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EQUINET CONFERENCE

PROMOTING
EQUALITY
MAINSTREAMING
IN POLICYMAKING

19 Nov 2021 • 09:30-12:45 CET

Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, brings together 47 organizations from across Europe, which are empowered to counteract discrimination as national equality bodies across a range of grounds including age, disability, gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

Equality is a founding value of the European Union and part of the shared constitutional traditions of Member States. Moreover, the Union's duty to ensure equality mainstreaming and combat discrimination is reflected in Articles 8 and 10 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU, as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon. Therefore, equality considerations should inform and guide all actions by the European Union, its Member States and public authorities.

In the current context of health, economic and environmental crisis, it is especially important that equality is taken into consideration for tackling the challenges the EU is facing. For building fairer societies, equality is a necessity, not a luxury. An essential development in this regard is the European Commission's recent decision to set up a Task Force on Equality, specifically tasked to mainstream equality in all EU policies. A further step, beyond mainstreaming equality in the public sector, could be to ensure that equality considerations are also taken into account by private actors such as employers and service providers.

Equality bodies have built up considerable experience and expertise in promoting equality mainstreaming and this experience can be used to inform policymaking, both at European and national level. Therefore, this year Equinet set up a multi-annual cluster that brings together equality bodies, focusing on equality mainstreaming. Equality bodies across Europe, as public institutions concerned with promoting equality as a fundamental value and combating discrimination, play an important role in promoting and supporting both public and private actors in implementing equality mainstreaming.

In its first year, the cluster has been discussing the use of equality duties and equality impact assessments for mainstreaming equality as these are tools holding significant potential (also identified in Equinet's recent "[Recommendation for a fair and equal Europe: Rebuilding our societies after COVID-19](#)") and this is an area where Equinet and its members already have considerable experience and expertise. The Cluster has collected good practices from Equality Bodies across Europe on equality duties and equality impact assessments for mainstreaming equality and created a Compendium which informed this conference.

This online conference will create an opportunity for national equality bodies to discuss with relevant actors on how they can cooperate and better promote equality mainstreaming and use the tools of equality duties and equality impact assessments to tackle discrimination across the various protected fields and grounds.

Please join us:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86333390212?pwd=d3AvK0cwYUd6K1kzMmFPczMzK3k3dz09>

Meeting ID: 863 3339 0212

Passcode: 199539



Agenda

Moderator: Sophie Hale, Membership and Network officer, Equinet

09:30 – 09:40 Conference opening

09.40 - 09.50 Keynote speech

- Helena Dalli, Commissioner for Equality, European Commission

09.50 - 10.15 Equality mainstreaming & equality bodies

- Niall Crowley, Independent expert and author of the Equinet paper 'Making Europe more Equal: A Legal Duty?'
- Vilma Gabrieliūtė, Head of the Equal Opportunities Mainstreaming Group, Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of the Republic of Lithuania

10.15 - 11:00 Session I: Presentations on good practices by equality bodies

- Ketevan Shubashvili, Head of Equality Department, Public Defender, Georgia, Moderator of Cluster on Equality Mainstreaming
- Jussi Aaltonen, Senior Officer, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Finland
- Donal Collins, Employment Development Officer, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

11.00 - 11.10

Coffee Break

11.10 - 11.55 Session II: Challenges & opportunities of equality mainstreaming tools

Breakout rooms and feedback in plenary

Breakout room 1: **Protecting rights of older people to travel insurance**

- Ketevan Shubashvili, Head of Equality Department, Public Defender, Georgia
- Nino Niavadze and Mariam Koshoridze, Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia

Breakout room 2: **Mainstreaming equality in implementation of Welfare Development Plan**

- Art-Peeter Roose, Advisor, Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner's Office, Estonia

Breakout room 3: **Preventing sexual harassment in public services**

- Despina Mertakka, Officer A, Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman), Cyprus
- Nicoletta Agrotou, Officer, Cyprus Academy of Public Administration representative

11.55- 12.35 Session III: Cooperation for increasing effective equality mainstreaming

- Barbara Limanowska, Senior Gender Mainstreaming Expert, European Institute for Gender Equality
- Sandra Konstatzky, Director, Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria
- Ander Bergara Sautua, Inter-institutional Cooperation Coordinator, Emakunde-Basque Institute for Women, Basque Country
- Anna Lawson, European Disability Expertise, (EDE)

Short Q&A

12.35-12.45 Closing Remarks

Our speakers

Helena Dalli

Commissioner for Equality, European Commission

Helena Dalli is the first EU Commissioner for Equality since December 2019. Her role is to deliver on the Union of Equality chapter within the Political Guidelines of President von der Leyen, by strengthening Europe's commitment to equality and inclusion in all of its senses.

Prior to taking her role as Commissioner, Dalli held various political roles in Malta including Member of Parliament (1996 to 2019), Minister for European Affairs and Equality (2017 to 2019), and Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (2013-2017). She was also opposition Shadow Minister for public administration, equality, public broadcasting and national investments (1998-2013) and Junior Minister for Women's Rights in the Office of Prime Minister (1996-1998). Dalli holds a PhD in Political Sociology from the University of Nottingham, and lectured in Economic and Political Sociology, Public Policy, and Sociology of Law at the University of Malta.



Anne Gaspard

Executive director, Equinet

Anne Gaspard has been the Executive Director of Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies since the establishment of the Equinet Secretariat in 2008. Anne had been active involved in the field of equality and non-discrimination at a European level since the start of her professional career, following her graduation in European studies and political science from University College London and Berlin Humboldt University.



Starting with the campaign of the European Year against Racism in 1997 for the European Parliament and subsequent experience within the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), Anne then joined and managed the UK-based secretariat of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) to support its Chair from 1998 to 2000. Anne was then responsible for the implementation of various European anti-discrimination and equality projects for a European diversity management consultancy, leading the European office of Focus Consultancy in Brussels for seven years, until she joined Equinet in early 2008.

Niall Crowley

Independent equality and diversity expert

Niall Crowley is an independent equality and diversity expert. He has worked on research, policy, evaluation, and strategy development projects at a European level with the European Commission, EIGE, and the Council of Europe and in a wide range of European countries. Prior to this he was Chief Executive of the Equality Authority in Ireland, an equality body that worked on nine different grounds including gender in the fields of employment and of goods and services. Previously he worked on rights issues in the NGO sector. He is author of 'Empty Promises: Bringing the Equality Authority to Heel' published by A&A Farmar in 2010 and 'An Ambition for Equality' published by Irish Academic Press in 2006. He is the main author of the Equinet paper ['Making Europe more Equal: A Legal Duty?](#)



Vilma Gabrieliūtė,

Head of equal opportunities mainstreaming group at the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of Lithuania



Vilma Gabrieliūtė is an expert on human rights education and Diversity management. Vilma holds a Master's degree in Leadership and management of change and is the author of the Diversity implementation mechanism in private sector.

Vilma has 15 years of experience in non-governmental organizations working in human rights field as a trainer and advocacy coordinator. Since Vilma Gabrieliūtė joined Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson of Lithuania in 2018, she is contributing to developing equal opportunities mainstreaming tools and consulting the public as well as private sector, providing training on diversity management and inclusion. Since 2021 she is

the head of equal opportunities mainstreaming group, and a member of the Board at the Lithuanian Diversity charter.

Ketevan Shubashvili

Head of Equality Department at the Office of Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia

Ketevan Shubashvili is Head of Equality Department at the Office of Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia since 2016. She lectures in Human Rights Law at Master's level at universities in Georgia. In 2013, Ketevan earned an LL.M. degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Essex (Colchester, UK). In 2011 she graduated from Georgian Institute of Public Affairs, Master's degree in International Law. In 2009 Ketevan earned Bachelor of Laws from Tbilisi State University. In 2013 Ketevan underwent an internship with the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg, France). She has extensive experience in international human rights litigation and is author of several academic articles on human rights.



Jussi Aaltonen

Senior officer, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Finland



Jussi Aaltonen is a senior officer at the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman in Finland. The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman is an independent equality body that supervises the observance of [The Non-Discrimination Act \(1325/2014\)](#) (covers all the other discrimination grounds with an open-ended list excluding gender-related issues)

Jussi has worked at the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman's office since 2015. Prior to 2015, he worked as senior officer at The Equality Ombudsman's office tackling gender discrimination. Jussi graduated from the Faculty of Law Helsinki University.

One of Jussi's expertise is equality planning. As a representative of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, he is currently developing a digital tool for an EU-REC funded national project promoting authorities duty to promote equality (Drivers for Equality 2021-2022).

Donal Collins

Employment Development Officer, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Donald has worked in the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, since its formation in 1999. Prior to this he worked in the Fair Employment Commission in Northern Ireland.

He has held various roles within the Commission and his current role is working with public authorities in Northern Ireland on their Section 75 statutory equality and good relations duties. He also provides guidance to public authorities about their obligations under equality law and good practice.



Nino Niavadze

Head Of Legal Department, LEPL Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia



Ms. Nino Niavadze is a Doctoral Student in civil law in the Republic of Georgia and has been leading Legal department at Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia since 2013. Ms. Nino has had an experience in this field for 17 years. She is an attorney, arbiter, lecturer and outsourced expert for the UNDP. Her professional experience involves drafting insurance and consumer protection framework, as well as supervising fulfillment in the insurance sector of Georgia.

Mariam Koshoridze

Head of Consumer Protection and Financial Education Division, Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia (LEPL)

Ms. Mariam Koshoridze has been a lawyer and practices in the insurance sector for over 14 years. Ms. Mariam has been leading the Consumer Protection and Financial Literacy division at Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia since 2018. Her duties involve supervising consumer protection through off site and on site supervision, examining consumers complaints and supporting good practice environment in the insurance field.



Art-Peeter Roosve

Advisor at Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner's Office of Estonia

Art-Peeter Roosve is an advisor at Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner's Office of Estonia. He specializes in the fields of gender and age discrimination and international communication. He has participated in many Commissioner's activities for promoting equality. He is also one of the many co-writers in Estonia's Human rights study book due to be released next year (chapter on older persons rights). In his international communications role he carries most of the Commissioner's international queries and communications. Most recently he was a part of Equinet's task force on the Compendium of Good practices on Equality Mainstreaming. He has a Bachelor's degree in law from University of Tartu and is currently acquiring his master's degree at the same university. He's writing his master's thesis on the implementation and legal limits of positive action measures for furthering equality.



Despina Mertakka

Officer A', Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights (Cyprus Ombudsman)

Despina has been working in the Cyprus Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights Office since 2007 where she had the opportunity to deal with a variety of cases and citizen's complaints related to possible abuse of powers in the public sector, violation of human rights and since 2011, issues that are dealt by the Equality Authority and concern anti-discrimination law as instructed by the EU Directives and implemented by the Cypriot competent bodies. Despina holds a Bachelor in Law (LLB) and Master of Laws in Human Rights (LLM) in the area of gender and sexuality.



Nicoletta Agrotou

Training Officer, Cyprus Academy of Public Administration



Since 2011, Nicoletta works as a Training Officer for the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration. At the beginning, her main responsibility was the design, organisation and implementation of training programs for the newcomers in the Public Service, as well as training programs for the teams working for the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of EU. Her duties, since 2013, include among others, being a Member of the Steering Group for the promotion of learning activities related to the training of civil servants on gender mainstreaming in all policies or being a member of the Thematic Network of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on gender mainstreaming. She graduated from the

school of Medieval and Modern Greek Philology, and also holds a Master of Arts in Education Policy and Practice from the University of Sheffield.

Barbara Limanowska

Senior Gender Mainstreaming Expert, European Institute for Gender Equality

Barbara Limanowska is the Senior Gender Mainstreaming Expert at the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Prior to this she was engaged as the Regional Gender Adviser at the Regional UNDP Office in Bratislava.

In the past she has served as the Director of The National Women's Information Center in Warsaw, as a consultant on anti-trafficking for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Bosnia Herzegovina, and as a senior anti-trafficking adviser to several UN and international agencies, including UNICEF, OSCE and UNDP.



Sandra Konstatzky

Director of the Ombud for Equal Treatment, Austria



Sandra is, since 2018, Director of the Ombud for Equal Treatment at the Federal Chancellery in Austria. She was previously Deputy Director and Legal advisor at the same Equality Body. She is a Lawyer by training and holds a master's degree in law with a specialty in Legal Gender Studies.

She performs trainings at the European Law Academy and lectures at the Law University of Vienna. Additionally, Sandra was an Equinet Board member from 2015-2021, as well as Board member of the Austrian Women Lawyers' Association.

Ander Bergara Sautua

Head of Inter-institutional Cooperation Area

Ander Bergara Sautua has been working at Emakunde, the Basque Institute for Women, since 1995, where he has held different positions. Currently, he is the Head of the Institutional Cooperation Area. Ander is also a gender trainer and a lecturer in postgraduate university courses on gender issues, as well as the author of many publications on the subject.



Anna Lawson

Professor of Law at the University of Leeds, Board member of the European Disability Expertise Network

Anna Lawson is Professor of Law at the University of Leeds where she is also a joint director of the University's Centre for Disability Studies. Anna is a Board member of the European Disability Expertise Network (formerly the Academic Network of European Disability Experts). She is also the joint founder of the International Journal of Disability and Social Justice and its associated International Community of Disability and Social Justice. Her work focuses on disability equality and human rights at international, national and local levels. Herself disabled, Anna has played active roles in a range of disabled people's organisations and human rights organisations – including being a long-standing member of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Disability Advisory Committee and patron of the National Association of Disabled Staff Networks.



Sophie Hale

Membership and Network developing Officer, Equinet

Sophie Hale has worked as the Membership and Network Development Officer at Equinet since early 2020. She works on all issues related to supporting Equinet's members and ensuring the smooth functioning of the network. She coordinates the new Cluster on Equality Mainstreaming, and in 2020, she led on gathering information from Equinet members about their work on Covid-19, which resulted in the Equinet online Covid-19 database. She previously worked at ENNHRI (European Network of National Human Rights Institutions) in the human rights policy team focusing on asylum and migration and NHRI accreditation. She holds a Master's degree in Human Rights. Previously, Sophie worked in education in the Middle East and Asia.



Further reading

Documents

- Equinet paper '[Making Europe more Equal: A Legal Duty?](#)
- EUDEL, Emakunde, [Preliminary Gender Impact Assessments- Explanatory guide to the process and tools devised for implementation in local bodies](#)
- Commissioner for Administration and the Protection of Human Rights, Cyprus, [Code of Conduct on Preventing and Combating Harassment and Sexual Harassment in Public Services](#)
- Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia, [Recommendation on prevention and elimination of age discrimination by Insurers and/or insurance intermediaries in the type of Travel Insurance](#)
- ANED, [Mainstreaming disability equality in the European Semester 2019-20 policy-issues-and-questions](#), 17 June 2019
- ANED, [Mainstreaming disability equality in the European Semester 2018-19: policy issues and questions](#), 24 October 2018
- ANED, [Mainstreaming disability rights in the European Pillar of Social Rights – a compendium](#), 17 May 2018
- Lawson, Ana, Beckett, Angharad E., "[The Social and Human Rights Models of Disability: Towards a Complementarity Thesis](#)" (2021) 25 (2) International Journal of Human Rights 348 – co-authored with
- Lawson, Ana, Orchard, Maria, "[The Anticipatory Reasonable Adjustment Duty: Removing the Blockages?](#)" (2021) 80 The Cambridge Law Journal 308 – co-authored with M Orchard.
- Lawson, Ana, "[Disability Law as an Academic Discipline: Towards Cohesion and Mainstreaming?](#)" (2020) 47(4) Journal of Law and Society, 558.

Websites:

- [Emakunde website on mainstreaming](#)
- [Cyprus Academy of Public Administration Academy's web site](#)
- [LEPL Insurance State Supervision Service of Georgia web-site](#)
- [Website on Mainstreaming Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson](#) (in Lithuanian)

Other practical tools

- EIGE, [Gender Equality Training toolkit](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Impact Assessment toolkit](#)
- EIGE, [Institutional transformation toolkit](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Sensitive Parliaments toolkit](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Budgeting toolkit](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Analysis tool](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Audit tool](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Statistics and Indicators tool](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Monitoring tool](#)
- EIGE, [Sex-disaggregated data tool](#)
- EIGE, [Gender Planning tool](#)



Equinet, European Network of Equality Bodies

Equinet is a membership organisation bringing together 47 equality bodies from across Europe. 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/>

