

Members & Equinet @ Work Together: Working Groups and Clusters

Working Groups

The Equinet Working Groups are an essential part of the inner functioning of the Network. Composed of expert staff from member organisations, they are the **central standing platforms for effective cooperation** and sharing of expertise amongst equality bodies and their staff, alongside the Equinet training events and seminars. Each Working Group is headed by one or two Moderators from national equality bodies who, assisted by the Equinet Secretariat, are responsible for the organisation and the implementation of the work as planned in the annual Work Plan.

Communication Strategies and Practices

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Equality Law

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Policy Formation

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Research and Data Collection

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Clusters

Equinet clusters are time-limited task-forces focusing on specific topics of high interest to equality bodies. Their objective is to provide a platform for Equinet members to exchange good practices, while also building their capacity by enabling engagement with European-level policy and legal developments in the thematic area of the cluster. Clusters bring together **high-level experts** for focused and results-oriented discussions. Members of the clusters collaborate to help steer Equinet's activities on the given topic, thereby further ensuring their relevance and added value for both equality bodies and external stakeholders.

Compared to, for example, Equinet's Working Groups, Clusters are relatively less time-demanding and could offer greater flexibility in terms of expected outputs and involvement by members.

Disability

Equinet Disability Cluster provides Equality Bodies with a space for engagement and exchange of information regarding the topic of disability and disability rights. It feeds into the UN CRPD review of the EU's implementation of the Convention, and it works closely with the European Disability Forum and the ENNHRI CRPD working group.

The cluster will hold two online meetings in 2022 and it will design the webinar series "Equality bodies building their capacity regarding psychosocial disabilities and persons with mental ill health" planned for the second half 2022.

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Equality Mainstreaming

Equinet Cluster on Equality Mainstreaming relies on equality bodies' experience and expertise in promoting equality mainstreaming as they can be used to inform policymaking, both at European and national level. The work of this Cluster is horizontal in nature, cutting across all grounds. In 2021 the Cluster published the [Compendium of Good Practices on Equality Mainstreaming: The](#)

[Use of Equality Duties and Equality Impact Assessments in 2021](#). In 2022, it will focus on the role of equality bodies in supporting equality planning at the national level by public bodies, as well as by private sector actors, including diversity charters. The Cluster will also discuss situations when adopting an equality plan is compulsory, including for beneficiaries of EU funding.

The Equality Mainstreaming cluster will hold two online meetings in 2022, and feed into a conference held on 19 May, during the European Diversity Month, on the role of equality bodies in supporting equality planning and the links to Diversity Charters.

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Age

Building upon Equinet's work on age discrimination and previous engagement in the context of the UN Open Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA), Equinet Age Cluster seeks to continue building the capacity of its members to effectively engage with the work of the UN on ageing as well as to facilitate the exchange of experiences in promoting age equality and non-discrimination.

The cluster held a one-day webinar on the potential of equality bodies getting involved in the UN work on ageing taking place on 25 February 2022, and will host two online meetings throughout the year.

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Artificial Intelligence

Equinet AI cluster will collaborate to develop capacity-building resources to support equality bodies in the development, monitoring and impact assessment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems. The Cluster will also input to ongoing AI-related regulatory developments at the European level.

The cluster will hold two online meetings in 2022 to develop a capacity building event, possibly, a training of trainers on equality and non-discrimination for private and public duty-bearers. The

cluster will also use for its work and contribute to the further development of [Equinet's dedicated AI website](#), which serves as an online learning platform for equality bodies on their AI-related work.

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Economic & Social Rights

Equinet Economic & Social Rights Cluster will help guide Equinet's work on the topic of economic and social rights and in specific, will be the leading contributor to Equinet's involvement within the framework of the Cooperation Platform CoE-FRA-Equinet-ENNHRI.

This Cluster will hold two online meetings in 2022 and will provide inputs to the organization of a roundtable "Equality bodies' role in implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan." The Economic & Social Rights Cluster will also develop a summary factsheet on roles of equality bodies under the EPSR Action Plan (based on key findings of the roundtable).

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Rainbow Families on the Move

As indicated in the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, in 2022, the European Commission will make a new legislative proposal on mutual recognition of parenthood. Equinet Cluster on Rainbow Families on the Move gathers equality bodies to build their capacities and collectively reflect on the issue rainbow families face when it comes to freedom of movement, ahead of this important EU development.

The Cluster will hold two online meetings and publish one discussion paper collecting the experience of equality bodies on the rights of rainbow families and relevant good practices, focusing, in particular, on the principle of freedom of movement.

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Project: Standards for Equality Bodies

The European Commission adopted a Recommendation on standards for equality bodies in June 2018, in order to ensure the independence and effectiveness of national equality bodies. The Recommendation, a legal act of the Commission, sets minimum standards concerning the mandate of equality bodies; their independence; their effectiveness, including sufficient resources and appropriate powers; and the national institutional architecture for equality.

Equinet is using the practical experience and expertise of equality bodies to develop indicators in order to measure compliance with standards for equality bodies. These indicators can contribute to measuring adherence to the standards. They are designed to help European Institutions, Member States and equality bodies themselves to monitor the situation and to identify any necessary improvements to the status and work of equality bodies.

More about Standards for Equality Bodies [here](#).

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