the training reflected on the mandates and capabilities of equality bodies operating as freedom of movement bodies, provided an overview of recent case law and policy developments regarding freedom of movement within the EU, and outlined the ongoing work of different European partners in the field, with a focus on equality bodies' potential involvement and future cooperation. [See the presentations here.](#)

Capacity-building and fostering knowledge

The objectives for the training included **increasing equality bodies' knowledge of relevant freedom of movement law and jurisprudence and its links with non-discrimination law** as well as **providing practical guidance on the implementation of freedom of movement law for the purpose of equality protection**. During the first session, staff of equality bodies had the chance to learn about recent [freedom of movement case law](#) of the Court of Justice of the EU. The session included a Q&A during which the participants had a chance to find out more details about specific cases and discuss upcoming actions of the European Commission in supporting Member States and ensuring the proper implementation of the Directive.

Another objective of the training was to **share and discuss good practices on the legal and promotional work** being done by both national equality bodies as well as relevant external partners working on the topic. Therefore, the first session was also dedicated to showcasing the work of equality bodies tackling discrimination of Union workers and discussing their challenges in carrying out the functions assigned to them under Art. 4 of Directive 2014/54/EU. The presentations were based on the work of equality bodies previously shared within Equinet's Freedom of Movement Cluster as well as on an upcoming Equinet discussion paper on freedom of movement within the EU.

The second session then focused on the work of EU partners and their examples of good practices. Participants had the chance to learn more about the work of the European Labour Authority, a key



partner in the area of freedom of movement. ELA presented its action plan and campaign on seasonal workers, which provided an opportunity for equality bodies operating as Art. 4 bodies to learn more on common topics of interest and get involved in external partners' projects. The session was also open to equality bodies' contributions, ideas and suggestions. To facilitate the brainstorming, representatives from the Greek Ombudsman's office presented their work on seasonal workers, allowing participants to learn more on this specific topic, how they themselves can provide assistance to seasonal workers while also supporting ELA's campaign with their own contributions.

Cooperation with partners

Another objective of the training was for staff of equality bodies to **get a better understanding of the relevant EU partners working on freedom of movement as well as ways of establishing cooperation with them**, in order to be better supported in their everyday work. Therefore, the third session of the training was dedicated to discussions with external partners, providing information and assistance services in the freedom of movement area.

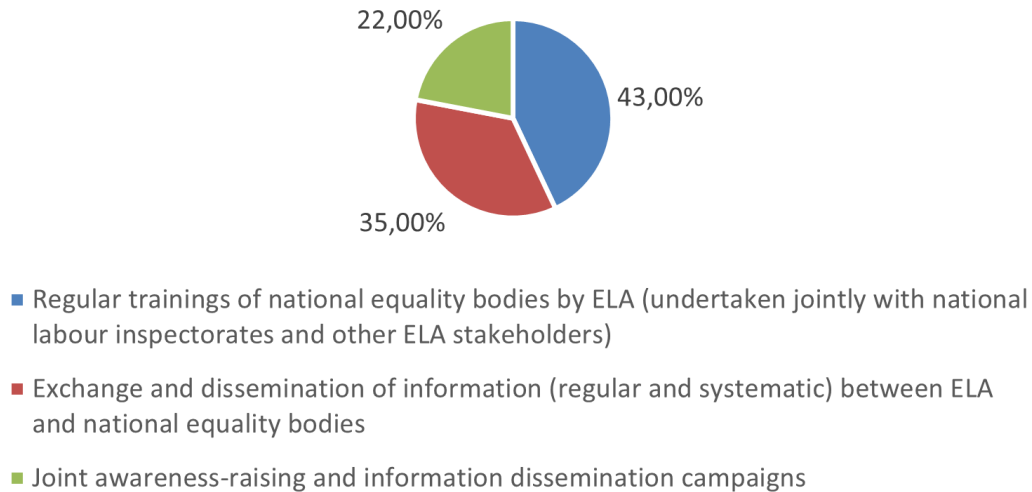
Participants first had the chance to find out more about the assistance being provided to Union workers by [Your Europe Advice](#). The introductory presentation was followed by an interactive discussion on how equality bodies and YEA could cooperate on future discrimination cases. It was established that staff of equality bodies can reach out to YEA via the [online form](#) when solving discrimination cases in which the application of certain rules is unclear.

Participants also suggested the following ways of cooperation:

- Regular **exchange of new information, experience and knowledge** in the freedom of movement area;
- Providing **an informal space to discuss difficult legal topics and compare data** between equality bodies and Your Europe Advice;
- Offering **access to reports, publications, research and other promotional materials** (e.g. brochures) among each other as well as **exchanging contact details** to facilitate easier day-to-day contact;
- Organising **regular trainings and sharing advice on case handling** with each other;
- Establishing **formal partnerships and providing counselling**;
- Exchanging **networks** in order to reach out to more **legal experts** working on the topic;
- **Promoting each other's work** to ensure victims of discrimination have access to all assistance services where and when relevant.

Following this part of the session, participants also had the chance for a more informal discussion with representatives of the [European Labour Authority](#) on establishing long-term links and working together on topics of common interest. During the brainstorming, staff of equality bodies were asked to rate what kind of cooperation with ELA would be most useful for them.

Ways of cooperation between equality bodies and the European Labour Authority



During this session, it was established that national equality bodies can get in contact with the national contact points of ELA in order to better work together, aside from the possibility of participating in trainings and other activities.

Ways forward

Equinet's Freedom of Movement Cluster was formed in 2018 to support equality bodies who have been mandated under Art. 4 of Directive 2014/54/EU as freedom of movement bodies, to tackle discrimination of Union workers. It has served as a forum to exchange good practises, provide new knowledge on case law and policy developments, as well as to build the overall capacity of Equinet members. This training was just one of several similar events, facilitating information exchange and contact building.

On 20 April 2021, members of the Cluster were invited to participate in the **50th SOLVIT workshop**. The online event provided an opportunity for staff of equality bodies to liaise with national SOLVIT contact points and establish links to cooperate on cases related to freedom of movement.

On 28 April 2021, the **European Labour Authority** hosted a **workshop on "assistance and services to seasonal workers and employers"** extending the invitation to members of the Cluster and dedicating a session specifically to equality bodies mandated as freedom of movement bodies.

In summer 2021, the **Equinet discussion paper "Freedom of Movement in the EU: Equality Bodies Tackling Discrimination of Union Workers"** is set to be published. It will provide an overview of the work of equality bodies working on the topic, discuss the obstacles that they face in fully realizing their potential as well as provide recommendations on the national and EU level to be better supported in their daily work. The paper should serve as a useful publication for all actors working on the topic of freedom of movement, bring more visibility to the work of equality bodies as well as attract more support from external partners.

Acknowledgements

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[All presentations of the training are available online.](#) This training was the last event organised under Equinet's Freedom of Cluster following its termination in early 2021.