

High-Level Roundtable & Networking Event

Celebrating Standards for Equality Bodies



Together
for equality
Stronger
for all

15 October 2024, starting time 15:30 CEST
albert, Mont des Arts 28, 1000 Brussels



Concept Note

In 2022-24, Equinet and its members played a key role in advancing negotiations around the proposed legislation on Standards for Equality Bodies. To celebrate the historic adoption of the Standards Directives in May 2024, Equinet has organised a high-level roundtable and networking event bringing together all the main actors involved in the negotiating process and all those that we wish to bring along with us on the way to achieving a successful and ambitious transposition at the national level.

This celebratory event aims to attract a vast audience of high-level representatives from relevant national ministries, European institutions and civil society with the goal of raising awareness on the importance of the Standards Directives and inspiring participants to contribute to common efforts towards their effective transposition.

The roundtable will be followed by a networking reception and gourmet, vegetarian walking dinner at the Restaurant Albert to continue the conversations and celebrations well into the evening. We hope you will be able to stay with us until late!

This initiative is organised with the support of the German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA) and Unia - Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism in Belgium.

Venue

The event will take place at the **albert**, located at Mont des Arts 28, 1000, Brussels. **There are two entrances to the venue:**

Before 17:00

Until 17:00 on the day of the event, you can enter through **the Royal Library of Belgium primary entrance**, in Mont des Arts square. Once inside the library, follow the directions to the elevators and go up to the 5th floor. There, you will find our team to welcome you!



After 17:00

From 17:00 onwards, you can enter through the **Palais de Charles de Lorraine entrance**, located in Rue du Musée 1, 1000, Brussels. Inside, you can take the stairs or the elevators to the top floor and follow the directions to the **albert terrace and restaurant**.



Agenda

15:30 Arrival and welcome

16:00 – 16:05 Welcoming remarks by **Patrick Charlier**, Equinet Executive Board Chair and Co-Director of Unia

16:05 – 16:10 Video celebratory message by **Commissioner Helena Dalli**, DG JUST

16:10 – 16:20 Keynote by **Ana Gallego Torres**, European Commission Director General for Justice and Consumers, DG JUST

16:20 – 17:10 Roundtable 1 "Looking back: reflecting on our achievements"

This panel conversation aims to take stock of the past years' legislative journey leading to the adoption of the Standards Directives with a view to identify the challenges experienced and draw lessons learned on effective negotiation and advocacy to strengthen equality bodies in Europe.

With a video message from **Paulina Brandberg**, Minister for Gender Equality and Working Life of Sweden.

Moderator: **Sandra Konstatzky**, Director of the Ombud for Equal Treatment at the Federal Chancellery of Austria

Panelists:

- **Marc Angel**, MEP Co-Rapporteur on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on standards for equality bodies
- **Pablo López Pietsch**, Technical Secretary General of the Ministry of Equality of Spain
- **Bertil Cottier**, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance Chair, Council of Europe
- **Isabelle Chopin**, Director Migration Policy Group

17:10 – 18:00 Roundtable 2 "Looking ahead: strong Equality Bodies for more equal societies"



This panel aims to collectively reflect on the priorities for the next two years of transposition of the Standards Directives to envision how stronger equality bodies can play a key role in leading to more equal societies.

With a video message from MEP **Alice Bah Kuhnke**, rapporteur for the opinion of the LIBE Committee on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on standards for Equality Bodies.

Moderator: **Tena Šimonović Einwalter**, Ombudswoman of Croatia

Panelists:

- **Katarzyna Kotula**, Minister for Equality of Poland
- **Mario Nava**, European Commission Director General DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
- **Krzysztof Śmiszek**, MEP Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
- **Catherine Naughton**, Executive Director European Disability Forum

18:00 – 18:05 Closing by **Ferda Ataman**, German Independent Federal Commissioner for Anti-Discrimination and head of the German Federal Antidiscrimination Agency (FADA)

18:05 – 18:10 Concluding remarks by **Patrick Charlier**, Equinet Executive Board Chair and Co-Director of Unia

18:10 – 18:15 Networking reception inaugural message by Equinet Co-Directors **Anne Gaspard** and **Tamás Kádár**

18:15 – Late Networking dinner and celebrations, with catering from the albert.

Refreshments, dinner & musical entertainment

Following the roundtable, we will be offering refreshments and a gourmet, vegetarian walking dinner, catered by the albert restaurant.



Our speakers

Marc Angel

MEP Co-Rapporteur on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on standards for equality bodies



Marc Angel is a Luxembourgish politician of the Luxembourg Socialist Workers' Party who has been serving as a Member of the European Parliament since 2019. Angel earned a degree (Mag. Phil.) as a translator for German, French and English. He started his political career in the Luxembourg City Council as its Member between 1994 and 2020. He became Member of the Luxembourgish Parliament in 2004 and notably chaired the Committee for Foreign and European Affairs, International Development, Immigration and Asylum from 2013 to 2019.

Angel became Member of the European Parliament in December 2019. Beside acting as Head of the Luxembourgish Delegation in the S&D group, he is currently serving on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and is a substitute member of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and the Committee on Constitutional Affairs. In addition, he is part of the parliament's delegation to the EU-Chile Joint Parliamentary Committee, to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and for relations with the countries of the Andean Community. He also co-chairs the European Parliament Intergroup on LGBTI rights.

Ferda Ataman

German Independent Federal Commissioner for Anti-Discrimination and head of the German Federal Antidiscrimination Agency (FADA)



Ferda Ataman has been the Independent Federal Commissioner for Anti-Discrimination and Head of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency since July 2022. A political scientist by training, she has previously held positions at the Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration in North Rhine-Westphalia and as Head of Unit at the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency. She also worked as a book author, journalist and columnist for publications including Der Spiegel, Tagesspiegel and Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg and set up Mediendienst Integration, a research-based information platform for journalists. Most recently, she founded a consultancy firm for diversity. Ataman has been involved in various associations that stand up for more diversity in the media and equal participation in society and was a member of the advisory board of the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency.

Alice Bah Kuhnke

MEP rapporteur for the opinion of the LIBE Committee on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and the Council on standards for Equality Bodies



Alice Bah Kuhnke is currently a member of the European Parliament for the Swedish Green Party (Miljöpartiet de Gröna), and serves as a member of the Committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) as well as a member of the Committee for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO).

Paulina Brandberg

Minister for Gender Equality and Working Life of Sweden



Paulina Brandberg serves as Sweden’s minister for gender equality and working life. Paulina has a background in the legal profession with over a decade’s experience working as a public prosecutor. Prior to becoming a government minister, she was the Liberals’ legal policy spokesperson. Since becoming politically active in 2020, Paulina has worked to enforce stricter legislation to tackle organized crime and honour-based oppression.

Patrick Charlier

Equinet Executive Board Chair and Co-Director of Unia



Patrick Charlier is a lawyer by training (UCL). He worked for the Human Rights League, first as legal counsel (1992 to 1996), then as director (1996 to 2001). Since joining UNIA in 2001, he has held various positions within the racism department of the Migration Observatory before becoming coordinator of the Discrimination department and finally director.

Patrick is the Chair of Equinet (European Network of Equality Bodies) since October 2023 and is a substitute member of the Central Prison Supervisory Board.

Isabelle Chopin

Director of Migration Policy Group



MPG's Director since 2016, Isabelle is responsible of the organisation's overall strategy and execution. Isabelle joined MPG at its inception in 1995 and has been working in the organisation throughout the last few decades at both European/international and national/local level as well as at governmental and non-governmental level. She was the Director of the Starting Line Group campaign that led to the adoption in 2000 of the two European anti-discrimination directives (Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin and Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation). She has led many trainings and projects in the fields of non-discrimination, citizenship, hate speech, data collection, integration, political participation. She coordinates the anti-discrimination strand of the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination.

Isabelle's major interests are the practical implementation of legislation on the national level, anti-discrimination and related issues, and processes to enhance NGOs' capacity to act.

Isabelle is a French lawyer specialised in anti-discrimination law and is also the Specialist Coordinator in non-discrimination law of the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination. She graduated from Paris V and the Vrije Universiteit Brussels.

Bertil Cottier

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance Chair, Council of Europe



Bertil Cottier is the Chair of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). He is the member of ECRI in respect of Switzerland since January 2019. In Switzerland, he is Professor emeritus at the University of Lausanne (Law Faculty) and the Università della Svizzera italiana (Faculty of Communication Sciences) in Lugano.

Helena Dalli

European Commissioner for Equality



Helena Dalli became the first commissioner for equality on December 1, 2019. In her role, Dalli is responsible for strengthening Europe's commitment to inclusion and equality in all of its senses, irrespective of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as well as tackling discrimination on multiple grounds. Previously, she held several political positions in Malta including minister for European affairs and equality from 2017 to 2019, and minister for social dialogue, consumer affairs and civil liberties from 2013 to 2017. She was also the opposition shadow minister for public administration, equality, public broadcasting and national investments from 1998 to

2013 and parliamentary secretary for women's rights in the prime minister's office from 1996 to 1998. She was a member of Parliament from 2017 to 2019. Commissioner 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.

Ana Gallego Torres

European Commission Director General Justice and Consumers



Ana Gallego is the Director-General for Justice and Consumers at the European Commission since November 2021. Before joining the European Commission, she was Director-General of International Legal Cooperation and Human Rights in the Ministry of Justice in Spain. She has a degree in law from the University of Granada, Spain and studies in Translation and Interpretation from the same university.

Anne Gaspard

Equinet Co-Director for Network Strategic Engagement



Anne Gaspard is Equinet Co-Director for Network Strategic Engagement since February 2022, after leading Equinet as its Executive Director since 2008 with the first establishment of the Equinet Secretariat. Anne grew up in France (Paris and Normandy) and later moved and completed her school curriculum at the French Lycée in London. Anne has been active and involved in the field of equality and non-discrimination at a European level since the very start of her professional career, following her Bachelors graduation in European studies and political science from University College London (UK) and Berlin Humboldt University (Germany).

Starting work in Brussels with the Campaign of the European Year against Racism in 1997 for the European Parliament and a subsequent stage experience within the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) at the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg, Anne then joined and managed the UK London-based secretariat supporting the first Chair of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), predecessor institution to the now Fundamental Rights Agency based in Vienna, from 1998 to 2000. Anne was then responsible for the implementation of various pan-European equality and anti-discrimination projects for a European diversity management consultancy heading and leading its European office in Brussels for seven years (2000-2007).

Sandra Konstatzky

Director of the Ombud for Equal Treatment at the Federal Chancellery of Austria



Sandra Konstatzky started in 2003 in various functions in the Ombud for Equal Treatment, the national equality body in Austria (legal advisor, department manager for the topic gender equality, deputy director). Since 2018 she holds the position of the director. Since 2023 and from 2015-2021 she was and is currently board member of EQUINET, the European Network of Equality Bodies. Board member of the Austrian Women Lawyers' Association ("Die Jurist*innen"). She is a master in networking in equality issues at national and international level. In 2023 she won the Justitia Award "game changer".

Tamás Kádár

Equinet Co-Director for Operations, Policy & Legal



Tamás has been working at Equinet since 2010. Previously, he worked at the Hungarian Equal Treatment Authority as a legal officer, investigating discrimination cases on all grounds and drafting decisions of the Authority. He graduated from the Faculty of Law of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, and he also holds a Master of Economic Science degree from University College Dublin in Ireland. Tamás has published articles on equality and non-discrimination, spoken at numerous international conferences and acted as a trainer and expert in various EU, Council of Europe, OSCE and USAID-funded projects.

Katarzyna Kotula

Minister for Equality of Poland



Katarzyna Kotula is the Polish Minister for Equality, as well as a philologist, English teacher, social activist, entrepreneur. She graduated from the University of Adam Mickiewicz.

Member of Parliament in the 9th term, active in the area of women's rights and social policy. Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Group for Reproductive Rights and member of the Committee for Social Policy and Family and the standing subcommittee for Family in the 9th term of office of the Sejm. Particularly involved wherever the rights of women, older people and excluded people, including people with disabilities,

were violated. She was a co-founder of the Social Committee "We are", aimed at introducing and applying the UN Convention on Persons with Disabilities in Poland.

She organized and participated in various protests and events related to the defense of human rights. She was one of the leaders of the National Women's Strike and was also involved in defending victims of pedophilia in the Church.

From the beginning, she was strongly involved in changing the anti-abortion law and women's rights, including reproductive rights. She was a member of the legislative initiative committee "Legal abortion. No compromise".

Pablo López Pietsch

Technical Secretary General of the Ministry of Equality of Spain



Pablo López Pietsch, Technical Secretary General at the Ministry of Equality, Spain, has the responsibility of overall coordination of legislation proposals and legal affairs within this Ministry and of international relations. In this capacity, he lead the negotiations on the equality bodies directives on behalf of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU (second semester 2023) at technical level. Previous positions include his work as Seconded National Expert at the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA); as assistant Deputy Director General of Equal Treatment and Non-discrimination for the Institute of Women and Equal Opportunities, Spain; and as Social Counsellor at the Spanish Permanent Representation to the EU.

Catherine Naughton

Executive Director European Disability Forum



Director of the European Disability Forum (EDF), a unique platform which brings together representative organisation of persons with disabilities from across Europe. She was the Vice President of the Social Platform from 2017 until 2023. Social Platform is the largest network of European rights- and value-based civil society organisations working in the social sector. Catherine has an academic background in public health, and 25 years of experience in the field of disability- with a particular focus on inclusive development: the rights of persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries. She has worked in many countries, and at the EU and International level in promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream development and humanitarian programmes.

Mario Nava

European Commission Director General Employment, Inclusion and Social Affairs



Mario Nava is the Director-General of DG EMPL of the EU Commission. Previously, he was the Director-General of DG REFORM and has held Director and Head of Unit posts in the DG for Financial Services. He was also President of Italian Financial Market Authority. He teaches at Bocconi University and at Solvay Business School. In 2023, he was awarded the title of Bocconi Alumnus of the year.

Tena Šimonović Einwalter

Ombudswoman of Croatia



Tena Šimonović Einwalter graduated from the University of Zagreb Faculty of Law, awarded the Diploma of the International Institute for Human Rights in Strasbourg, holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Zagreb Faculty of Political Science and a Master's degree in European and Comparative Law from the University of Oxford Faculty of Law.

After contributing to drafting of the Croatian Anti-Discrimination Act, Tena began working in the Office of the Ombudsman in 2008 to set up its equality body mandate. She was elected by the Croatian Parliament as a Deputy Ombudswoman in 2013 and elected as the Ombudswoman in 2021. She has been the Chair of Equinet (2017-2019 and 2019-2021) and a former Member of the Executive Board. She is also the expert on behalf of Croatia in the Council of Europe's European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and co-representative of ECRI in the Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI).”

Krzysztof Śmiszek

MEP Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats



Krzysztof Jan Śmiszek (born 25 August 1979) is a Polish lawyer, politician, human rights activist, and university lecturer. He has served as the member of the Polish parliament since 2019 and was appointed Deputy Minister of Justice in 2023.

He graduated in law from the University of Warsaw in 2003 and earned his PhD in European anti-discrimination law in 2016. Śmiszek has worked in various roles focused on anti-discrimination and human rights, including positions with the Polish government and Equinet, where he worked as a policy officer. Since 2011 he provides lectures on the European anti-discrimination law in Academy of European Law in Trier. He was also a scholarship holder of the University of Michigan.

In 2019, he joined the political party *Wiosna* (Spring) and was elected to the Polish parliament, where he became Vice-Chairman of the Left parliamentary club and Chairman of the LGBT+ Parliamentary Group. In 2024 he was elected as a Member of the European Parliament, where he works in the LIBE and JURI committees.

Further reading and useful resources

- [Directive \(EU\) 2024/1500](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on standards for Equality Bodies in the field of equal treatment and equal opportunities between women and men in matters of employment and occupation
- [Council Directive \(EU\) 2024/1499](#) on standards for Equality Bodies in the field of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, equal treatment in the field of employment and occupation between persons irrespective of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, equal treatment between women and men in matters of social security and in the access to and supply of goods and services
- Equal Rights Trust for Equinet (2024) Understanding the New EU Directives on Standards for Equality Bodies – [Key Principles derived from the Legal Digest on Standards for Equality Bodies](#)
- European Commission (2018). [Recommendation \(EU\) 2018/951 of 22 June 2018 on standards for equality bodies](#)
- ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 2 (2017): [Equality Bodies to Combat Racism and Intolerance at National Level](#)
- European Commission (2022). [Factsheet: Standards for Equality Bodies](#)
- Equinet (2023) [Litigation powers for Equality Bodies](#)
- Equinet (2022) [Equality Bodies working on cases without an identifiable victim: Actio popularis](#)
- Equinet (2023) [Measuring Standards for Equality Bodies: Indicators for Self-Assessment](#)
- Equinet (2023) [Informing the policy agenda: Equality Bodies making recommendations](#)
- Crowley, N (2024) [Standards for Equality Bodies – Nearly Done](#), Social Europe
- Crowley, N for Equinet (2016) [Developing Standards for Equality Bodies](#)
- Dalli, H. (2022). [Strong equality bodies for effective equality enforcement](#), Op-Ed for Euractiv
- Kádár, T. for Equinet (2022), [Towards a new gold standard for Equality Bodies - and equal societies?](#)
- Kádár, T. (2018). [Equality bodies – A European phenomenon](#), International Journal of Discrimination and the Law, Volume 18, Issue 2-3, SAGE Publications, 144–162

- Elizondo-Urrestarazu, J. (2024). [Igualdad en práctica: Organismos de igualdad en E17uropa y consideraciones para su implementación en Brasil](#). REI – Revista Estudos Institucionais, 10(3), 737–760.
- Elizondo-Urrestarazu, J. (2023). [Equality bodies: New standards, new challenges](#). IgualdadES, 9, 245-278.
- European Parliament Study: [Strengthening the Role and Independence of Equality Bodies](#)

Let's meet on social media!

The High-Level Roundtable and Networking event is an opportunity to (re)connect with equality experts, stakeholders, and allies. We encourage you to share your participation in this event on your or your organisation's social media channels or other communication channels. In doing so, we ask you to please tag Equinet's [LinkedIn account](#) and [Twitter account](#), as well as to use the hashtag #TogetherForEquality.

Co-organising institutions

This initiative is organised with the support of Unia, the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism in Belgium, and the German Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (FADA), within the framework of a project funded by FADA to support National Equality Bodies in ensuring a successful transposition of the Standards Directives funded.

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/>