
High-Level Conference

Game Changer: Sport's role in fighting discrimination

7-8 November 2024
Palazzo Merulana, Rome, Italy



Concept note

Sport serves as a cornerstone of social interaction, possessing the unique ability to unite individuals from diverse backgrounds, irrespective of race, gender, or sexual orientation. It is not merely a pastime but a powerful vehicle for promoting the values of diversity, fostering inclusivity, and challenging discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice. However, the harsh reality reveals a troubling narrative of recurring racist incidents within European sporting arenas, alongside pervasive discrimination against women, racial minorities, and the LGBTQI+ community.

The persistence of these barriers, exacerbated by prejudice and harmful stereotypes, demands urgent action from EU institutions and Member States to dismantle systemic inequalities within the sports sector. The legal and policy framework at the European level provides a foundation for combatting discrimination, with the EU adopting [equality strategies](#) aimed at addressing disparities across all areas of life, including sports. Measures such as [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/817](#) and European Parliament [resolutions](#) underscore the imperative of collaboration among stakeholders to confront racism and discrimination head-on.

Equinet's exploration into the role of Equality Bodies in combatting discrimination within sports remains limited. However, several Equality Bodies have accumulated valuable experience in addressing these issues and stand ready to share best practices. This is the case of the Italian Equality Body, the National Office Against Racial Discrimination (UNAR), whose joint initiative with national sports federations and organizations [National Observatory Against Discrimination in Sport](#) is committed to promote equality and inclusion in and via sport throughout the country.

Equinet and UNAR seek to facilitate the dissemination of these insights, fostering a collective effort to drive meaningful change. Moreover, it is crucial to engage with relevant stakeholders to strategize on how Equality Bodies can collaborate effectively to promote equality and eradicate discrimination within sport. With this purpose, the conference will bring together Equality Bodies and relevant International and European institutions and organisations to share good practices and develop their cooperation on promoting equality and tackling discrimination in and through sport.



Agenda

Day 1 – 7 November (Conference)

Host: Danielle Madam

- 09:30 – 10:00** **Arrival and registration of participants (welcome coffee)**
- 10:00 – 10:30** **Opening**
Welcome participants, introduce agenda, UNAR and Equinet
- **Eugenia Roccella**, Minister for Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities, Italy
 - **Helena Dalli**, EU Commissioner for Equality
- 10:30 – 10:50** **Keynote speech**
This session aims to provide an introduction to the topic. Highlighting the importance of sports, links with inclusion and non-discrimination, mentioning current challenges, areas of actions and needs.
- **Danielle Madam**
- 10:50 – 11:20** **Coffee & Stretch Break**
- 11:20 – 12:10** **Panel: Sport’s role in fighting discrimination**
This panel will discuss different challenges and aspects/angles of equality and discrimination in sport.
Chair: **Daris Lewis Recio**, Equinet
- **Knut Oftung**, Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, Norway
 - **Rosi Mangiacavallo**, European Roma Rights Centre
 - **Dan Christian Ghattas**, Organisation Intersex International Europe
 - **Martino Corazza**, International Mixed Ability Sports
- 12:10 – 12:25** **Q&A**
- 12:25 – 13:35** **Lunch Break**
- 13:35 – 14:00** **Teaming Up for Inclusive Sports: Equality Bodies in Action**
This session aims to provide a good practice example promoting equality and non-discrimination through sport featuring both UNAR (and Lega serie A) and the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia.
- **Mattia Peradotto**, UNAR
 - **Lorenzo Casini**, President Lega Serie A

- **Brankica Janković**, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia

14:00 – 14:20

Q&A

14:20 – 14:30

#TheyLedTheWay

The aim of this session is to have a dynamic conversation between the host and the athlete.

- **Pamela Malvina Noutcho Sawa**, Athlete

14:30 – 14:45

Promoting Diversity in the Olimpycs

This session aims to provide a good practice example promoting equality and non-discrimination through sport in the Olimpycs.

- **Charlotte Groppo**, Head of Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion of the International Olympic Committee

14:45 – 14:55

Q&A

14:55 – 15:15

Coffee & Stretch Break

15:15 – 15:30

Combating Hate Speech in Sport

This session aims to provide a good practice example promoting equality and non-discrimination through sport from the Council of Europe.

- **Gabriela Matei**, Council of Europe – Sport is Respect

15:30 – 15:40

Q&A

15:40 – 15:55

Fostering Positive Social Change through Football for All

This session aims to provide a good practice example promoting equality and non-discrimination through sport from UEFA.

- **Presilia Mpanu-Mpanu**, Social & Environmental Sustainability Expert UEFA

15:55 – 16:05

Q&A

16:05 – 16:15

Closing

- **Patrick Charlier**, Chair of Equinet

16:30 – 17:15

Visit to Palazzo Merulana

17:30 – 18:15

Cocktail reception

- Host welcome: **Agnese Canevari**, UNAR
- Athlete/Sport speaker: **Rigivan Ganeshamoorthy**

Day 2 – 8 November (Workshops) Only open to Workshop’ speakers and Equinet’s members

Hosts: Daris Lewis Recio and Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu, Equinet

09:15 – 09:30

Warm up: arrival and registration of participants

09:30 – 09:35

Welcome and introduction

Welcome participants, share agenda and rules

09:35 – 10:00

Replay: Reflections from the Conference

During this session speakers from UNAR and Equinet will share their reflections from the Conference the previous day. Participants will be requested to share their impressions as well, both in an interactive manner as well as through Slido.

- **Mattia Peradotto**, UNAR
- **Tamás Kádár**, Equinet

10:00 – 11:30

Scoring Goals in Equality: Practice sharing

Participants will be divided into groups. Speakers (Equality Body and/or a partner) will rotate from one group to the other. In each group, speakers will present their initiative and open the floor to questions from participants and rotate every 20 minutes to the next table.

1. Group 1 (Equality promotion and litigation): **Jutilla Matti**, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (Finland); **Samuel Bashmakov**, Finnish League for Human Rights (Finland)
2. Group (Accessibility): **Neil Martin**, Equality and Human Rights Commission; **Owain Davies**, Level Playing Field (UK)
3. Group 3 (Litigation): **Miha Lobnik**, Advocate of the Principle of Equality (Slovenia)
4. Group 4 (Racism): **Daniela Conti**, UISP (Italy)

11:30 – 12:00

Coffee & Stretch Break

12:00 – 13:00

Mauling: Open discussion on takeaways

The hosts will moderate an open discussion to dwell into the main takeaways and thoughts/ open discussion regarding the two Conference and Workshop days.

13:00 – 13:15

Final whistle & Farewell

- **Mattia Peradotto**, UNAR
- **Teresa Pedreira**, Equinet



Our speakers

Samuel Bashmakov

Human Rights Adviser, Finnish League for Human Rights, Finland



Samuel Bashmakov (M.Sc. Admin. in Public Law) works as a Human Rights Adviser for the Finnish League for Human Rights focusing on human rights in sports and the "Don't Break the Game" campaign. Our aim is to raise awareness and increase knowledge of the sports actors on human rights and their duties. We work closely with different sports organizations, government officials, sports clubs and athletes to achieve this mission.

Agnese Nadia Canevari

Manager, Head of the Studies, Reserches and Institutional relations Unit, UNAR, Italy



Manager, Head of the Studies, Reserches and Institutional relations Unit of the National Office against Racial Discrimination (UNAR) – Department for equal opportunities – Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Espert in human rigths, equality and antidiscrimination. Responsible of projects related to the promotion of equal treatment and the fight against discrimination in various grounds. Member of working groups at the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

Graduated in Political Science, master in European institutions and constitutional history.



Lorenzo Casini

President, Lega Serie A, Italy



Lorenzo Casini (born 1976 in Rome) has been President of the Lega Nazionale Professionisti Serie A since March 2022. A newly appointed Dean of the Scuola IMT Alti Studi of Lucca, Italy, where he has been full professor of administrative law since 2015, he is also President of the IRPA- Istituto di Ricerche sulla Pubblica Amministrazione (Institute for Research on Public Administration) and co-President of the Italian Chapter of the International Society of Public Law. He is also a professor of administrative law and organization and functioning of Public Administration at the SNA - Scuola Nazionale dell'Amministrazione (National School of Administration) of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, where he is also head of the Organization and Functioning of Public Administration area. His latest books include *Advanced Introduction to Cultural Heritage Law* (Elgar, 2024) and *Lo Stato (im)mortale. I pubblici poteri tra globalizzazione ed era digitale* (Mondadori, 2022).

Patrick Charlier

Co-Director, UNIA, Belgium & Executive Board Chiar, Equinet



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.



Daniela Conti

Head of Interculturality and Cooperation, UISP, Italy



Daniela Conti has worked at the Italian Union for Sport for All UISP APS since 1996 in different sectors: planning, social policies, international relations, training, author of articles for the UISP magazine and co-author of methodological guides.

Currently, she is UISP Head of Interculturality and Cooperation Policies and responsible for several European and national projects on the issues of the fight against racism and discrimination.

She is currently National Adviser and Head of Interculturality and Cooperation Policies.

From 2020 to 2022 she was evaluator of Erasmus+ Sport Programme projects for the European Union: from 1993 to 2000 she worked at the Faculty of Sociology as a researcher, assistant professor, author of articles for scientific journals and books.

She is expert in sport as a tool for social inclusion (sport for migrants/refugees, sport in prison), promoter of campaigns to combat all forms of discrimination through sport, organiser of national and international events and conferences, project manager, trainer on the social aspects of sport for all.

She speaks Italian, English, French, Spanish.

Martino Corazza

Co-founder and Director, International Mixed Ability Sports



Martino is the Co-founder and Director of International Mixed Ability Sports (IMAS) a non-profit organisation that advocates for a radical change in the way we think of, join in, and enjoy sport, leading to a fairer and more equitable society. He holds a degree in History from the University of Turin, and a MA in Disability Studies from the University of Leeds. Professionally, his background is rooted in education, sport, and social activism, having worked as a specialist tutor since 2008. In 2012 he was the

recipient of a Grundtvig Assistantship which enabled him to spend a year in England teaching



adults with learning disabilities. Here, his passion for non-formal education, social justice, and international cooperation, combined with a 20-year-long career in playing and coaching rugby, led to creation of IMAS and the Mixed Ability movement. From a small project in Bradford (UK), the Mixed Ability movement has now grown beyond rugby and disability to include more than 20 disciplines in 25 countries and thousands of participants who face a range of barriers to participation. Over the years, Martino has worked with an extensive range of stakeholders to implement inclusive policies and programmes, from community clubs to National and international Governing Bodies. The most recent example is the Mixed Ability Week 2022 in Cork – Ireland – which saw the participation of over 1100 athletes of all abilities from 15 different countries. The event was endorsed by UNESCO and co-funded by the European Commission.

Helena Dalli

EU 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.

Owain Davies

Chief Executive, Level Playing Field, United Kingdom



Owain Davies, Chief Executive of Level Playing Field, has been with the charity since 2017, driven by a deep-rooted passion for inclusion shaped by personal and family experiences. Under his leadership, the organization has made significant strides in improving accessibility in sports venues. Prior to joining Level Playing Field, Owain successfully led the award-winning Disability and Inclusion Program at the Saracens Sports Foundation and has a strong background in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) sector. A lifelong sports enthusiast, Owain understands the transformative power of live sporting events in promoting physical and mental well-being, fostering community spirit, and ensuring that disabled sports fans have equal opportunities to enjoy these experiences.

Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu

Senior Legal and Policy Officer, Equinet



Jone Elizondo-Urrestarazu works as a Legal and Policy Officer at Equinet where she focuses on legal files as coordinator of the Equality Law in Practice Working group. Likewise, Jone works on other issues and is part of different Equinet expert groups, such as the Standards for Equality Bodies project or both the Disability and Mainstreaming clusters. Jone holds a PhD in Law by 3 Spanish Universities (Universidad de Deusto, Universidad Ramon Lull and Universidad Pontificia de Comillas) thanks to her thesis focusing on multiple and intersectional discrimination and EU law. Her working experience is varied, covering academia and national CSOs, as well as pan European organisations including the EU Fundamental Rights Agency or the Migration Policy Group where she has coordinated and authored several publications on equality and non-discrimination & spoken at numerous webinars and conferences.



Rigivan Ganeshamoorthy

Athlete, Italy



Native of Sri Lanka, my disability began in 2017 with Guillain-Barré syndrome which was followed in 2019 by an accident that caused me a cervical injury.

My adventure in the world of Paralympic sport began in 2017 in a completely casual way, when I was approached by an exponent of the FISPEs world in the workshop where I worked who invited me to try different disciplines. I immediately became passionate about throwing and thus became closer to the Anthropos group family, of which I am still part of today. After stepping away from Para athletics for a short period, in 2023 I returned to competing and in Paris 2024 I made my debut at the Paralympics, winning gold in the discus throwing, setting three world records in succession.

Dan Christian Ghattas

Executive Director, Organisation Intersex International Europe



Dan Christian Ghattas, PhD, is the Executive Director of Organisation Intersex International Europe (OII Europe). He started advocating for intersex human rights in 2009 and has since provided expertise to governments, EU and CoE and the UN. He co-initiated the 1st International Intersex Forum and is a co-founder and former co-chair of OII Europe. In 2013 he co-authored the Malta Declaration. The same year he authored the first empirical (pre-)study on the life situations of intersex individuals worldwide, Human Rights Between the Sexes, in 2016, the ILGA-Europe/ OII Europe Intersex Toolkit Standing up for intersex human rights - How can you help? and, in 2019, the ILGA-Europe/ OII Europe legal toolkit Protecting intersex people in Europe. A toolkit for law and policy makers. In 2023 he co-authored the OII Europe IGM Ban indicators for effective protection of the rights of intersex people, in particular against IGM.

Charlotte Groppo

Head of Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion of the International Olympic Committee



Charlotte is a French-Italian expert on gender equality policies, with a long experience with National, local and International organisations. She joined the IOC as Head of the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit in September 2023. Previously, Charlotte worked on diverse projects, including implementing a EU funded project to promote gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in 7 EU Member States administrations – including Italy. Between 2020 and 2022 she has been advising the French minister for Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal opportunities as a gender expert. In 2019 Charlotte joined the Generation Equality Forum General secretariat as Civil Society Head. Charlotte has a degree in International relations, a double Master degree in International Economic policies and Management of International organization in Sciences Po Paris and Bocconi Business School as well as a master of research on Gender and Development from Paris Sorbonne, where she also started as a PhD fellow to study French local and national gender equality policies and intersectionality.

Brankica Janković

Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, Serbia



Brankica Janković, master lawyer, was elected Commissioner for the Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia for the first time in May 2015 and for the second time in November 2020 by the National Assembly. Prior to the election, she held the position of the State Secretary in the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy from 2012-2014 and was the Director of the Gerontology Center Belgrade from 2006-2012. She graduated at the Faculty of Law of the University of Belgrade, completed her master studies at the Faculty of Law of the University of Novi Sad and is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Security in Belgrade. She speaks English and Russian.



Her academic contributions extend to teaching master studies on Multicultural Social Work – Anti-Discrimination Policies and Practices at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, as well as at the Higher Security Studies of the School of National Defense of the Army of the Republic of Serbia, as a guest lecturer. Brankica is also a dedicated mentor in the Share Your Knowledge regional program and holds membership in various professional and peer associations related to social protection, as well as numerous humanitarian associations and foundations.

She has taken the initiative to establish and participate in several regional platforms fostering collaboration between women and human rights institutions. Throughout her professional journey, Brankica has actively contributed to the development of various national strategic and legal documents. Additionally, she has authored numerous professional papers and publications, showcasing her dedication to advancing knowledge and expertise in her field.

Recognised for her outstanding contributions, she has received numerous awards, including the OSCE "2017 Person of the Year," the "Petar Manojlović" award for contribution to the improvement of the position of the elderly, and the "Golden Wheel" award for her efforts in the protection of human rights of the members of the Roma national minority, awarded by the National Council of Roma in Serbia.

Tamás Kádár

Co-Director for Operations, Policy & Legal, Equinet



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.



Daris Lewis Recio

Legal & Policy Officer, Equinet



Daris Lewis is a Legal and Policy Officer at Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies. His work focuses on research and equality data, different forms of racism, and age discrimination. In 2024, he became a member of the Knowledge Committee of the European Citizens Panel on Tackling Hatred in Society.

He graduated in Law from the University of Sevilla and holds an LL.M. in Public International Law from Utrecht University in The Netherlands.

Daris has published articles on equality and non-discrimination, spoken at international events, and provided guest lectures in various universities in Europe. He has been involved in regional and local NGOs providing legal aid to asylum seekers as well as promoting and raising awareness on equality and non-discrimination.

Miha Lobnik

Head of institution, Advocate of the Principle of Equality, Slovenia



Miha Lobnik has been the head of the Slovenian independent equality body since 2016. He was the founder and program director of the Legebitra Information Centre. He is also a Board member of the European Network of Equality Bodies.



Danielle Madam

Multi-time Italian Champion, Graduate in Communication, Innovation, and Multimedia Studies, Italy



Danielle Frederique Madam, born in 1997 in Douala, Cameroon, came to Italy at the age of 7. Her early life was marked by the loss of her father during a family feud and separation from her mother, who decided to entrust her care to an uncle living in Italy.

After her uncle passed away, Danielle faced difficult times but found redemption through sports. At age 13, thanks to a physical education teacher, she was introduced to athletics, quickly excelling in shot put and soon reaching the qualifying standard for

the World Youth Championships.

Her dream of wearing the Italian national team jersey was hindered by bureaucratic complications. Though Cameroon extended an invitation, Danielle declined, as Italy was the country that had welcomed, protected, and ultimately shaped her sense of belonging.

In 2021, at the age of 24, Danielle finally became an Italian citizen after a long bureaucratic struggle.

Over the years, Danielle has earned several athletic accolades, including:

- 5 Italian championship titles (3 federation and 2 university)
- 5 youth silver medals at the Italian championships
- 2 youth bronze medals
- 1 absolute bronze
- 14 Lombardy absolute regional championship titles

In 2022, she graduated with a degree in communication sciences and is currently pursuing a master's degree in business administration, specializing in strategic and management consulting. Alongside her studies, she works in communication and media, actively promoting women's sports and inspiring young women to push beyond their limits. She was recognized among 107 exceptional women in the exhibit Extraordinary Women, Leaders of Today and was recently awarded the Leader of Change Culture prize at the 2024 Black Carpet Awards, underscoring her belief in sports as a powerful tool for integration.



Rosi Mangiacavallo

Country Facilitator and Researcher, European Roma Rights Centre, Italy



Rosi Mangiacavallo holds an MA in intercultural and social citizenship and a BA in politics and international relations. She has worked for over 15 years with Romani communities in Italy and Roma rights NGOs based in Italy and elsewhere in Europe. Since 2011 she has been working as Country Facilitator and Researcher for the ERRC, based in Milan, Italy.

Neil Martin

Equality and Human Rights Commission, United Kingdom



Neil has had an extensive career in equalities and human rights having worked for the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Britain since it was set up in 2007. Prior to that he worked for the Commission for Racial Equality and the Department for Work and Pensions. Neil is an EHRC inquiries expert, having developed and implemented a number of the Commission's high-profile projects including State of Play: Progress on Premier League Clubs' Accessibility, Experiences from health and social care: the treatment of lower-paid ethnic minority workers, Tackling racial harassment: universities challenged, Housing and disabled people: Britain's hidden crisis, Preventing Deaths in Detention of Adults with Mental Health Conditions. He has also worked with the England and Wales Cricket Board and Yorkshire County Cricket Club to ensure that steps are taken to eliminate discrimination in cricket.



Gabriela Matei

Council of Europe – Sport is Respect



Gabriela Matei graduated Aircraft Engineering in the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Romania and the International Diplomacy and Business programme of the Georgetown University in Washington DC. She has been working at the Council of Europe since 2007, pursuing public policy and fiscal decentralisation reforms in South-East Europe, developing civil society engagement in Eastern Partnership countries, as well as enhancing the respect of human rights through work with

Parliaments, ministries of sport, interior affairs and education, prosecutors and the European Court of Human Rights, sports federations and international sport organisations. Her work to apply Council of Europe’s standards in the member states were at the core of technical cooperation programmes led by the Council of Europe with governments, NGOs, in cooperation with the European Union, the Open Society Foundations, OECD, UNDP and various European organisations.

From 2022 to June 2024, she led the EU Council of Europe funded project “Combating hate speech in sport”, and from July 2024 on the joint project [Balance S4](#), using her expertise and interest in sport, inclusion, safeguarding diversity to demonstrate that respect can be multiplied in our society through sport. Her objective is to make a difference, a sustainable societal change through the campaign [#Sport IS Respect](#) and the [Saint Denis Convention](#).

Jutila Matti

Senior Specialist, Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman’s Office, Finland



Matti Jutila works as a senior specialist at the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman’s office. His main fields of responsibility are equality in education, youth work, non-governmental organizations and sports. Before his current position Jutila worked at the Finnish League for Human Rights and in the academia. Jutila got his doctorate from the University of Helsinki in 2011 with a thesis on transnational governance of rights of national minorities.



Presilia Mpanu-Mpanu

Social & Environmental Sustainability Expert, UEFA



Presilia is a British-Congolese citizen specialised in international human rights and public international law.

She currently holds the position of Social & Environmental Sustainability Expert at UEFA. She supports the development of the 7 human rights policies (anti-racism, child and youth protection, equality and inclusion, football for all abilities, health and wellbeing, refugee support and solidarity and rights) of

UEFA's Strength Through Unity strategy through the implementation of projects tailored and targeted to reach UEFA's short, medium and long term objectives.

Previous to this, Presilia was a member of cabinet for European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, who 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. Previous to this, Presilia worked in the European Parliament on issues relating to human rights, Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs.

Presilia holds a Master's degree in Human Rights Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

Pamela Malvina Noutcho Sawa

Athlete, Italy



Born in Cameroon, Pamela Malvina Noutcho Sawa is 32 years old and has lived in Italy since she was eight. However, it was only in 2022, after a lengthy bureaucratic process, that she obtained citizenship, swearing in front of the mayor of Bologna, Matteo Lepore. She works as a nurse at the Ospedale Maggiore. In September 2023, she won the Italian championship. After reuniting with her father, who had left her country for study and work, she spent her childhood and adolescence in Perugia before

moving to Bologna, where she graduated in Nursing Sciences. During an internship at a shelter for the homeless, which included a small gym, she discovered her passion for boxing.



She trains at Bolognina Boxe, and her coach is Alessandro Dané. As an example of a healthy, correct, and motivating lifestyle, Pamela Malvina is an Ambassador for the Erasmus FPI project “Boxing for Change - #WithBoxingYouLearn!”, an international initiative aimed at schools and juvenile detention centers, created and promoted by the Italian Boxing Federation, in collaboration with partners such as Scholas Occurrentes – Foundation of Pope Francis and the Romanian Boxing Federation, along with Sport Senza Frontiere and the Spanish Boxing Federation.

Together with the other project Ambassadors, Pamela Malvina is committed to encouraging young people’s participation in sports and physical activity, as well as promoting integration, social inclusion, and equal opportunities through the rules and values of boxing.

Still undefeated in her professional career, with 7 wins out of 7 matches, Pamela currently ranks among the top in international rankings (1st in EBU; 7th in the IBF world ranking).

On April 5th of this year, she won the EBU Silver Lightweight Championship, defeating British fighter Jordan Baker Porter at Paladozza in Bologna.

On 25 October, at the Unipol Arena in Bologna, Pamela Malvina beat the Serbian Nina Pavlovic, winning the prestigious title of EBU Women’s European Lightweight Champion.

Knut Oftung

Director, Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, Norway



Knut Oftung works as director of The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud. Oftung has a PhD from the University of Oslo and is a specialist in gender equality with a particular focus on men and masculinities.



Teresa Pedreira

Communication & Membership Manager, Equinet



A former Equinet communication trainee, today Teresa is responsible for the development and implementation of the Equinet communication and member engagement strategies. She holds a joint Erasmus Masters in transnational migrations (Université de Lille), intercultural mediation (Uniwersytet Wrocławski), and social education (Universidad de Granada).

Mattia Peradotto

Director General, UNAR, Italy



Born in 1989, Mattia PERADOTTO is a graduate in Management Engineering and Business Management from Politecnico di Milano. He also participated in an exchange program at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

His diverse professional journey encompasses a range of roles at various levels of government and organizations. He began his career as the head of the secretariat for the President of the Judicial Commission for the staff of the Chamber of Deputies. He then moved on to serve as a key figure in the secretariat of the Senate Vice-President. Later, he assumed the position of Secretary General of a Foundation under the umbrella of the FEPS (Foundation for European Progressive Studies).

Following his work in the public sector, Peradotto transitioned into the Government, where he became the head of the secretariat for the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family. From August 2022, he took on the role of Director General at UNAR (National Office Against Racial Discrimination), which operates under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.



Eugenia Roccella

Minister for Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities, Italy















Eugenia Roccella was born in Bologna, is married, and has two children. She holds a degree in literature, is a professional journalist, and earned a Ph.D. in Historical Studies of Italian Literature.

She has worked as a columnist for *Avvenire* and the political culture journal *Ideazione* and has contributed to various publications, including *Il Giornale*, *Libero*, and *Il Foglio*. Roccella is both an author and editor of numerous books, most recently *Una famiglia radicale* (A Radical Family), published in 2023 by Rubbettino. Her most ambitious work, co-edited, is *Italiane: Dizionario Biografico delle Donne dall'Unità d'Italia* (Italian Women: A Biographical Dictionary from Italian Unification), a three-volume collection published in 2004 by the Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, featuring profiles of 247 women who shaped Italian history. Among her other works is *Dopo il femminismo* (After Feminism), published by *Ideazione Editrice* in 2001.

As a member of Parliament in the 2008 and 2013 terms, she served as Undersecretary of Welfare and Health. Re-elected in 2022, she currently serves as Minister for Family, Natality, and Equal Opportunities in the government led by Giorgia Meloni.

Further reading and useful resources

-  Equinet Report, 2022 [“Exploring Positive Action as a Means to Fight Structural Discrimination in Europe”](#)
-  European Commission, [a Union of Equality](#)
-  UNAR and Lega Serie A, [Keep Racism Out](#)
-  Finland:
 - Guidebook on Positive Action by the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, [Yhdenvertaisuuden Edistäminen Ja Positiivinen Erityiskohtelu, 2017](#) (only available in Finnish)
 - Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (Finland), [Monitoring Racism in Grassroots Sport](#)
 - Finnish League for Human Rights, [Don’t Break the Game](#)
-  Ireland:
 - Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission [Guides and tools for employers - Positive action in relation to disability.](#)
 - IHREC (2008), [Positive action for Traveller employment](#)
 - IHREC (2020), Submission to the Citizen’s Assembly on Gender Equality
-  European Roma Rights Centre, [Moving On: Access to Sport for Roma, Sinti & Travellers in Europe](#)
-  OII Europe, [LBTI Women in Sports: violence, discrimination and lived experiences](#)
-  Mixed Ability Sports, [10 years report](#)
-  International Olympic Committee, [Gender Equality in Sport](#)
-  Council of Europe, [Sport is Respect](#)
-  UEFA, [Social Sustainability](#)
-  Level Playing Field (UK), [Campaigns and research](#)

UNAR - Ufficio Nazionale Antidiscriminazioni Razziali, Italy

UNAR is the **National Office Against Racial Discrimination**, an Italian Equality Body operating since 2004 with the function of promoting equal treatment and the removal of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin. Operating since 2004, it is established at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Equal Opportunities Department. It operates in an autonomous and impartial manner and also deals with the different impact that discrimination can have on women and men, as well as the existence of forms of racism of a cultural and religious nature.

For more information, please see our website: <https://www.unar.it/portale/>

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/>