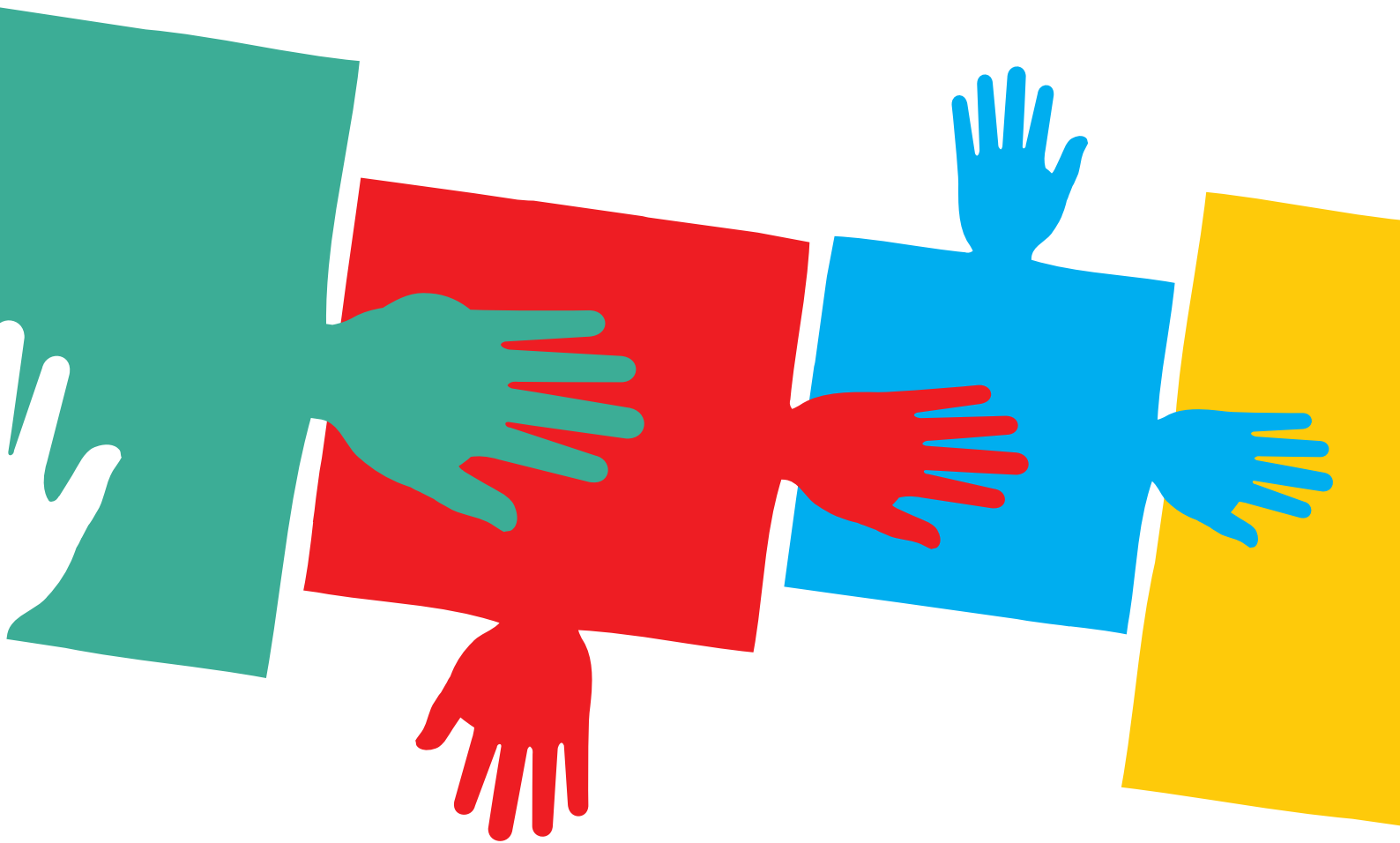




# RESEARCH ON EQUALITY BODIES' GOOD PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF NON-DISCRIMINATION





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**FINAL REPORT**

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# PREFACE

This report has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the 'Services Tender for the Provision of Research on Equality Bodies' Good Practices in the field of non-discrimination'.

This tender forms part of the Project 'ESF4.220 Developing a Culture of Rights through Capacity Building' where the overall objectives of the Project are to:

- Facilitate and accelerate the implementation phase of NCPE's extended remit by strengthening the necessary internal knowledge capacity;
- Strengthen the skills of NCPE staff members that they use in fulfilment of their daily work; nurture a culture on equality and non-discrimination among targeted public service providers; empower stakeholders through training; and to instil a culture of consciousness, sensitise people and raise awareness on equality and non-discrimination among the general public;
- Provide and disseminate further information regarding the current situation on discrimination on the grounds of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin and gender identity.

Furthermore, and in line with Section 2.2 of the tender document, the contract's specific objectives (which are not necessarily those of the project) are to:

- Research good practices for methods and tools to reach out to target groups, especially in sectors related to the extended remit of the NCPE (namely discrimination on the grounds of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity) and also in other sectors such as disability;
- Provide strategies tailored towards the diversity of target groups that an equality body such as NCPE has;
- Research ways of communication and practices used by equality bodies within the same country and evaluate how these bodies communicate with each other and work together.

In this respect, this report is divided as follows:

- Chapter 1** Presents the background and purpose of the project and includes a number of challenges that this study seeks to address;
- Chapter 2** Highlights the scope and objectives of the study;
- Chapter 3** Identifies the methodology adopted for this study, that incorporated 3 phases: literature review, an online questionnaire and a number of in-depth telephone interviews with equality bodies within Europe;
- Chapter 4** Presents the findings of the literature review conducted;
- Chapter 5** Presents the findings of the qualitative research (online questionnaire and in-depth interviews).
- Chapter 6** The final Chapter of the report presents the main recommendations



# GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>EQUINET</b>	European Network of Equality Bodies
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>HALDE</b>	Haute autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité (French Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Commission)
<b>NCPD</b>	National Commission Persons with Disability
<b>NCPE</b>	National Commission for the Promotion of Equality
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NHRI</b>	National Human Rights Institution
<b>p.</b>	Page
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>VO</b>	Voluntary Organisations



# 1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

## 1.1 Overview

According to European Union legislation, such as Article 13 of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC), Article 8a of the Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC), and the Gender 'Recast' Directive (2006/54/EC), Member States are required to set up an equality body. Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, defines equality bodies as: "...independent organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and promoting equality".

As covered by European law:

I. Equality bodies are legally required to promote equality and combat discrimination on one or more from the following grounds:

- Gender and family responsibilities,
- Race and ethnic origin,
- Age,
- Sexual orientation,
- Religion or belief, and
- Disability.

II. Member States are to ensure that the competences of equality bodies include:

- A. Without prejudice to the right of victims and of associations, providing independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing their complaints about discrimination;
- B. Conducting independent surveys concerning discrimination;
- C. Publishing independent reports and making recommendations on any issue relating to such discrimination.

In this regard, in Malta there are two equality bodies, namely: the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and the National Commission Persons with Disability (NCPD). According to a report by Ammer et al. (2010), titled Study on Equality Bodies set up under Directives 2000/43/EC, 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC both bodies in Malta are classified as predominantly promotion-type equality bodies.

This Project is being spearheaded by NCPE.

NCPE was set up by virtue of Chapter 456 Equality for Men and Women Act in January 2004 and its primary task is to monitor the implementation of:





- Chapter 456 Equality for Men and Women Act;
- Legal Notice 85 of 2007 Equal Treatment of Persons Order;
- Legal Notice 181 of 2007 Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Regulations; and
- Legal Notice 316 of 2011 Procedure for Investigation Regulations.

## 1.2 Challenges

Despite being required by EU law, the role, structure and resourcing of equality bodies are often surrounded by debate and controversy, often referring to the number of challenges met by the same equality bodies. Questions relating to the impact and effectiveness of equality bodies are also given particular prominence by Member States' Governments.

Consequently, through this research study, NCPE is seeking to gather information which shall eventually enable it to be more effective in its work, by addressing a number of challenges equality bodies face, including:

- Under-reporting of cases of discrimination;
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights;
- Engagement of equality bodies with key players;
- Lack of participation in events (including training);
- Developing its communications' profile and positioning;
- Maximising on new technologies;
- Building cooperation with other stakeholders to meet objectives;
- Adapting services to effectively meet target groups' needs;
- Developing and strengthening business cases for equality mainstreaming;
- Lack of commitment towards equality by stakeholders; and
- Dealing with sensitive research.



## 2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study, as stipulated in the tender document, is to *“seek methods and tools to reach out to target groups and stakeholders especially in sectors related to the extended remit of NCPE and also to other sectors such as disability”*.

More specifically, the objectives of this project are to:

- Research good practices for methods and tools to reach out to target groups, especially in sectors related to the extended remit of the NCPE (namely discrimination on the grounds of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity) and also in other sectors such as disability.
- Provide strategies tailored towards the diversity of target groups that an equality body such as NCPE has.
- Research ways of communication and practices used by equality bodies within the same country and evaluate how these bodies communicate with each other and work together.

Furthermore, the study will clearly indicate the effectiveness and impact of each method/tool/practice on the relevant target group.



## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Overview

The methodology adopted is dependent on the goals and objectives of the project that revolve around attaining information from other international equality bodies with respect to good practices in the field of non-discrimination. Subsequently, this study sought to address the following research questions:

- What are the good practices adopted by equality bodies in EU Member States for methods and tools used to reach out to target groups<sup>1</sup> in sectors related to an extended remit, that is discrimination on the grounds of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity, and also on other grounds such as disability?
- What are the strategies which need to be adopted in order for an equality body to reach its diverse target groups?
- How do equality bodies in other EU Member States within the same country communicate between each other and work together?

More specifically, and as identified in the tender document, the research addressed the following challenges generally encountered by equality bodies:

- Under-reporting of cases of discrimination
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights
- Engagement of equality bodies with key players
- Lack of participation in events (including training)
- Developing its communications' profile and positioning
- Maximising on new technologies
- Building cooperation with other stakeholders to meet objectives
- Adapting services to effectively meet target groups' needs
- Developing and strengthening business cases for equality mainstreaming
- Lack of commitment towards equality by stakeholders
- Dealing with sensitive research.

<sup>1</sup>The target groups are: national and local authorities, NGOs and civil society, public administration and general public.

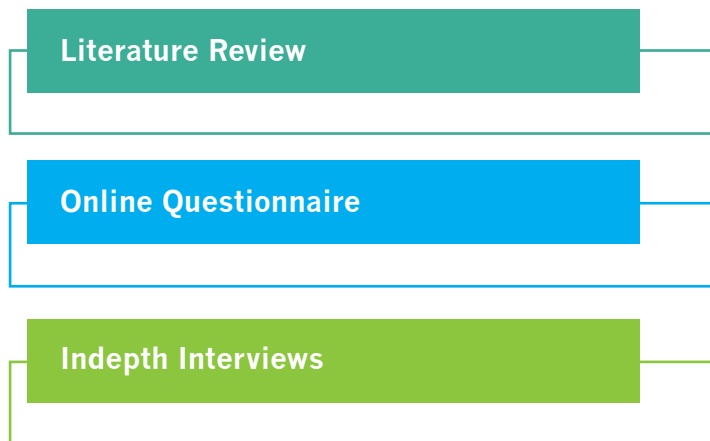
### 3.2 Data Collection

In order to answer the above research questions a qualitative approach to collecting the data was proposed and subsequently adopted. As opposed to other approaches, a qualitative approach offers the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the good practices adopted by equality bodies in the field of non-discrimination. Furthermore, a qualitative approach offers particular flexibility useful to the topic in question with the possibility of covering aspects of the topic which would not have been previously thought about by the researchers (Rubin & Babbie, 2010).

In this respect, the research study consisted of three phases:

- I. Literature review; followed by
- II. An online questionnaire sent to all equality bodies in the European Union Member States excluding Austria, Northern Ireland<sup>2</sup> and Malta; and
- III. A telephone/Skype interview conducted with a total of 8 equality bodies from different European Union Member States.

#### Graphic Representation of the three Research phases



#### 3.2.1 Literature Review

In line with the Terms of Reference, the first phase of the research study comprised a literature review of existing local, EU and Equinet documents and similar studies. The literature review commenced following the receipt of the approval letter and the signed contract, and was formally launched straight after the kick-off meeting with NCPE.

Careful review was carried out in order to obtain the maximum value from the desk research in order to ensure validity, reliability and relevance of the information gathered.

<sup>2</sup>Equality bodies in Austria and Northern Ireland were partners in the project that this study was part of, and a separate study was carried out on their practices.

### 3.2.2 Online Questionnaire

The second phase of the research study consisted of the self-administered online questionnaire which primarily included closed-ended questions. Such an approach was adopted as it is easier and quicker for respondents to answer the questions whilst still enabling the collection of the required data for this study. Furthermore, in view of the stringent time frames, utilising such approach makes it easier to compare the answers of different respondents, while also facilitating the coding and analysis phase.

Nonetheless, the questionnaire (a copy of which is attached as an Annex to this report) also comprised a minimal amount of open-ended questions to allow respondents to be more flexible in their answers. The adoption of an online questionnaire also makes it easier for respondents to answer questions on their schedule and at their individual pace. Furthermore, an online questionnaire reduces the social desirability bias usually attributed to interviews or focus groups.

Prior to launching the study, the questionnaire was reviewed by NCPE and eventually incorporated a total of 36 questions broadly segmented into 8 phases as follows:

- 
- 1<sup>st</sup> phase** A total of 5 questions (one of which being an open-ended question) that sought to attain information about the entity responding the questionnaire, namely:
- Name of the entity (open ended question);
  - How long the entity has been established for;
  - Total number of full time employees;
  - Whether the entity was predominantly promotional type and legal support<sup>3</sup> or a quasi-judicial body<sup>4</sup>; and
  - The grounds that fall within the equality body's remit.

- 
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase** This section comprised a total of 6 questions relating to reaching out to the target groups of equality bodies. The first question asked entities to indicate the tools they normally utilised. The other set of questions asked equality bodies to indicate, which in their opinion were the most effective tools to reach out to:
- Employers and service providers;
  - NGOs, VOs, CSOs, policy makers/drafters, equality bodies;
  - Victims of discrimination and members of minority groups; and
  - The general public.
- The final question was an open-ended question asking entities to share any good practices established in reaching out to the different target groups.

<sup>3</sup>Promotion-type and legal support body i.e. spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination

<sup>4</sup>Quasi-judicial body i.e. impartial institutions which spend the bulk of their time and resources hearing, investigating and deciding on individual instances of discrimination brought before them

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**3<sup>rd</sup> phase**

A set of 3 questions that focused on the strategic aspects of equality bodies.

- The first question was a close-ended question to see whether equality bodies had a strategy in place for reaching out to the diverse groups that fell within their remit;
- An open-ended question then followed, asking entities to provide further information; and
- Finally, through an open-ended question, equality bodies were requested to list 3 endeavours (activities/tools) which were successful in reaching out to specific target groups.

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**4<sup>th</sup> phase**

A total of 7 questions that sought to attain better insight about the equality body's communication/collaboration with other equality bodies within their country.

Questions relating to communication:

- The first close-ended question was a straightforward question to determine whether entities responding to the questionnaire generally communicate with other equality bodies based in the same country as the;
- Subsequently, an open-ended question sought to understand why such equality bodies did/not communicate; and
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> close-ended question sought to determine the three (3) tools utilised most often to communicate (among those that indicated to communicate) with other equality bodies.

Questions relating to collaboration

- The first close-ended question was a straightforward question to determine whether entities responding to the questionnaire generally collaborate with other equality bodies based in the same country as them;
- Subsequently, an open-ended question sought to understand why such equality bodies did/not collaborate;
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> open-ended question requested entities to mention any good practices established in this regard, if any; and
- The 4<sup>th</sup> question was close-ended and asked entities to indicate in which area/s they generally collaborate in.

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**5<sup>th</sup> phase**

This phase had a total of 6 questions and sought to determine how equality bodies tackle the issues of:

- Under-reporting of cases of discrimination;
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights; and
- Lack of participation in events organised by the equality body.

For each of the above indicated issues, equality bodies were provided with two questions:

- i. A close-ended question to determine how equality bodies tackled this issue; and
- ii. An open-ended question for them to provide some positive examples/good practices.

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### 6<sup>th</sup> phase

This part of the questionnaire sought to determine how equality bodies effectively meet their target group/s needs through their work.

- This consisted of a close-ended question where entities were presented with a number of options and were requested to indicate which of the options were of relevance to their cause.

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### 7<sup>th</sup> phase

This part of the questionnaire sought to determine how equality bodies effectively promote the implementation of equality mainstreaming with stakeholders.

This part consisted of two questions:

- A close-ended question where equality bodies were presented with a number of options and were requested to indicate which of the options were of relevance to their cause; and
- An open ended question requesting entities to mention any good practices established in this regard.

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### 8<sup>th</sup> Phase

This final part of the questionnaire comprised a set of 6 open-ended questions to determine how entities generally dealt with the issues of:

- Sensitive research;
  - Lack of commitment by stakeholders;
  - Raising awareness on complex issues related to equality;
  - Raising awareness on the equality body's investigative role;
  - Publishing any conclusions reached through investigation; and
  - Investigating complaints on multiple grounds.
-

### 3.3 Questionnaire distribution

The researchers contacted Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies, to notify them about the research that was being conducted by NCPE (Annexed to this report is the email/news bulletin sent out by Equinet) such that Equinet in turn notify their members about NCPE's study.

According to Equinet's list of members found on: <http://www.equineteurope.org/-Member-organisations->, currently, Equinet brings together 45 equality bodies from 33 different European Union Member States. For the purpose of this study it was stipulated in the tender document that equality bodies in Austria, Northern Ireland and Malta are not considered for this study. Thus, this left a pool of 40 equality bodies from 30 European Union Member States.

NCPE also attained from Equinet the contact persons of the various entities forming part of their network. This was fundamental when carrying out follow-ups and also when seeking to fix the in-depth interviews as elaborated upon below.

From their end, the researchers at Grant Thornton contacted all those entities forming part of the Equinet network (apart from the exclusions highlighted earlier) and provided them with a link to complete the online survey. The email with a brief description about the study and the link to participate in the survey was sent out in the second week of November. Entities were allowed a total of 2 weeks to participate in the survey. In the third week of November, both NCPE and Grant Thornton sent out a reminder enticing entities to participate in the survey. In total 15 completed questionnaires were received and subsequently analysed for this research.

Overleaf is a graphic representation of the countries that participated in the study<sup>5</sup> and an indication from where they operated



- Tender specifically indicated that these countries do not participate in the research
- Entities from these countries participated in the research

<sup>5</sup>Entities from Norway and Serbia also participated in the survey.



The above graph illustrates that the web-based online survey enabled the attainment of a good representation from a cross-section across Europe. Furthermore, there was a mix of: primarily promotion-type and legal support body, quasi-judicial, and those that provided a mix of both. Apart from one entity that indicated to be primarily a promotion-type and legal support body focusing exclusively on disability, entities indicated to be responsible for multiple grounds (the vast majority indicated to be responsible for 5 or more grounds).

The size of entities was also quite varied, ranging from those that employed less than 5 full time employees to entities that employ over 100 employees. Furthermore, with respect to years of establishment, one entity indicated to have been established for less than 5 years, with the vast majority indicating that they have been established for between 6 and 20 years.

The main findings of the online survey and in-depth interviews are presented in Chapter 5 of this report – Research findings.

### **3.3.1 Semi-structured telephone/Skype interviews**

The third phase of the research study consisted of a semi-structured telephone/Skype interview targeting 8 equality bodies from 8 different European Union Member States, excluding Austria, Northern Ireland and Malta.

Semi-structured interviews are seen as a combination of having both the flexibility of open-ended interviews and the directionality of survey instruments, with the aim of producing focused data (S. L. Schensul, Schensul, & leCompte, 1999). A semi-structured interviewing guide consisting of a list of open-ended questions based on the research questions and on the literature review was drawn up and reviewed by NCPE prior to carrying out the interviews. (A copy of the semi structured interview guide is Annexed to this report).

Semi-structured interviews allowed the researchers to obtain an ‘in-depth’ understanding of the methods and tools adopted by equality bodies in order to reach their target groups as well as an ‘in-depth’ understanding of the practices adopted by equality bodies in order to communicate and work together with other equality bodies in the same country. Telephone/Skype interviews lasted forty-five minutes on average. To increase the validity of the study, where possible, the telephone interviews were held with a manager within the equality body.

The selection for the telephone semi-structured interview was based on purposeful sampling. This kind of sampling is concerned with selecting participants which are considered to be most useful for the study. Furthermore, according to this kind of sampling, participants are chosen based on their vast experience and particular competence (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Where possible, for the purpose of this study the sample selected was based on the equality bodies’ remit being most similar to NCPE and that, as stipulated in the tender document, all equality bodies came from different European Union Member States.

In the end a total of eight entities participated in the in-depth interviews.

Interviewee	Entity	Country	Date of interview
Barbara Bos	Netherlands Institute for Human Rights	Netherlands	24/11/2015
Bostian Vernik	Advocate of the Principle of Equality	Slovenia	25/11/2015
Luckovardi Kollipi	Office of the Greek Ombudsman	Greece	01/12/2015
Patrick Chalier	Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities	Belgium	3/12/2015
Kosana Beker	Commission for the Protection of Equality	Serbia	4/12/2015
Zuzana Pavlickova	Slovak National Centre for Human Rights	Slovakia	7/12/2015
Iva Palkorska	Office of the Public Defender of Rights	Czech Republic	7/12/2015
James Beetham	Equality and Human Rights Commission	U.K	7/12/2015

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The data attained from the online questionnaire and telephone/skype interviews along with the field notes and other material accumulated by the researchers, was gathered and analysed. Analysis involved working with the data, organising it and breaking in into manageable units with the aim of discovering and interpreting what was important to answering the objectives of the study (Section 2 of this report). The findings of the in-depth interviews are presented in Chapter 5 of this report – Research findings.



## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 4.1 Introduction

Equality bodies play a crucial role in bringing about social change and in promoting respect for equal treatment. According to European Union (EU) legislation, namely Article 13 of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC), and Article 8a of the Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC), EU Member States are required to set up an equality body. Equality bodies are:

*“... independent organisations assisting victims of discrimination, monitoring and reporting on discrimination issues, and promoting equality” (Equinet, 2013).*

The legal role of equality bodies is to promote equality and combat discrimination on one or more of the following grounds, that is, gender, race and ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and disability as covered by European law. Furthermore, according to the Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC), Member States shall ensure that the competences of equality bodies include:

- a) Without prejudice to the right of victims and of associations, providing independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing their complaints about discrimination;
- b) Conducting independent surveys concerning discrimination;
- c) Publishing independent reports and making recommendations on any issue relating to such discrimination.

The independent assistance provided by equality bodies to victims of discrimination includes: providing information about existing anti-discrimination legislation in the relevant country and about the possibility to take legal action; directing victims of discrimination to a particular organisation which could help them seek legal action; assisting victims of discrimination in reaching an amicable solution or an out-of-court settlement with the discriminators; and providing legal advice and representation to victims of discrimination (Equinet, 2013).

For an equality body to reach its maximum impact and effectiveness it has to be structured, led and resourced in a manner which ensures that all the above-mentioned three functions are implemented and adhered to. Furthermore, it must have sufficient financial resources, adequate staff numbers, and adequate staff competencies in order to meet all three functions. The role of equality bodies also extends to being involved in the drafting stages of mainstream legislation and in the development of policy with the aim of achieving equality (Ammer, et al., 2010).

Although some equality bodies were already established in some EU Member States prior to the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) and Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC), over the past 15 years, the European Union has witnessed an increase in the number of equality bodies in its Member States. The year 2007 saw the setting up of Equinet – the European Network of Equality Bodies (Steiner, 2013). The role of Equinet is to provide support to national equality bodies in achieving, as well as, exercising their

full potential. Equinet sustains the work of national equality bodies through the establishment of a network and a platform at a European level (Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2015). To date, Equinet brings together 45 national equality bodies from 33 countries in Europe ([www.equinet.org](http://www.equinet.org)). All 45 equality bodies are diverse in their histories, structures, size and grounds covered.

Ammer et al. (2010) in their report titled '*Study on Equality Bodies set up under Directives 2000/43/EC, 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC*' make a distinction between two kinds of equality bodies. On one hand there are those equality bodies which are known as *predominantly tribunal-type equality bodies* and thus spend most of their time and resources on investigating cases of discrimination brought before them. Whilst on the other hand there are those equality bodies which are known as *predominantly promotion-type equality bodies* and thus spend most of their time and resources on a broader combination of activities including awareness-raising, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, as well as providing assistance to individual victims of discrimination.

In Malta there are two equality bodies: the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and the National Commission Persons with Disability (NCPD). According to the report by Ammir et al. (2010) both bodies in Malta are classified as *predominantly promotion-type equality bodies*. The National Commission Persons with Disability was set up by virtue of Chapter 413 Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act in February 2000 and its primary task is to monitor the implementation of the same legislation and to monitor, promote and protect the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality was set up by virtue of Chapter 456 Equality for Men and Women Act in January 2004 and its primary task is to monitor the implementation of the following legislations:

- Chapter 456 Equality for Men and Women Act;
- Legal Notice 85 of 2007 Equal Treatment of Persons Order;
- Legal Notice 181 of 2007 Access to Goods and Services and their Supply (Equal Treatment) Regulations.; and
- Legal Notice 316 of 2011 Procedure for Investigation Regulations.

#### 4.1.1 Organisation of the Literature Review

This section 1.0 of the literature review has provided an introduction about equality bodies, including their role and mandate, and the nature of the equality bodies found in Malta. Section 2.0 of this literature review will cover some of the challenges encountered by equality bodies. The challenges include those related to reaching out to different target groups; those related to the engagement of stakeholders and key players; and those related to dealing with sensitive research. Section 3.0 of this literature review will make reference to how some of the challenges encountered by equality bodies can be overcome. Finally, section 4.0 will consist of a conclusion.

#### 4.2 The Challenges Encountered by Equality Bodies

Research shows that equality bodies face a number of challenges in achieving their full potential (e.g. Ammer, et al., 2010; Equinet's Working Group on Policy Formation, 2012; Equinet's Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2012). Notwithstanding the fact that Equality Bodies are required by European Union legislation, elements like their role, structure and resourcing are often surrounded by

debate. In addition, given the current concern by governments about achieving value for money, questions relating to the impact and effectiveness of equality bodies are also given particular prominence (Crowley, 2013). In this section of the literature review, a number of challenges as experienced by equality bodies will be elaborated upon.

#### 4.2.1 Reaching Out to the Target Groups

Reaching out to the diverse target groups can be a challenge for equality bodies (Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2015). Other related challenges include: under-reporting of cases of discrimination; lack of knowledge and awareness about rights amongst the general public as well as particular target groups; and lack of participation in events, including training, by the general public and particular target groups.

Most of the literature points to the under-reporting of cases of discrimination as one of the greatest issues of concern for equality bodies (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2010; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2012; Equality and Rights Alliance, 2013). According to a report by Crowley (2013), based on research, most equality bodies have come to the conclusion that the actual number of acts of discrimination in their respective countries is much higher than the number of acts being reported. Low numbers of reported cases of discrimination are experienced across many European Union Member States including Austria, Estonia, France and Poland (Council of Europe, 2010; Council of Europe, 2010a; Council of Europe, 2010b). Most of the under-reported cases of discrimination are based on the grounds of sexual orientation and religion (Ammir et al., 2010). A report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2012) claims that most cases of discrimination that go unreported are by selected ethnic minorities and immigrant groups.

The issue of under-reporting of cases of discrimination could be due to a number of causes. It is argued that the number of registered complaints depends on: the level of awareness about rights held by the target groups; the confidence that making a complaint will be heard and understood; the level of compensation made available; and how user-friendly the mechanism of making the complaint is. A history of the country's approach to discrimination needs to also be taken into consideration when understanding the low numbers of cases of discrimination reported (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2010).

A study carried out by the Belgian Institute for the Equality of Women and Men, titled 'Being Transgender in Belgium' (2009, p. 107-108) found that the highest percentages for reasons why respondents did not seek help upon experiencing discrimination included:

- 33.7% did not need any help;
- 30.5% didn't dare to ask for help;
- 29.5% don't know where to get help; and
- 21.1% afraid of prejudice on part of care providers

The problems surrounding access to justice are also due to a lack of awareness of rights as well as poor knowledge about the tools that are available for victims of discrimination (United Nations Development Programme, 2013; Givens & Evans Case, 2014; Council of Europe, 2015). According to Givens and Evans Case (2014), the current issue across the EU is no longer the lack of adequate legislation but its uneven implementation. It is reported that although EU Member States have satisfactory and comprehensive legislation to combat inequality and discrimination, most EU citizens are not aware of their rights (Givens & Evans Case, 2014). With the aim of addressing this problem and with the aim of enabling equality bodies to organise awareness-raising campaigns amongst its target groups, the European Union has identified awareness-raising as one of the fields relevant for EU funding (European Commission, 2005).

According to a survey carried out by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in 2010, based on face-to-face interviews with 23,500 respondents from 27 EU Member States, it resulted that under-reporting of cases of discrimination could be due to a number of issues which emerged from this study. The findings of this study show that on average across the different minority groups surveyed, only 25% of the respondents were aware of existing non-discrimination legislation in the areas of employment, goods and services. In addition, 80% of all respondents could not mention one single organisation which offers support to victims of discrimination, and when given the name of an equality body in their relevant member state, 60% of the respondents claimed that they had never heard of such an organisation. Furthermore, 36% of the respondents who claimed they were discriminated against said that they did not make a complaint because they did not know how or where to go.

#### 4.2.2 The Involvement of Stakeholders and Key Players

A report by Equinet's Working Group on Policy Formation (2012) lists a number of limitations that impact on the effectiveness of equality bodies. One of the limitations on this list is the lack of stakeholder engagement. The lack of engagement by stakeholders leads to other challenges such as stakeholders' lack of commitment towards equality in general as well as lack of cooperation with the aim of meeting objectives. According to Leslie and Taccogna (2015) creating an environment whereby authentic engagement with stakeholders is facilitated is indeed considered to be hard work. The above-mentioned challenges very often rely on the stakeholders' perceptions of the equality body.

The public profile of any organisation may be either their biggest asset or their biggest pitfall. According to a report by the Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices (2015), shaping a positive and effective profile of the organisation can be one of the greatest challenges faced by the equality body's communications office. The credibility of an equality body is greatly affected by the perceptions held by the stakeholders, the general public and the target groups. Furthermore, the opinion and evaluation of an equality body by both individuals and stakeholders is based on:

- The experience of working and being in contact with the equality body;
- The competences of the staff of the equality body; and
- The perceptions of the equality body as generated by the media (Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2015).

Notwithstanding the amount of work done by the equality body, it is equally important that the stakeholders, general public and the target groups are consistently and strategically reminded of the existence of the equality body.

Non-discrimination and equality mainstreaming are valuable new means of advancing equality while combating discrimination. Legislation to prohibit discrimination is an important foundation for this work. However, legislation alone will not secure the achievement of equality and the elimination of discrimination. A wider framework for action on equality involving all stakeholders as well as key players is required so that cultural, behavioural, institutional and structural changes that are required for a more equal Europe can be achieved (European Union, 2011).

#### **4.2.3 Sensitive Research**

Two of the three major competences of equality bodies mentioned in section 1.0 are conducting surveys and publishing reports. Thus, one of the main roles of equality bodies is conducting research. Apart from the collection of statistical data, social research investigation often involves issues, perspectives and opinions that are considered to be of a sensitive nature. This kind of research is considered to be sensitive since it may impact on the feelings, attitudes and values held by individuals involved in the research process (McCosker, Barnard, & Gerber, 2001). It is for this reason that equality bodies need to be aware of sensitive research and of the ethical guidelines that need to be implemented when collecting such data.

### **4.3 Overcoming the Challenges**

Despite the number of challenges encountered by equality bodies, they are still contributing towards bringing about social change and towards achieving an impact on equality and non-discrimination. The role of Equality bodies should be seen as a means of ensuring future well-being for the citizens of the European Union (Equinet's Working Group of Policy Formation, 2012). In this section of the literature review reference will be made to how some of the challenges mentioned above can be addressed through promising practices.

#### **4.3.1 Maximising the Potential of Equality Bodies**

Reaching out to the diverse target groups and engaging stakeholders and key players remain pivotal elements for the work of equality bodies in achieving maximum impact and effectiveness. Most of the literature points out to awareness-raising as being one of the most crucial roles of equality bodies (Equinet, 2014; Equinet's Working Group on Gender Equality, 2014; Gaspard, 2014; Paraskevopoulou & McKay, 2015). Awareness-raising about the services offered as well as awareness-raising with the aim of creating a positive public profile of equality bodies should remain high on the agenda of any equality body (Equinet's Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2015).

Although awareness-raising is not explicitly mentioned in the EU Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC), it is still considered as a necessary tool in the fight against discrimination and in the promotion of equal treatment. The Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC) states that equality bodies are agencies for the promotion of equal treatment. Promotional work conducted by equality bodies falls within the following three categories: activities empowering stakeholders to support equality policies and practices, supporting employers and service providers to implement good equality practice and measures empowering vulnerable groups. Five EU Member States actually have legal provisions which make equality bodies responsible for awareness-raising (Ammer et al., 2010).

## Promising Practice #1

### Finland – Ombudsman for Equality

*Name of initiative:* Profiling the Ombudsman in the social media

**Objective:** To be where people are and to reach the 2 million Finns on Facebook (to be found and to find the people and organizations we exist for); to tell about the work of the Ombudsman of Equality and about the Equality Act; to share the news among the stakeholders and receive the latest news as fast as possible in a convenient way; to represent the Ombudsman positively and in a relaxed way as a modern, open, very approachable and accessible but reliable authority.

*Target audience:* the Finnish people (all age groups; active, interested people and people who might not know about us but find us there), NGOs, media, other authorities in the social media, international partners.

*Messages:* Gender equality involves everybody; Ombudsman is a modern, open, very approachable and accessible but reliable authority and for everybody, who suspects that they are being discriminated against based on gender or who just wants to promote gender equality.

*Channels of communication used:* Facebook, Twitter, soon also Vimeo and YouTube.

*Short description:* We chose the channels that suit best our objectives (Facebook and Twitter) and decided the guidelines, profiles and social media rules for these profiles on Facebook and Twitter.

*Measurable benefits for the public image of the equality body:*

Facebook: 1265 followers; different age groups, domestic and international followers; many stakeholders (human right institutes and NGOs actively share our news and statements);

Twitter: 106 followers (private persons, stakeholder organizations);

Possibility to get the information about the people - which kind of people/organizations are interested in our work - get the feedback about our actual profile among the target groups

Follow up the reactions; what kind of topics and style increases the communication and sharing and become viral; which issues are the most interesting ones; what are the issues the followers themselves bring up; what could be the possible topics that will raise up as negative issues, threatening or challenging issues/groups of likeminded/persons

Possibility to follow and get the information from other essential organizations and key persons, follow the news and the weak signals

Lots of visitors on your official website (40 000 new visitors/year)

(Equinet Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2015, p. 35).



The development of a comprehensive communication strategy which would target particular vulnerable target groups who are not aware of relevant legislation and services offered by equality bodies should be prominent amongst the work of equality bodies. However, the challenges of under-reporting of cases of discrimination and the lack of knowledge and awareness of rights are also very dependent on the level of accessibility of the equality body. Accessibility remains key to the effectiveness of the equality body. According to a report by Equinet's Working Group on Policy Formation (2012), it is essential that issues such as design of services and provision of opportunities for justice to be secured are dealt with in terms of accessibility. Elements that need to be kept in mind in relation to accessibility of the equality body to the diverse target groups as well as the general public include: the location of the equality body; outreach from the central location; and the ability to consider the variety of practical implications related to diversity.

Accessibility also refers to the equality body having processes and practices, such as translation and interpretation services, and adaptations for persons with physical, sensorial and intellectual impairments, which already exist and are in place. Moreover, accessibility can be enhanced by providing printed material in minority languages or in other accessible formats such as easy-to-read, audio or digital copies. In addition, a report by Linna (n. d.) from the Swedish Ombudsman recommends that equality bodies should remain in close contact with victims of discrimination and although equality bodies may seem to be working on individual cases, it is this role which will bring structural social change.

In order to reduce the problem of under-reporting of cases of discrimination it is also being recommended that equality bodies impact areas such as: victims of discrimination to facilitate change in their situation and experiences; organisations which provide employment and/or goods and services so that they become more effective in complying with and going beyond relevant legislation; government policy and legislation; stakeholder action by mobilising a wider framework for action to maximise scarce resources; on public attitudes; and by becoming essential institutions for social change (Equinet's Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices, 2012).

Notwithstanding the under-reporting of cases of discrimination, a number of equality bodies across the EU have marked an increase in case-load. According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance report published in 2010, the UK has seen a 10% increase in its caseload in the field of human rights. Similarly, HALDE, the French anti-discrimination and equality body has seen a dramatic increase of 1,500 complaints in 2005 to 10, 546 complaints in 2009.

Strategic networking with relevant stakeholders is considered to be of great importance to raising awareness of the work carried out by equality bodies as well as to increase the level of engagement of stakeholders with the aim of meeting objectives. In a report by Linna (n.d.), it is recommended that equality bodies should not work alone but should involve all major stakeholders in their projects. Involvement of stakeholders in projects will create a sense of ownership by the stakeholders, which could in turn increase participation in events as well as commitment by stakeholders towards equality in general. Establishing strong ties with civil society organisations also leads to commitment and increase in participation in events organised by the equality body.

Networking with stakeholders will also allow equality bodies to make use of a wider range of resources than those they already have in their control. The role of networking is to assist in the effectiveness of the organisation by connecting bodies, entities and organisations of a similar nature. Such connections can enable valuable learning amongst everyone involved with the aim of allowing the sharing of resources to reach the impact on issues which are of common concern. A mobilisation of resources will further

enhance the effectiveness of the equality body beyond what could be achieved by the finite amount of resources allocated to the equality body (Equinet's Working Group on Policy Formation, 2012).

Organising follow-up activities with stakeholders and civil society is also a very relevant recommendation. It is recommended that equality bodies organise follow-up activities with the aim of suggesting measures to change discriminatory policies and practices. According to the synthesis report by Ammir et al. (2010), such activities are considered vital in enforcing anti-discrimination legislation and preventing future cases of discrimination. In addition, conducting surveys, publishing reports and communicating recommendations are all considered as positive ways of increasing knowledge about equality and discrimination and as way of increasing the public profile of the equality body.

### **Promising Practice #2**

A significant recommendation is to organise formal engagements such as monthly meetings or a formal forum with the following: NGOs; social partners, which could include trade unions as well as business organisations; civil society; and other statutory organisations such as other equality bodies or human rights institutions in the same country or in the same region (Equinet's Working Group on Policy Formation, 2012).

According to the synthesis report on equality bodies by Ammir, et al. (2010) it is highly recommended that the work of equality bodies is based on a multi-annual strategic plan. The strategic plan should include a combination of activities including: enforcing equal treatment legislation, raising awareness of rights and obligations, building a knowledge base of discrimination and inequality, and promoting and supporting good practices by employers and service providers. In addition, for non-discrimination and equality mainstreaming to reach their full potential equality bodies need a strong support structure which includes leadership, coordination structures, guidance materials, training, expert support, participation, legislative requirement, and data (European Commission, 2011).

### **4.4 Conclusion**

The work of equality bodies is considered to be crucial in combating discrimination and promoting equality. Equality bodies are significant in building a culture that is respectful of rights. Implementing the requirements of the EU Equal Treatment Directive (2002/73/EC) is one way of achieving social change. However, the role of equality bodies could go further than what is enshrined in EU legislation. In order to be able to fulfil their roles, equality bodies need the provision of sufficient resources, independence and strong EU standards.

## 5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 5.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the online survey and in-depth interviews conducted throughout the months of November and December 2015. This was a qualitative study and hence great care was taken when interpreting the findings to highlight trends without focusing on percentages that could be misleading. Furthermore, the data of both research endeavours have been aggregated to address the following challenges encountered by equality bodies, as requested in the tender, namely:

- Under-reporting of cases of discrimination
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights
- Engagement of equality bodies with key players
- Lack of participation in events (including training)
- Developing its communications' profile and positioning
- Maximising on new technologies
- Communicating and cooperating with other entities within the same country
- Adapting services to effectively meet target groups' needs
- Developing and strengthening business cases for equality mainstreaming
- Lack of commitment towards equality by stakeholders
- Raising awareness
- Investigating complaints on multiple grounds

### 5.2 Under-reporting

The issue of under-reporting seems to be an issue of concern across many of the European countries. However, this issue seems to be more pronounced in those countries where equality bodies have indicated a lack of resources (both financial and human) as a deterrent in their efforts to tackle this particular issue.

The entities participating in the research indicated that under-reporting primarily stems from the public's lack of awareness of their legal rights. However, a number of entities also indicated that in their opinion victims of discrimination were at times unwilling to go forth with their case, possibly due to the "lack of faith in the system".

The issue of lack of faith invariably places onus on the local Governments to have the structures, policies and indeed the will to ensure that laws pertaining to equality are firstly in place and equally important, adhered to. Well established networks like Equinet and the European Commission are proving to be useful mediums to instigate change and place further pressure on Governments to implement and subsequently abide to equality legislation, though there is clearly room for improvement in certain countries across the European Union.

“Our country is still way backwards and Government/political parties do not give due credit to equality...one and a half years ago Slovenia received the first official infringement letter from the Commission (re Equality legislation)”

**Advocate of the Principle of Equality - Slovenia**

**Promising practice #3**

We generally utilise NGOs who have a more direct contact with their target audiences. Also, victims are likely to feel more comfortable sharing their experiences with NGOs – possibly due to lack of trust in the Government. Hence we feel that through our NGO network we manage to keep in touch with the target audience and possibly identify issues.

**Commission for the Protection of Equality - Serbia**

The vast majority of respondents highlighted various tools that entities utilise to try and tackle the issue of under-reporting of cases of discrimination with, namely:

- Appearances on the local media (TV/radio or similar); and
- The publishing of material (primarily without excessive use of legal language)

Appearances in printed media, meetings with particular NGOs, promotion over social media and training (both to potential victims and to employers) were mentioned by at least half of the respondents. Of the various tools indicated, training and appearances on the local media are the most likely tools utilised by entities that indicated a limited number of tool utilisation.

**Promising Practice #4**

*“The issue of under-reporting is not always easy to tackle.*

*We tend to undertake research and subsequently publish reports/distribution of findings as one way of tackle the issue of under-reporting and, equally important, determine the extent of under-reporting.*

*From what we see, in certain instances it is not an issue of people not being aware – but more an issue of reluctance to complain. If you take the issue of sexual orientation or transgender issues – people are joked about at work on a daily basis. They (victims) sometimes feel that if they report they will be picked on even more... so this is difficult to tackle – not much one can do but create awareness that such action is wrong.”*

**Netherlands Institute for Human Rights**

*“We have some features on our website comprising presentations in sign language in order to reach out to this specific target group with regards to discrimination across the different grounds.”*

***Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities - Belgium***

### 5.3 Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights

The research shows that across the board within the European Union there still seems to be a lack of knowledge and awareness of rights amongst the general public. In certain occasions, such a stance is not facilitated by local Governments since not enough due importance is given to the issue. A further contributing factor is that in some instances Governments are not abiding to EU legislation to the extent that *“the Commission started placing some pressure on our Government (Slovenia) to get their act together and in fact one and a half years ago our Government received the first official infringement letter from the Commission”*.

In efforts to increase awareness, equality bodies tend to utilise a wide range of tools with the most popular tool being that of *‘training the employers’*. Other equally popular tools utilised being:

- The utilisation of brochures/leaflets and the distribution of other publicity material – both in an accessible format and in the minority languages;
- Meeting up with particular NGOs;
- Using social media;
- Campaigns on TV/radio; as well as training given to potential victims.

Other tools utilised but to a lesser extent, comprise: TV/Radio appearances; articles in local newspapers; and reaching out to the private sector. Among entities that had limited human resources (less than 10 full time employees), *‘the utilisation of social media’* and *‘training employers’* rated high among the various tools utilised.

#### **Promising Practices #5**

##### **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights**

We have recently created 4 short videos (promoted on the web) each of a few seconds duration with each video focusing on a specific aspect: disability, pregnant women, immigrants, and mental disability. If people clicked on the video (or similar) they were directed to a form where they could share their experiences (related to the video topic).

Each video ends with the phrase – *“Can you imagine how it will end?”*

Such videos were placed on social media – Facebook, LinkedIn, our entity's website, Twitter and the like.

These short videos proved to be a great success, particularly the video that focused on the rights of pregnant women at the workplace. We had lots of shares, likes and comments/shared experiences. (As for the issue of pregnant women at the workplace) we realised that a number of individuals did not realise that they were being discriminated against at their work place.

### **Slovak National Centre for Human Rights**

We found it particularly effective when we distributed leaflets on discrimination, human trafficking, labour law, mobbing and bossing. In this respect we also translated a leaflet on the mandate of the Centre and anti-discrimination legislation into Romani language, and subsequently carried out training sessions for Roma people, students, older people, employees etc.

### **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights**

Another useful 'tool' we embarked on relates to training our local anti-discrimination bureaus once a year to help them fill the knowledge gaps. It's a yearly event that is very much appreciated by them. This effort is also useful to exchange information on ongoing projects on both sides.

## **5.4 Engagement of equality bodies with key players**

For the purpose of this study, the online questionnaire categorised the key players as follows:

- Employers and service providers
- Non-Governmental Organisations, Voluntary Organisations, Civil Society Organisations, policy makers/drafters, equality bodies;
- Victims of discrimination and members of minority groups
- The general public

### **5.4.1 Employers and service providers**

By far and large, irrespective of their size, equality bodies across the various EU Member States deem that *'the organisation of training events'* is the most opportune way to target this segment. *'Media campaigns'*, *'the setting up of meetings with this target group'*, and *'the utilisation of the web/electronic mail'* were other tools often sought to reach out to employers and service providers. Other tools mentioned, though to a lesser extent, comprise:

- Appearances in printed media;
- Organisation of conferences;
- The drawing up of media campaigns
- Brochure distribution

Conversely, the tools that were mentioned least were:

- Outreach sessions;
- Visits (to schools, companies and the like);
- Social media
- 1 to 1 meetings
- Participation in large mainstream events

From the above list of tools, *'brochures/leaflet distribution'* seems to be a tool that is often utilised by the smaller equality bodies (those employing up to 25 full time employees).

### **Promising Practice #6**

"We also encourage employers to build networks – and meet up face to face /informally with different entities. This too aids when it then comes to organising events."

***Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Belgium***

#### **5.4.2 NGOs, VOs, CSOs, policy makers/drafters, equality bodies**

Irrespective of their size, *'outreach sessions with particular NGOs'* was by far the most sought after tool to reach out to this target group among the equality bodies that participated in the survey. Another tool utilised by the majority of entities related to the *'organisation of training sessions specifically for this target audience'*.

Conversely, the tools that attained the lowest scores (were least mentioned) related to:

- Mail shots;
- Distribution of printed material; and
- Presence at large mainstream events such as concerts/fairs etc

With respect to *'social media'*, while the vast majority of equality bodies indicated to utilise this tool, it was not indicated as being one of the most effective tools to reach out to this specific target group. Indeed none of the entities participating in the survey indicated *'social media'* as their preferred, or second preferred tool (to reaching out to this target group).

### 5.4.3 Victims of discrimination and members of minority groups

When determining the tool/s deemed most effective to reach out to victims of discrimination and members of minority groups, it transpires that entities across the Member States utilise a wide array of tools, with no tool attaining a predominant mention, thereby implying that different tools are deemed to be effective by the equality bodies (that participated in the survey) in the different countries across the Europe.

*'Outreach sessions with particular NGOs', 'one-to-one sessions with individuals', 'media campaigns', 'the entity's website', 'appearance in the printed media', 'visits (to schools, companies and the like)' and 'social media'* were responses that attained relatively high mentions.

Conversely, *'mail shots', 'the distribution of printed material' and 'the organisation of conferences/seminars'* were not perceived to be primary tools for reaching out to this target group.

#### Promising Practice #7

##### **Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) - UK**

Our experience is that the most effective way of building trust and reaching out victims of discrimination or members of minority groups is good cooperation with NGOs who work with specific issues.

### 5.4.4 The general public

When seeking to reach out to the general public, three tools stand out as being particularly utilised by equality bodies, these being:

- Media campaigns (such as TV spots, radio and similar);
- Appearances in printed media; and
- Website and/or electronic newsletters.

That said, there seems to be consensus that 'social media' is gaining momentum in terms of importance, with one interviewee indicating that *"in view of stringent budgets, new technologies, namely social media are becoming all the more important."* When elaborating further the same individual indicated that social media was particularly effective to reach out to large audiences within a very short time frame, without necessarily utilising large budgets.

Apart from the main office in Brussels we also have offices in centres to be in close vicinity to the people. This makes it easier to be in direct contact with the people.

##### **Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Belgium**



### **Office of the Greek Ombudsman**

Regarding Social Media: We have social media (Facebook and the like) but have never really focused exclusively on this medium (to reach out to the public/target audiences) – hence while we understand that it is important, we have no specific tool to determine the extent of its usefulness/effectiveness.

### **Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Belgium**

We have a presence on Twitter, Facebook and also have a website. We have never really carried out a campaign on social media but utilise it primarily for the dissemination of information...Also Facebook is sometimes utilised to reach to perpetrators rather than to reach out to victims.

### **Promising Practice #8**

#### ***Netherlands Institute of Human Rights***

We are currently running a campaign (on social media), and especially Facebook seems to be exploding with reactions, so social media is becoming very important. We will undergo other similar promotional campaigns in the future.

#### ***Inter-federal Centre for Equal Opportunities - Belgium***

We have found it useful to draw up cooperation protocols with NGOs and trade unions.

Last year we also published a book that dealt specifically with disability in schools. This was a very successful initiative which was gauged through the increase in the reporting of cases.

#### ***The equality and anti-discrimination ombudsman – Norway***

In 2015 we had a campaign against discrimination when people are becoming parents. We used different channels to reach out, and experienced an increase in people contacting us and visiting our web page.

### 5.5 Lack of participation in events (including training)

For the majority of the large equality bodies (employing fifty or more full time employees), lack of participation in events is not deemed to be an issue. Among those entities that are of the opinion that ensuring adequate participation could be an issue (at times), the two main endeavours undertaken (to deal with this issue) are:

- Involvement of major stakeholders, particularly NGOs, in the organisation of the event; and
- Sending specific emails (not generic).

Other tools utilised but to a much lesser extent include: *'inviting renowned speaker/s to the event'*, *'involving expert speakers'*, *'giving due concern to the date chosen for the event'*, *'the provision of sign language services'*, *'provision of transport'* and *'the provision of certificates of attendance'*.

#### Promising Practice #9

##### **Office of the Greek Ombudsman**

This is not really an issue for us. We have built strong networks and also have excellent personal contacts. The way we act is that we generally get confirmation (re attendance) on an event from the 'core' individuals and then build on that to increase participation. I am not saying that publicity is not important, but I think the most important aspect is to build a good network and have strong contacts.

##### **Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Belgium**

This is not much an issue for us. We just had 2 conferences in November and both were really well attended. We believe that one effort which worked well was to plan well in advance and send out an email inviting people (potential participants) to save the date. This was sent 2/3 months prior to the event. We primarily utilise email, newsletters and the website to publicize events. We also send a programme invitation closer to the date.

### 5.6 Developing communications' profile and positioning of equality bodies

While all equality entities participating in the study seem to be aware of the importance of reaching out to the target groups falling within their remit, to date not all equality bodies participating in the study have developed a communications strategy to assist them in such endeavours. Indeed, almost half of those participating in the survey indicated not to have such a strategy in place. Though this is a qualitative study, such amount is deemed considerable and noteworthy. Furthermore, the larger entities (employing over 50 full timers) were far more inclined to have a strategy in place.

## Equality and Human Rights Commission

We developed an Internal Communication Strategies

### Promising Practice #10

#### ***The Greek Ombudsman***

In 2007, the Greek Ombudsman (GO) established two open communication networks, one for Roma and one for immigrants and asylum seekers. It is actually an unofficial partnership between the various stakeholders in order to share information, knowledge and collectively work for the promotion of equality and, overall support, for these groups of the population. Each network currently numbers more than 30 partners. The GO launched these networks in order to establish a regular contact with those groups of the population who suffer systematically from discriminatory actions and exclusion. The initiatives aim at encouraging the mediation by these bodies between the targeted population group and the Greek Ombudsman, the dissemination of critical information related to institutional tools and know-how, and the gathering of information on the crucial problems faced by these groups; but, above all, the main objective has been the joint coordination of action of the participating bodies. Both the aforementioned initiatives have proved to be successful. Using the experience gained by the establishment of the previous two networks, in 2013 the GO also went on to establish the same networks on the grounds of sexual orientation, disability

### 5.6.1 Appropriate tools to reach out to the target groups

Equality bodies were asked to indicate which particular tools they generally utilised to reach out to their target groups. The results evidence that a wide range of tools were utilised with no tool in particular standing out. Among the tools mentioned most often were:

- Website/electronic mail;
- Appearances in the broadcast/printed media;
- Distribution of printed material, brochures/leaflets;
- The organisation of conferences and meetings;
- Training events.

As for '*social media*', entities indicated this medium to be an important tool (though other tools attained a higher rating) that was likely to increase in importance in the future. The fact that a number of entities did not focus exclusively on this medium when undertaking a particular promotion/activity, limited their understanding of the true value/importance of this medium.

Other endeavours mentioned though to a lesser extent include:

- Outreach sessions with trade unions;
- Visits (to schools/companies);
- TV spots, radio and the like;
- One-to-one sessions;
- Mail shots; and
- Presence in large mainstream events.

As for 'presence in large mainstream events', this was a tool that seems to be of relevance primarily for the smaller entities (less than 25 full time employees).

### 5.7 Maximising on new technologies

The vast majority of equality bodies have today incorporated the utilisation of new technologies with almost all having a dedicated website. Furthermore the website is often used to disseminate information and issue their investigative findings. Another tool utilised often, particularly among those with limited resources is an online newsletter/s and personalised emails.

As for the inclusion of social media into their communication efforts, the research indicates that to date such tool is not deemed to be the primary choice when seeking to communicate, be it with NGOs, potential victims, employers or the general public.

That said, there seems to be consensus that social media is gaining in importance, enabling equality bodies to reach out to the masses instantly.

Rather than a financial burden associated with the utilisation of such technology, equality bodies indicated the need for human resource/s (a dedicated individual/team), able to continually update content, post and follow discussions/content that was deemed fundamental for its success.

Such findings are congruent with a study conducted by Equinet - The Public Profile of Equality Bodies. An Equinet Report (2015).

#### The Public Profile of Equality Bodies. An Equinet Report (2015)

Well organized and consistent social media engagement is important. Either to communicate publicly or to exchange information with specific groups (e.g. twitter for journalists or stakeholders to know a report has been issued, Facebook for promoting the work of the equality body and for sharing articles on related issues). However, dialogue can sometimes be difficult like providing answers, or avoiding disputes through the web.

The Public Profile of Equality Bodies. An Equinet Report (2015). Page 21

## Digital and Social Media

Digital and social media is a channel that can be used to promote positive, accurate messages, and to counter inaccurate messages, about the application of the law on equalities and human rights.

Equality bodies will seek to communicate with their audiences using digital and social media, notably:

- **Websites:** The majority of equality bodies have a website<sup>15</sup> and this can help in demonstrating their credibility and showing stakeholders that they are serious about their work. A website can be easily updated and ensures promotion of work. For example, the current homepage of Poland's Human Rights Defender<sup>16</sup> shows their latest statistics notably that in November 2013, their offices received 469 visitors and 3069 telephone calls, providing explanations and advice. They sent 6253 letters in 4809 cases, registered 187 open letters and protests. Another benefit of having a website can be seen in improved stakeholder relations services. A feedback form on the website can be invaluable, giving stakeholders a way to provide honest feedback. Websites can also be used to promote cases and policy developments. For example, the EHRC website has a page on Legal and Policy which demonstrates how they aim to secure an effective legal and regulatory framework for equality and human rights by influencing legislative and policy developments and by using their statutory powers<sup>17</sup>.
- **Electronic Newsletters:** Electronic newsletters are a popular way of communicating with stakeholders. The EHRC, for example, sends out a monthly electronic newsletter to around 38,000 EHRC contacts. The newsletter contains news relating to equality, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, transgender, human rights and more. This can be an extremely quick and cost-effective way to communicate with stakeholders and can be used as a key vehicle for promotional content and news feeds. Also, it is an excellent way in linking back to specific pages on an equality body's website or blog, and in turn this encourages quality, targeted website traffic.
- **Social Media:** The majority of equality bodies do not use Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube in the promotion of their work<sup>18</sup>. This can be disadvantageous as social media is a key tool area that can be used to generate more followers to a website and it can help an equality body to reach a larger audience. At a technical level, social media can help to boost a website's search engine ranking. Active and new content on social media accounts can mean a better Search Engine ranking on Google. Social media is free so it can prove a very cost effective solution in terms of marketing and promotion of work.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.equineteurope.org/Member-organisations-> (this link contains the Equality Bodies of Equinet and their websites.)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.rpo.gov.pl/en> (Poland's Human Rights Defender website)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/>(EHRC Legal and Policy pages).

<sup>18</sup> [In the meantime (2015), over half of Equinet members use one form of social media or another, namely Facebook, Twitter or Youtube]

## Promising Practice #11

### **Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) – UK**

New technology is of utmost importance as it enables us to attain important data – for example, from the online newsletter we can know which are the topics people read most (clicked on) etc, it also enables us to better understand if there are variances in topics of interest by different regions.

## 5.8 Communicating and cooperating with other equality bodies within the same country

The research sought to determine to what extent equality bodies communicate and cooperate with other equality entities within the same country.

### 5.8.1 Communicate with other equality bodies within the same country

The majority of entities participating in the survey indicated that they communicate with other equality bodies. It was noted that this enabled them to learn and share useful information and experiences. Other instances where equality bodies communicated amongst each other is related to their investigative role, i.e. when an entity receives a complaint that was not within their remit, they would communicate the issue to the appropriate equality body for them to handle it.

Furthermore, entities also pointed out that communication with other equality bodies was fundamental not to duplicate work, particularly among those (bodies) indicating the lack of human resources as an issue of concern for the smooth running of their operations.

On the other hand, there were entities that felt that there could be instances for improved communication between equality bodies. In this respect, one entity indicated that *“unfortunately this is just the ad hoc operative exchange of info, not a cooperation with a view of harmonising policies”*.

#### **Greek Ombudsman**

It must be noted that according to the anti-discrimination law, the Committee for Equal Treatment of the Ministry of Justice and the Labour Review Board, institutions that are not *stricto sensu* independent authorities, have taken on the role of agencies for the promotion of equal treatment in the private sector. So, the Greek Ombudsman communicates with the other two Equality Bodies in cases where the complaint submitted to the institution falls within the mandate of the other two Equality Bodies.

#### **Equality and Human Rights Commission – United Kingdom**

We have an annual 4 NHRI meetings and we sometimes produce Human Rights Council statements jointly.

### Tools utilised most often

Email and telephone/skype calls were the tools utilised most often to communicate with other entities (within the same country). Social media was not indicated to be a favoured tool for communication between equality bodies. Informal networking was also indicated to be a tool used quite often.

Other tools utilised though to a lesser extent include: monthly meetings or similar, the organisation of conferences, and consultation sessions.

### 5.8.2 Collaborating with other equality bodies within the same country

With respect to collaboration between equality bodies in the same country, the research evidenced that the larger entities (employing 50 or more full timers) tended to collaborate with other equality entities, while the smaller entities (less than 10 employees) generally did not collaborate with other equality bodies within their country. The main reasons for this lack of collaboration for small equality bodies were attributed to the lack of resources, as well as the lack of will from other entities to collaborate. With respect to the latter, there seems to be instances where such lack of collaboration stems from equality bodies' concern in safeguarding their tasks/remit. In instances where certain tasks were believed to be 'in conflict' and to overlap between entities, a silos approach seems to be adopted.

#### **Greek Ombudsman**

There are instances where NGOs feel threatened by the Ombudsman, however it is paramount to be clear and communicate with such entities and make them aware of the distinction in their role/job duties as opposed to them.

Among those equality bodies that collaborated, it was highlighted that various collaborations were undertaken with no one particular collaboration standing out. Entities tended to collaborate when: '*Assisting victims of discrimination*', '*campaigning*', '*undertaking educational endeavours*', and when '*dealing with international cooperation*'. Conversely entities did not indicate to collaborate on '*EU projects*'; '*Treaty/directives/legislation monitoring*' or '*when dealing with litigation issues*'.

#### **Equality and Human Rights Commission – United Kingdom**

We have an annual 4 NHRI's meetings and we sometimes produce Human Rights Council statements jointly.

#### **Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Belgium**

We have excellent communication and collaboration with other equality bodies. We organise training together (sometimes) and even undertake certain campaigns together. We also work together on certain cases and research...

## 5.9 Adapting services to effectively meet target groups' needs

While equality bodies have indicated a number of different endeavours that they undertake to better understand the needs of their target audience/s, three efforts stand out, namely:

- Consultation/stakeholder and/or target group sessions;
- Staff meetings; and
- Research projects.

A number of the larger entities (employing 50 plus full timers) also indicated to utilise focus groups to better understand the needs of their target groups.

### **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights**

We determine trends in our opinions and through our Front Office where the public can file complaints/questions.

### **Advocate of the Principle of Equality - Slovenia**

We call for comments and proposals on the web page. No other tool (except in very few training sessions).

### **Advocate of the Principle of Equality - Slovenia**

When seeking out what are the needs of our target audiences we would either:

- Utilise our network for feedback;
- Conduct 1 to 1 meetings with victims/individuals that have had issues; and
- Carry out on site visits and have discussions with a specific target audience.

## 5.10 Developing and strengthening business cases for equality mainstreaming

When seeking to promote the implementation of equality mainstreaming with stakeholders, the smaller equality bodies (those employing less than 50 full timers) participating in the study indicated to generally undertake two approaches, while the larger ones tend to embark on a number of endeavours. Furthermore, the larger entities were the ones to generally utilise a multitude of tools that often incorporate mailshots and the distribution of information/fact sheets.

Irrespective of the equality body size, the main tasks highlighted are:



- The organisation of training and/or consultation sessions, with a number of entities opting for targeted small group sessions;
- Entities involvement and feedback on policy and strategy making; and
- The organisation of one-to-one meetings.

## **Promising Practices #12**

### ***Equality and Human Rights Commission – United Kingdom***

We have a stakeholder engagement team that regularly meets up with members of parliament, etc as well as different Government departments and also organise one to one meetings, and a number of round tables. Therefore we are in touch with the stakeholders and ensure that they keep abreast of Human Rights issues/laws etc.

### ***Office of the Public Defender of Rights – Czech Republic***

We will also aim to provide education for professionals who deal with non-discrimination disputes or with victims of discrimination.

### ***The Scottish Government -***

Mainstreaming equality - <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/18507>

A more equal and just Scotland contributes to our economic and social wellbeing.

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. No one should be denied opportunities because of irrelevant differences.

Government is making progress on incorporating equality across its activities, both as a Policy Maker and as an Employer.

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – British Council**

### **OUR APPROACH**

There are 3 main strands informing our EDI Strategy – Business, Ethical and Legal, alongside a focus on 7 main (but not exclusive) areas – age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation and work-life balance. Together they help us give due regard to key aspects of diversity and use our resources effectively.

### Business Strand and Business Case

Respect for diversity is inextricably linked to our values and cultural relations role. We welcome diversity and recognise that diverse teams can outperform teams that are not diverse. We continue to strive to mainstream diversity in all our work to enhance the quality of what we do, our effectiveness and our reputation and to positively benchmark us alongside other organisations.

In respecting and valuing diversity we will continue to seek out and attract new talent and fresh perspectives and maximise and retain valued knowledge, experience and expertise. We will also continue to nurture creativity, innovation and flexibility and spot new opportunities, approaches and sources of support, so that we remain relevant and dynamic and achieve greater reach and impact and ultimately inclusion.

### Ethical Strand

We believe it is important to value everyone and treat them fairly as employees or participants in, or contributors to, our work irrespective of their background and the characteristics they have no control over. We recognise many benefits to doing at an individual, society and global level. This can be challenging, but a moral or ethical approach identifies inequality as dehumanising and inconsistent with social justice and inclusion.

### Legal strand

The law continues to play an important role in supporting social justice, eradicating unjustified and unlawful discrimination and achieving positive change and inclusion. Policies to support strong customer service, speaking up about concerns, environmental awareness and sustainability, child protection, anti-fraud and corruption and general legal compliance, supported by a Code of Conduct govern how we behave.

Our ultimate goal is to be an organisation where everyone who comes into contact with us feels valued and where our programmes, services and general ways of working demonstrate our commitment to diversity.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

Three main objectives with action points provide the focus for the next phase of our work.

**1) Developing capability and leaders.** Leaders exist in different roles and particularly, but not exclusively, in senior positions. They are crucial in driving progress and enhancing our working culture, reputation and impact. They can ensure communications and policies are shared with all staff and allow people to speak up. Therefore our emphasis will continue to be on nurturing and developing engagement, role models and capability, including that of senior leaders.

The result will be more confident and capable leaders, particularly senior leaders, who are able to promote diversity as an integral part of cultural relations and deliver the benefits of doing so. These include enhancing our people management and working culture and using the experience of our own journey and competence to position us as an organisation with a notable contribution to make to international aspects of diversity, as well as being a partner of choice.

## Tools

- Diversity development activities for leaders.
- Performance deliverables against which to measure progress and attainment.
- Web, intranet and other sources of information and guidance.
- Promoting and sharing our work and learning about international aspects of diversity with others.

**2) Fostering inclusion.** Greater inclusion is an important diversity outcome. To achieve this we intend to improve the involvement and representation of women in senior positions, and in some instances of men generally, as well as minority ethnic and disabled people, both in our workforce and activities. We will also nurture an organisational culture where people working and engaging with us feel respected and comfortable being themselves, free from unjustified discrimination.

The result will be an organisational and participant profile representative of the broader societies in which we work. In addition, there will be expanded opportunities for under-represented groups internally and externally to participate and contribute. The organisational benefits will be an enhanced reputation, brand and performance. These come from the positive messages, the recognition and invariable learning, employee engagement and expanded relationships and partnerships delivered by having more diverse staff and participants in our activities.

## Tools

- Equality targets to encourage actions that improve the internal representation and involvement of women, and in some instances men, minority ethnic and disabled people.
- Actions that improve the involvement of under-represented groups in our activities.
- Forums and initiatives for staff contributions and engagement that nurture inclusion, regardless of hierarchy, contractual status or geographical location.

**3) Performance, impact and legal compliance.** Measuring our performance and identifying our success in making a leading contribution to international aspects of EDI is crucial in evaluating our effectiveness and impact. We will therefore identify mechanisms for measuring the extent and quality of the contribution and distinct impact we aim to make. In addition, we will ensure we comply with our legal obligations.

The results will be improved performance against our own diversity standards derived from national and international benchmarks. This includes external recognition and strong compliance with legal obligations and the effective management of diversity related risk.

## Tools

- UK and global Diversity Assessment Framework targets, UK equality staff targets and relevant Staff Survey Results to measure progress.
- Statutory Equality Schemes (Northern Ireland and Welsh Language), Equal Pay reviews and action plans, Equality Screening and Impact Assessment activity, and the implementation of statutory codes to ensure legal compliance and manage risk.
- Distinct diversity impact measures to be developed

### 5.11 Lack of commitment towards equality by stakeholders

Not all entities felt that there were instances where there was a lack of stakeholder commitment towards equality. The main practices adopted to tackle this issue being:

- Repeated recommendations;
- Follow-up of recommendations;
- Bilateral meetings; and
- General promotion.

#### Promising Practice #13

In our country we realised that equality was not a specific topic students undertaking a law course would study. Hence we created moot court competitions for such students focusing on EU legislation pertaining to equality. This proved to be particularly effective/successful.

**Commission for the protection of equality - Serbia**

### 5.12 Raising Awareness

With regard to raising awareness, apart from the issues highlighted so far in this Chapter, the research study sought to also focus on the following specific instances, namely relating to:

- Sensitive research;
- The complex issues relating to equality; and
- The equality body's investigative role.

#### 5.12.1 Sensitive research

For the purpose of this study, sensitive research has been defined as:

*“Research is considered to be of a sensitive nature when it may impact on the feelings, attitudes and values held by individuals involved in the research process” - McCosker, Barnard, & Gerber,*

When dealing with sensitive research, there seems to be diverging ways how this is tackled. At one end there are equality bodies that opt for a consultative approach, while others tend to be bolder and publish their findings on their website. Further still, one of the in-depth interviews evidenced an equality body that opts for a “name and shame” approach whereby any businesses’ wrong doings are posted on the equality body’s website (including the name of the enterprise carrying out the wrong-doing/s).

### 5.12.2 Raising awareness regarding the complex issues related to equality

When tackling the complex issues related to equality, entities undertake various efforts, among which:

- Media inputs;
- Publishing of reports;
- Organising training sessions; and
- The entity's website.

### 5.12.3 Raising awareness on the entity's investigate role

As for increasing the awareness of the equality body's investigative role, those that replied to this question in the online survey indicated to generally do so through the organisation of training sessions and through press releases, with one entity also highlighting to do so through 'general promotion'.

Furthermore, when it came to publicising the conclusions reached following such investigations, entities generally relied on:

- Placing the findings in the entity's report/s;
- Press releases of the outcomes;
- Placement on the entity's website; and
- General promotional endeavours.

#### **Promising Practice #14**

##### ***Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (NIHR)***

With respect to receiving complaints from employees – the interviewee indicated that when they receive a complaint, they investigate and then publicize their findings on their website. This is a form of 'name and shame' that invariably places employers in a position where they ought to be more careful of what they do – also with respect to the Company's image. This, she said was another way to reach out to the employer – and that it was the employer's interest to keep a good link with the entity.

## 5.13 Investigating complaints on multiple grounds

With respect to investigating complaints on multiple grounds, one entity (Equality and Human Rights Commission – United Kingdom) indicated that it had a legal department that dealt specifically with investigating this kind of complaints. Such a stance is not surprising seeing that the entity has over 100 individuals employed on a full time basis.

On the other hand, the approach adopted by Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (that employed between 11 and 25 full timers) was that "in general we would investigate the complaint on the multiple grounds but then pursue the case in relation to the stronger ground".

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Overview

This study has explored the work of a number of equality bodies, mostly based in the European Union, through a survey and in-depth telephone interviews. When considering the findings of the survey and in-depth interviews the following recommendations were elicited. For the purpose of this report, recommendations have been divided in three sections:

- I. The good practices adopted by equality bodies for methods and tools used to reach out to target groups in sectors related to NCPE's extended remit, (that is discrimination on the grounds of sex or family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, or gender identity), and also on other grounds such as disability;
- II. The good practices adopted by equality bodies in involving stakeholders and key players; and
- III. The communication between different equality bodies within the same country.

### 6.2 Good Practices adopted by Equality Bodies in Reaching Out to the Target Groups

A number of equality bodies claimed that keeping close contact with the relevant NGOs working within the different remits as well as building a relationship of trust with such NGOs proved to be a successful practice in reaching out to the diverse target groups. Such practice is particularly useful in countries where the general public lacks trust in governmental authorities and thus victims of discrimination were more willing to go to the respective NGOs rather than to equality bodies. In turn, the close contact between NGOs and equality bodies allowed for NGOs to put forward any issues or even cases of discrimination to the equality bodies.

The vast majority of participants claimed that appearances on the media, media campaigns and the publishing of accessible material (including material in different minority languages, including sign language and without the use of excessive legal language) seem to be the most adequate tools used in targeting the diverse range of target groups. One way of tackling the issue of under-reporting of cases of discrimination amongst the target groups is to distribute the findings of research undertaken by equality bodies.

The use of social media is also gaining momentum and proving to be a popular practice amongst equality bodies in reaching out to the diverse target groups, particularly for the dissemination of information amongst civil society and the general public. Furthermore, the use of social media is particularly relevant when needing to reach out to large audiences in a short period of time. The equality bodies' website and an online newsletter are also considered to be important tools in the dissemination of information. However, in this regard, the participating bodies indicated the need for human resources to continually update content and keep the information provided on such media up to date.

Furthermore, as highlighted by the UK equality body (Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)) there is the potential to utilise new technology not only to distribute/disseminate information and create awareness, but it can also be particularly useful to also gauge readership/viewership and which articles/topics are popular.

### 6.3 Good Practices adopted by Equality Bodies in Involving Stakeholders and Key Players

A popular practice amongst the participating equality bodies in reaching out to the stakeholders and involving them in their work is 'training the employers'. It is believed that through such training, the equality bodies are enhancing the creation of a culture of rights amongst employers with the aim of decreasing discrimination. A useful tool adopted by the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights is the yearly training of local anti-discrimination bureaus around the country with the aim of filling the knowledge gaps. One could adopt this tool for Malta by training the staff at local councils with the aim of filling knowledge gaps about the services available and provided by NCPE.

The issue of lack of participation by major stakeholders in events organised by the equality bodies does not seem to hold significant relevance to the participating equality bodies. The direct involvement of major stakeholders in the organisation of events such as training and conferences seems to be the answer to this problem. In addition, another practice through which this problem can be overcome is by sending specific e-mails targeted towards the relevant stakeholders rather than sending generic emails. Although less utilised by the participating equality bodies, inviting renowned speakers as well as involving expert speakers in the events seems to be another successful practice in this regard.

The organisation of 'outreach sessions' with particular NGOs and other stakeholders is another tool of good practice used by the vast majority of the participating equality bodies. The organisation of specific training sessions for the target audience is another successful tool utilised.

### 6.4 Communication between Different Equality Bodies within the Same Country

The vast majority of the participating equality bodies claimed that communication amongst different equality bodies was useful in the sharing of good practices and information as well as when investigating particular cases. Such communication is also very relevant in order for work not to be duplicated amongst the different equality bodies. It is being recommended that planned meetings amongst equality bodies working within the same country rather than ad hoc initiatives are taken on board. The aim of these planned meetings would be to maximise the potential of such entities as well as ensuring cohesion in the work of equality bodies.

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## 8. ANNEX 1 - ONLINE SURVEY ON EQUALITY BODIES' GOOD PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF NON-DISCRIMINATION'

The below information is to indicate what type of questions were asked. The format could have altered slightly in view of the questionnaire being uploaded online. Furthermore, it was ensured that entities had ample space should they have wished to provide further details/information on good practices.

**1 Name of Equality Body** \_\_\_\_\_

**2 How long have you been established for? (kindly tick where appropriate)**

5 years or less

Between 6 and 10 years

Between 11 and 20 years

Between 21 and 30 years

Between 31 and 40 years

More than 40 years

**3 What is the total number of full time employees? (kindly tick where appropriate)**

5 or less

Between 6 and 10

Between 11 and 25

Between 25 and 50

Between 51 and 75

Between 76 and 100

More than 100

**4 Your entity is predominantly:**

Quasi-judicial body (*i.e impartial institutions which spend the bulk of their time and resources hearing, investigating and deciding on individual instances of discrimination brought before them*)

Promotion-type and legal support body (*i.e. spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination*)

**‘Other’**

**5 Kindly indicate the grounds within your remit (Kindly tick as many as appropriate).**

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender identity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race/ethnic origin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**6 How do you generally reach out to target groups falling within your remit? (Kindly tick as many as appropriate)**

Brochures/leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Campaigns (such as TV spots, radio and similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conferences/Seminars	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mail shots	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>

Social media	
Training events	
Visits (to schools, companies and the like)	
Website and/or electronic newsletters	
Outreach sessions with particular NGOs	
One-to-one sessions with individuals	
Distribution of printed material	
Appearances in printed media	
Appearances in broadcast media	
Presence at large mainstream events such as concerts/fairs etc	
Outreach sessions with particular CSOs such as trade unions, employers associations etc.)	
Other	
Please specify other _____	
_____	

**7 Kindly rank, in order of importance, the tools you feel are most effective for reaching out to the respective target groups (where '1' indicates the most important, '2' the second most important, '3' the third most important tool, '4' the fourth most important tool, '5' the fifth most important tool, etc utilised)**

	Employers and service providers	NGOs, VOs, CSOs, policy makers/drafters, equality bodies	Victims of discrimination and members of minority groups	General Public
Brochures/leaflets				
Media Campaigns (such as TV spots, radio and similar				
Conferences/Seminars				
Mail shots				

Meetings				
Social media				
Training events				
Visits (to schools, companies and the like)				
Website and/or electronic newsletters				
Outreach sessions with particular NGOs				
One-to-one sessions with individuals				
Distribution of printed material				
Appearances in printed media				
Presence at large mainstream events such as concerts/fairs etc				
Other				

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**8 Please mention any good practices established in this regard, if any'**

**9 Do you have a strategy for reaching out to the diverse groups that fall within your remit?**

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide further details where appropriate \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**10 List 3 endeavours (activities/tools) which were successful in reaching out to specific target groups. Kindly also specify the target group for each activity/tool mentioned.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**11 Do you generally communicate with other equality bodies based in the same country as yourselves?**

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why do you communicate?

Why don't you communicate? \_\_\_\_\_

**12 If you answered 'yes' to the above question, could you kindly indicate the three (3) tools utilised most often to communicate with equality bodies based in the same country as yourselves**

Exchange of brochures/leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open Conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set Monthly Meetings (or similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Through informal networking during meetings set for civil society in general	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone/teleconferencing/skype (or similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network of equality bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation Sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_

**13 Do you generally work/collaborate with other equality bodies based in the same country as yourselves?**

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why do you work/collaborate with other equality bodies?  
 Why don't you work/collaborate with other equality bodies?  
 Please mention any good practices established in this regard if any

**14 If you answered 'yes' to the above, could you kindly indicate in which area/s you generally collaborate?**

Campaigning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dealing with the private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
International cooperation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Investigation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Litigation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Presence on printed media, e.g. publishing articles together	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research and analysis and Report writing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treaty/directives/legislation monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual cases	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partners in EU Projects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assisting victims of discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide further details where appropriate

**15 How do you seek to tackle the issue of under-reporting of cases of discrimination? (tick as many as appropriate)**

Brochures/leaflet distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campaigns (TV, radio and/or similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearances in printed media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reaching out to the private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training to potential victims of discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training to employers and service providers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appearances on tv/radio	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishing of material in minority languages	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishing material in accessible format without the excessive use of legal language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meetings with particular NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not an issue for us	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_

Please mention any good practices established in this regard if any

Please provide further details where appropriate

**16 How do you seek to tackle the issue of lack of knowledge and awareness of rights? (tick as many as appropriate)**

Brochures/leaflet distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campaigns (TV, radio and/or similar)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper articles or similar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reaching out to the private sector	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social media	<input type="checkbox"/>



Training to potential victims of discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training to employers and service providers	<input type="checkbox"/>
TV/radio appearances	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishing of material in minority languages	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishing material in accessible format without the excessive use of legal language	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meetings with particular NGOs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not an issue for us	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please specify other _____	

Please provide further details where appropriate

**17 How do you generally deal with the issue of lack of participation in events organised by your equality body?**

Not an issue for us	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brochures/leaflet distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>
TV ads	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio ads	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper ads	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online campaign	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper articles or similar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Targeted Phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific emails (not generic)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of major stakeholders in the organisation of the event	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inviting renowned speaker/s	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giving due concern to the choice of day/location of event	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provision of certificate of attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>

Providing transport, including for disabled participants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Childcare services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sign language services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving expert speakers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please specify other _____	

Please provide further details where appropriate

**18 How do you generally determine what are the required services to effectively meet the target group/s needs through your work?**

Consultation/stakeholder and/or target group sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distribution of questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation box (for example at offices)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research projects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please specify other _____	

**19 How do you generally promote the implementation of equality mainstreaming with stakeholders?**

Consultation sessions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information/fact sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement and feedback on policy and strategy making	<input type="checkbox"/>
One to one meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mail shots	
Targeted small group sessions	
Training sessions	
Other	

Please specify other \_\_\_\_\_

Please mention any good practices established in this regard if any

**20 How do you generally deal with the following issues?**

<p><b>Sensitive Research</b> – (Research is considered to be of a sensitive nature when it may impact on the feelings, attitudes and values held by individuals involved in the research process<sup>6</sup>) (McCosker, Barnard, &amp; Gerber, 2001).</p>
Lack of commitment by stakeholders
Raising awareness on complex issues related to equality
Raise awareness on your investigative role
Investigate complaints on multiple grounds

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SURVEY**

<sup>6</sup>(McCosker, Barnard, & Gerber, 2001).

## 9. ANNEX 2 - TELEPHONE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Guidance questions – semi structured interview

1. Can you share any positive experiences for reaching out to your diverse target groups within your remit?
2. What modern technologies are used for reaching out to the diverse target groups within your remit?
3. How do you deal with challenges related to your target groups?

Prompting purposes

- a. Under-reporting of cases of discrimination
- b. Lack of knowledge and awareness of rights
- c. Lack of participation in events (including training)
- d. Adapting services to meet the needs of your target group

4. How do you deal with challenges related to stakeholders such as NGOs, national and local authorities, public administration?

Prompting purposes

- a. Engaging key players
- b. Building cooperation with stakeholders to meet objectives
- c. Developing and strengthening equality mainstreaming
- d. Lack of commitment towards equality by stakeholders

5. How do you deal with other challenges as an equality body?
  - a. Developing a communications profile and positioning – (having a positive profile of the equality body; that target groups and stakeholders are aware of the work that the equality body does)
  - b. Sensitive research – (Research is considered to be of a sensitive nature when it may impact on the feelings, attitudes and values held by individuals involved in the research process).
  - c. Developing and strengthening business cases for equality mainstreaming – (the advantages of adopting equality mainstreaming that would present to a company/stakeholders adopting such strategy).
  
6. How do you go about raising awareness on your investigative role? Do you publish the conclusions and how? How do you investigate complaints on multiple grounds?
  
7. How would you describe your relationship with other equality bodies in your country?
  - a. Do you work together?
  - b. How do you communicate with other equality bodies?
  
8. Have you developed any strategy (for example - communication purposes) and if so could you kindly explain/forward it to us.

## 10. ANNEX 3 - EQUINET EMAIL INFORMING ITS MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This is not the integral email. The below seeks to illustrate what was sent and give an indication of placement. Information pertaining to Part 1 of the email has been omitted. A description of this research study was included in Part 2 of the EQUINET Members' Bulletin on Internal Network Updates (the 'EQUINET Members' Initiatives'), as below:

Dear Equinet Members,

Please find attached and below the new issue of the Equinet Members' Bulletin, which gathers recent internal updates:

- **Equinet updates (Equinet AGM and Board Elections Strategic Litigation Cluster, new Equinet publications, next Equinet meetings)**
- **Equinet members' updates (Requests from Equinet members and members' initiatives)**
- **External stakeholders' requests**

Your feedback is also greatly appreciated so should you have comments or further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you and in the meantime, happy reading!

Best regards,

**Jessica Machacova**

Project Officer

**EQUINET - European Network of Equality Bodies**

138 Rue Royale | 1000 Brussels | Belgium

T: +32 (0) 2 212 31 80 | F: +32 (0) 2 212 3030

E: [Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org](mailto:Jessica.machacova@equineteurope.org)

Website: [www.equineteurope.org](http://www.equineteurope.org)

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## EQUINET MEMBERS' BULLETIN ON INTERNAL NETWORK UPDATES – TABLE OF CONTENTS

### PART 1: EQUINET UPDATES

- Equinet AGM elects **new Executive Board** (2015-2017)
- Equinet welcomes **three new member equality bodies**
- Equinet AGM: Other **key highlights**
- Reminder: **Equinet Strategic Litigation Cluster** – registration by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October
- New **Equinet Publications**
- **Save the date! - Next Equinet Meetings**

### PART 2: EQUINET MEMBERS' UPDATES

- **Requests** from Equinet members
- **Equinet Members' Initiatives**

### PART 3 – EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS' REQUESTS

- **ERIO's 4<sup>th</sup> workshop** "Fighting hate speech against Roma: the Role of Equality Bodies" – Presentations available
- Reminder: European Commission – **Consultation on the Implementation of the Self-Employed Directive 2010/41/EC** (*Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015*)
- Reminder: European Commission - **Public consultation on the implementation of the Directive 79/7/EEC on the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security** (*Deadline: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015*)

## 11. EQUINET MEMBERS' INITIATIVES

- **National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE – Malta) – Research on Equality Bodies' Good Practices in the field of Non-Discrimination**

As part of the project *“Developing a Culture of Rights through Capacity Building”*, the Maltese NCPE has commissioned Grant Thornton Services Ltd to conduct a research on Equality Bodies' Good Practices in the field of Non-Discrimination which includes:

- A **research on equality bodies' good practices** by analysing at least 10 equality bodies in 10 EU Member States, excluding Austria and Northern Ireland and taking into account relevant reports, studies and statistics.
- The study will involve **an online questionnaire** (and subsequently a number of Skype/telephone interviews) that will specifically target equality bodies in EU Member States.

The purpose and scope of the data collected by Grant Thornton Services Ltd is **to seek methods and tools equality bodies use to reach out to target groups and stakeholders**, especially in sectors to the extended remit of NCPE and also to other sectors such as disability.

Through this study, promising practices in the field of non-discrimination will be identified, providing strategies tailored towards the diversity of the target groups that an equality body such as NCPE has. The recommendations of this research will be used to develop positive experiences and promising practices. It will delineate any developments or improvements that have been put in place throughout the years and shed light on the differences, contrasts and/or similarities of experiences, circumstances and needs.





## 12. ERIO'S 4TH WORKSHOP "FIGHTING HATE SPEECH AGAINST ROMA: THE ROLE OF EQUALITY BODIES" – PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE

On 16th October 2015, the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), in cooperation with Equinet, held a workshop with equality bodies and Roma representatives hosted by the Belgian Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities.

The workshop presentations, pictures and reports of the event will be published on **ERIO's website**.



## 13. REMINDER: EUROPEAN COMMISSION – CONSULTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SELF-EMPLOYED DIRECTIVE 2010/41/EC (DEADLINE: 20TH NOVEMBER 2015)

The European Commission is welcoming contributions from equality bodies in relation to the application of the Directive 2010/41/EC on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EC.

More information about the consultation is available on **Equinet's Members' Area**.

**Contributions should be sent by 20th November to [JUST-D1-UNIT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JUST-D1-UNIT@ec.europa.eu)**

Reminder: European Commission - Public consultation on the implementation of the Directive 79/7/EEC on the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (Deadline: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015)

This public consultation is a part of the evaluation of the Council Directive 79/7/EEC on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security under the recently adopted **Commission's Better Regulation Framework**. This public consultation will be used to collect the views of the broad public in the context of evaluating the implementation and application of Directive 79/7/EEC.

**The public consultation consists of an online questionnaire which should be filled in by 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015.**

More information as well as the evaluation questionnaire are available **here**.

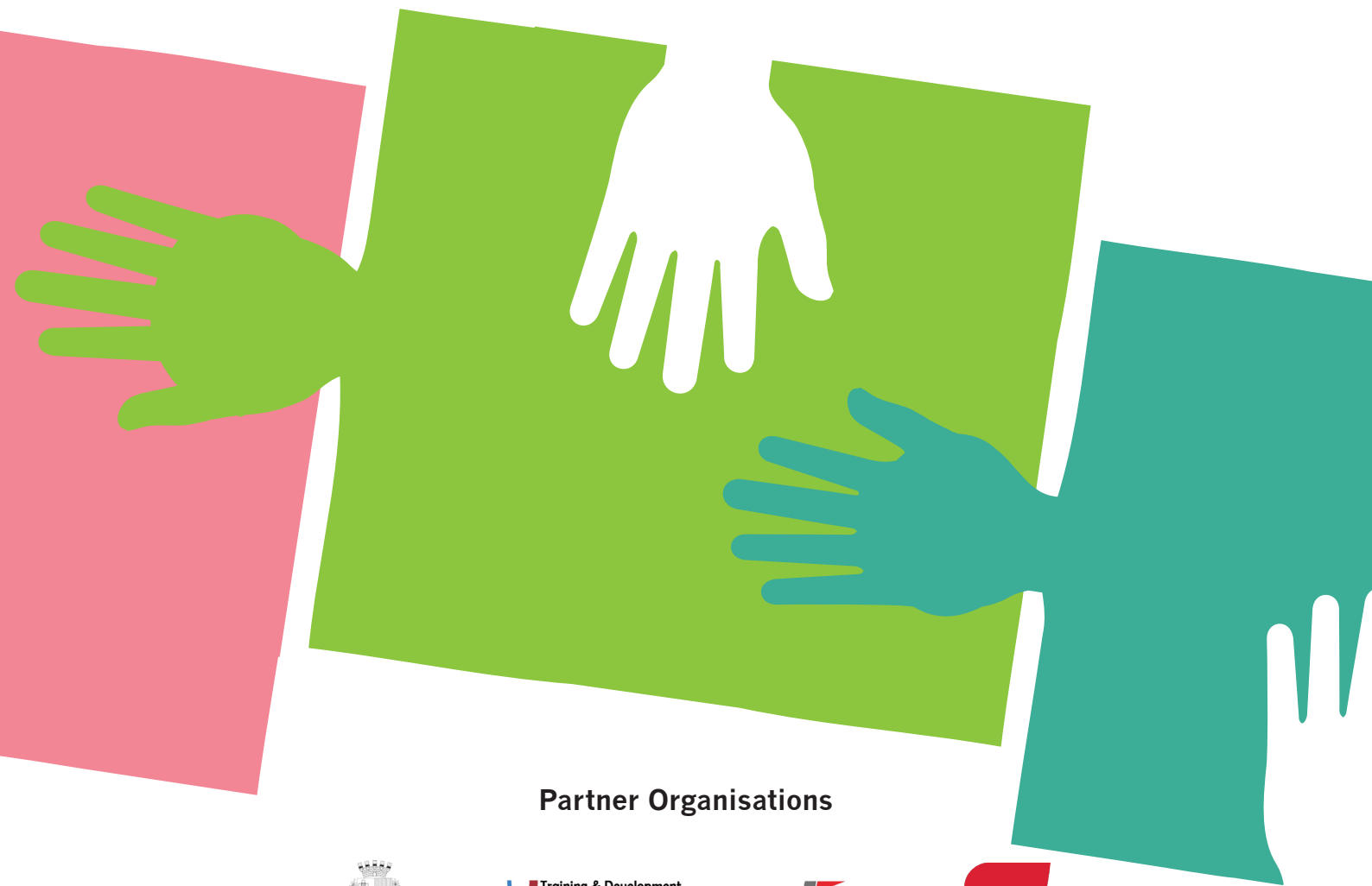
# National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)

Gattard House, National Road,  
Blata I-Bajda HMR 9010  
Malta

**Tel:** 00356 2590 3850 - **Email:** [equality@gov.mt](mailto:equality@gov.mt)

**Web:** [www.equality.gov.mt](http://www.equality.gov.mt)

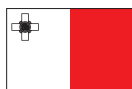
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