

Equality Bodies and the Economic Empowerment of Women

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Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner
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Equinet Mission

*‘Equinet promotes equality in Europe through supporting and enabling the work of national equality bodies. It supports equality bodies to be independent and effective as valuable catalysts for **more equal societies**’*

Equinet

- Network of national **equality bodies**
(46 members from 34 European countries)
- Equality bodies on the basis of **EU Equal Treatment Directives**
(2000/43/EC; 2004/113/EC; 2006/54/EC)
- **Diversity** among national equality bodies in terms of size, mandate, grounds, structure and experience



Equality bodies

- Mandated by EU to
 - “Provide independent assistance to victims”
 - “Conduct independent surveys”
 - “Publish independent reports and make recommendations”

Gender Equality: A Founding Value

« The European Union is unique in setting out, in its founding documents, the shared beliefs, ideals and principles that we hold to be important across all the member states. »

Equinet perspective « *The Persistence of Discrimination, Harassment and Inequality for Women* » (2015)



Gender Equality and the Financial Crisis

- Yet most equality bodies note «the negative impact of the economic and financial crisis and of austerity policies on the work of progressing gender equality»

Equinet perspective (2015)



Business Case for Gender Equality

“Inequalities do not only divide our societies, but also put a break on our competitiveness and economic growth.”

Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labor Mobility, 22 May 2017



The Situation of Women: Economic Empowerment?

- Discrimination on grounds of socio-economic status often linked to gender
- Pregnancy/maternity discrimination widespread
- Discrimination in relation to uptake of leave and flexible work arrangements
- Inequalities in care work
- Gender stereotypes continue to hinder equality

Good Practices

- Work-Life Balance policies
 - Increase labor market access for those with care responsibilities
 - Promote gender equality in care responsibilities, including through paternity leave and working with employers to combat discrimination and gender stereotypes
 - Ensure Barcelona targets for quality childcare are met
- Gender neutral hiring and promotion procedures
- Impact assessments by public authorities
- Proactive approach to equality through regular monitoring (both public and private sectors)



Conclusions

- Proactive approach to achieve equality in practice
 - Continuous efforts needed from all stakeholders
- Equality duties: an ambitious new tool?





**Thank you for your
attention!**

Any questions?



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