

# **Draft Equinet Work Plan 2019**

## INTRODUCTION

**A new beginning.** 2019 is a milestone year for Equinet as our European Network of Equality Bodies embarks on the first year of its new Strategic Plan for the period 2019 - 2022. Building upon our achievements and learnings from previous years, we start with renewed motivation and energy to work towards the realisation of the objectives under the new Strategic Plan, to advance and achieve substantive equality for all in Europe.

In past years, Equinet's focused work towards promoting standards for equality bodies materialised in two important documents at European level. In 2018, the European Commission adopted a Recommendation on standards for equality bodies in order to ensure the independence and effectiveness of national equality bodies. The Recommendation, a legal act of the Commission, sets minimum standards concerning the mandate of equality bodies; their independence; their effectiveness, including sufficient resources and appropriate powers; and the national institutional architecture for equality. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe also published its revised General Policy Recommendation No 2, providing standards to member states for the mandate, institutional infrastructure, effectiveness, independence and accessibility of equality bodies in order to realise their full potential and better protect people facing discrimination. In 2019, Equinet and national equality bodies must now take on the challenge to promote and support the monitoring and implementation of the European Commission's Recommendation and the ECRI General Policy Recommendation at national level across Europe.

2019 will also be a year of important milestones for equality in Europe. In May 2019, Europe will elect a new Parliament to serve the Union for the next five years, and a new European Commission will be appointed. Equinet and equality bodies will closely follow the developments leading to the formation of the European Union's key institutions. We will take on the challenge to pursue work on their values-based messaging to promote the appreciation of equality and diversity as core values in Europe, to ensure a strong equality agenda for the years to come at European level. This political commitment must be supported by strong financial mechanisms. Equinet will support the EU institutions in their work towards the adoption of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework Post-2020 with a strong equality focus.

We look forward to an important year of work, addressing challenges and exploring opportunities on topics of sexual harassment, promoting equality for older persons, implementation of standards for equality bodies, artificial intelligence and digitalisation, among other important priorities. In this context, in 2019 we will continue to work with our member national equality bodies across Europe, as well as the range of our partners and stakeholders at European level to effectively tackle discrimination and achieve substantive equality for everyone in Europe.

Tena Šimonović Einwalter  
Chair of Equinet Board

Anne Gaspard  
Equinet Executive Director

## OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

Equinet's overarching goal is to foster a strong, resilient and innovative network, which helps national equality bodies fulfil their potential to support people experiencing discrimination and ultimately, to advance and achieve full equality for all.

There are three core objectives reflected and operationalised in our annual work plan, aligned with the objectives of the Equinet Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022.

We will **strengthen and support equality bodies to achieve equality for all**. We will do so by facilitating the deepening of expert, institutional and administrative capacities of our members, promoting the full implementation of European laws and standards for equality bodies at national level, and providing opportunities for good practice exchange and peer-support.

Our second objective is to **act as the expert voice of equality bodies to advance equality in Europe**. Under this objective we aim to make a significant contribution to advancing the equality agenda in Europe. We will continue to collect, synthesize and communicate the specialised expert knowledge of equality bodies and we will also strive to create new knowledge.

Our third objective is to **sustain a resilient, engaged and innovative network**. We will sustain and enhance our effective links with our members, taking into account their diverse needs, and continue to ensure good and transparent governance and the financial sustainability of the Network.

## EQUINET STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2022

The Equinet Strategic Plan 2019 - 2022 builds upon our past achievements, and gives expression to our ambition for the next four years, considering the changing societal, political and policy environment in relation to the equality and equal treatment sector in Europe.

For the next four years, Equinet has defined a set of action areas under the Strategic Plan objectives, as follows:

### A. STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EQUALITY BODIES TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY FOR ALL

1. Supporting the understanding, implementation and monitoring of European standards for equality bodies at European and Member State level;
2. Strengthening institutional capacity of equality bodies by offering guidance and opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer support systems;
3. Building the capacity of equality body staff by providing space for peer exchange, learning, information sharing and development of expertise;
4. Building the capacity of equality bodies to increase their visibility by raising awareness about their work, understanding of their role and functions, recognition and appreciation of their potential at European and Member State level.

### B. ACT AS THE EXPERT VOICE OF EQUALITY BODIES TO ADVANCE EQUALITY IN EUROPE

1. Identifying, researching and analysing emerging challenges and opportunities in the field of equality and non-discrimination;

2. Conveying the expert voice of equality bodies at European and international level;
3. Being a research and knowledge hub for the work and contribution of equality bodies, while further generating and disseminating knowledge on equality and non-discrimination;
4. Strengthening cooperation with all relevant stakeholders at European level and acting as a focal point for building shared perspectives and generating new thinking on equality and non-discrimination.

### C. SUSTAIN A RESILIENT, ENGAGED AND INNOVATIVE NETWORK

1. Remaining relevant to the diversity of our membership and their staff, across the different combinations of functions and/or mandates held by equality bodies;
2. Strengthening our governance through transparency, inclusion, and increased Board capacity;
3. Sustaining active membership communication and engagement through a variety of innovative communication tools;
4. Ensuring sustainability of funding through securing a core grant and seeking diversification;
5. Putting in practice better monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

## OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES 2019

TOOLS FOR ACTION	TOPICS	OUTPUTS
<b>A. STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EQUALITY BODIES TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY FOR ALL</b>		
<b>SEMINAR</b>	<b>Equality bodies supporting equality for older persons</b>	1 seminar 1 summary
<b>TRAINING</b>	<b>Building positive narratives</b>	1 training event 1 collection of narratives
<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>Standards: Implementing European Standards for Equality Bodies</b>	1 meeting 1 study visit with legal focus (sanctions)
	<b>Legal Working Group</b>	2 meetings

<b>WORKING GROUPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis and development of ECtHR case law on discrimination</li> </ul>	1 monitoring system for legal cases
	<b>Communication Strategies and Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing positive narratives</li> </ul>	2 meetings
	<b>Research and Data Collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use and collection of data on complaints</li> </ul>	2 meetings 1 report
<b>CLUSTER</b>	<b>Freedom of Movement Directive</b>	2 meetings 1 collection of good practices

## B. ACT AS THE EXPERT VOICE OF EQUALITY BODIES TO ADVANCE EQUALITY IN EUROPE

<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>Sexual Harassment</b>	1 conference 1 summary
<b>WORKING GROUPS</b>	<b>Policy Formation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SDGs (2018 -&gt;)</li> </ul>	2 meetings 1 study visit on SDGs
	<b>Gender Equality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input into new EC Strategies for Gender and LGBTI</li> </ul>	2 meetings 2 strategy recommendations 1 Discussion Paper on Trans & Intersex Rights
<b>RESEARCH</b>	<b>Digitalisation (Artificial Intelligence)</b>	1 research paper
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make visible the work and experience of equality bodies</li> <li>Disseminate knowledge on equality based on the experience of equality bodies</li> <li>Promoting positive narratives about equality</li> </ul>	Equinet Website Newsletters Annual Report Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)

<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>	Ongoing engagement with European and international organisations and stakeholders	Regular meetings and exchange
	<b>Cooperation Platforms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roma Equality</li> <li>• Economic and Social Rights</li> </ul>	Reaction to developments in policy and legislation

## C. SUSTAIN A RESILIENT, ENGAGED AND INNOVATIVE NETWORK

<b>COMMUNICATION STRATEGY</b>	New strategy linked to our Strategic Plan 2019-2022	1 Communication Strategy
<b>BOARD MEETINGS</b>	Strategic guidance to the Secretariat	4 Board Meetings
<b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with Members, European institutions and stakeholders</li> <li>• Equinet Board elections</li> </ul>	1 Annual General Meeting
<b>MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>	New Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	
<b>COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members' Forum on website</li> <li>• Members' Bulletins</li> <li>• Webinars</li> </ul>	

## MAP OF ACTIVITIES

*Note: cantered around key topics - will be completed once draft is confirmed by the General Assembly of Equinet Members*

## A. STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT EQUALITY BODIES TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY FOR ALL

### SEMINAR

#### Equality bodies supporting equality for older persons

Building upon the findings of the Equality Law Working Group's 2018 discussion paper on age-based discrimination, in 2019 Equinet will organise a capacity-building seminar for staff members of equality bodies on the different ways in which equality bodies can work to advance and achieve equality for older persons.

Taking into account the demographic developments in Europe, as well as the increased attention to promoting the equality and rights of older people at European as well as international levels, it is necessary that ageing is looked at consistently through an equality perspective with a view to advancing and safeguarding substantive equality for older persons. In line with this, the overall objective of the seminar is to share views and good practices on the equal treatment of older persons and to develop concrete proposals and actionable recommendations to enhance their protection against discrimination, ensuring that their specific needs are addressed on an equal footing with others, with a view to achieve their full equality in practice.

The seminar will address different themes, including:

- The practical implementation of an equality perspective on older age: identifying best practices and blueprints for the future among equality bodies' initiatives in support of older persons' rights;
- Challenges related to safeguarding equality for older persons;
- Achieving equality for older persons as a precondition for protecting a broader range of economic, social, and political rights;
- Working with organisations promoting the rights and equal treatment of older people.

#### Expected outputs:

1. 45 staff members of equality bodies will participate at this seminar from more than 20 countries.
2. A summary of the seminar will be uploaded on the Equinet website.

## **TRAINING**

### **Building positive narratives**

Equality bodies are champions for the core European value of equality and defenders of the right to equal treatment. They are tasked with contributing to an awareness of rights and a societal valuing of equality, yet this is often hard to explain in an easy to understand way. Populist rhetoric is gaining momentum through a wide reach and basic messaging. As per recent research carried out by Equinet, it is important to provide equality bodies with the knowledge that helps them develop successful alternative narratives to such messages.

According to the Equinet Perspective on Equality Bodies addressing Hate Speech (due end 2018), there is a significant gap evident in the field of communication relating to work by equality bodies on alternative narratives. Hate speech can be challenged head-on and this is being done by some equality bodies. However, it must also be disrupted with narratives that carry and engage values that would motivate a different relationship with diversity. This is a resource intensive activity to sustain and to conduct to a necessary scale. However, it is not yet reported by equality bodies as part of their repertoire for combating hate speech and, more broadly, promoting equality.

In order to develop the capacity of equality body staff in this area, we will create a training session to explore how to build positive narratives and identify useful techniques on how to promote equality in a values-based manner. This will be done in an accessible and interesting way. Following a needs assessment, over 2 ½ days, staff of equality bodies will work on a number of strands to this, including:

- Understanding the key elements of narrative;

- Learning how to apply a values-based approach to narratives;
- Practically apply their learning in order to develop a collection of narratives to promote equality.

Expected outputs:

1. The training session will take place over 2 ½ days with around 15 members present.
2. 1 collection of narratives to promote equality.

## PROJECT

### Implementing European Standards for Equality Bodies

This project aims to support the understanding, implementation and monitoring of European standards for equality bodies at European and Member State level. It will contribute to strengthening and supporting equality bodies to advance and achieve equality for all.

The project will focus on discussing the practical implications of two key developments in 2017-2018: the adoption of ECRI's revised General Policy Recommendation No. 2. on Equality Bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level and the European Commission Recommendation on standards for equality bodies. Project participants will discuss:

- How these standards can best be used to guarantee independent, effective and accessible equality bodies;
- How equality bodies together with European and international organisations can support Member States in the implementation of these standards;
- The best ways to monitor the implementation of these standards;
- The changes and safeguards equality bodies themselves need to put in place to ensure their operations are in compliance with these standards.

Expected outputs:

1. Wide dissemination of and awareness-raising about the European Standards for Equality Bodies.
2. One meeting of equality bodies attended by around 15 members.
3. One study visit on an agreed issue relating to standards (e.g. sanctions in discrimination cases) attended by around 15 members.

## WORKING GROUPS

### Legal Working Group

In 2019 the Working Group will:

- Discuss recent and upcoming case law of the European Court of Human Rights and how equality bodies and Equinet could best contribute to developing the Court's jurisprudence, including increased analysis of Article 14 and issues that are at the cutting edge of equality law and theory. External experts might be invited to these discussions as appropriate.
- Monitor cases communicated by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) to identify those that are directly relevant for equality and non-discrimination and the work of equality bodies. The Working Group will also seek to identify cases of high relevance relating to

equality and non-discrimination and contribute to preparing any third party interventions to the ECtHR.

- Contribute to the preparation and organization of Equinet conferences and seminars with a legal focus.
- Provide a platform for case workers of equality bodies to request information and advice from each other relating to specific cases.

#### Expected outputs:

1. The Working Group will meet twice during 2018 with around 20 members present.
2. The Working Group will put in place a monitoring system for relevant cases communicated by the ECtHR and contribute to the drafting of any third-party interventions to the ECtHR.

### Communication Strategies and Practices

In 2019 the Working Group will:

- Organise thematic meetings on topical communication challenges that are presented by an expert (internal or external depending on the topic). The group will get to ask questions, identify the values-based messages and work together to develop responses to the challenges.
- Support the development of the training on positive narratives and follow-up from this, including the dissemination collection of narratives to promote equality.
- Following on from work done in 2018, the group will promote the Equality Checklist developed to set the agenda on equality and non-discrimination during campaigning periods in the run up to elections.

#### Expected outputs:

1. The Working Group will meet twice during 2019 with around 20 members present.
2. Engage in the organisation of the Training on Building Positive Narratives, from the point of view of equality bodies.
3. Enable Equinet and equality bodies to engage with European and national election campaigns in order to promote the Equality Checklist.

### Research and Data Collection

Research and data collection are essential tools for equality bodies to identify inequalities at the individual, organizational and societal level, and pursue and promote effective responses based on the evidence and insight provided by research. Data collection and analysis - the fundamentals of a research-based approach - provide an objective way to identify and tackle policy shortcomings and highlight room for improvement and good practices to be replicated at national and international level.

Initiated as a short-term Cluster in 2017 in order to identify good practices on how to run successful research and overcome data deficits, this Working Group provides space for the research and data collection staff of interested equality bodies to:

- Discuss the **challenges of research and data collection** and try to find ways forward;
- Share and discuss **criteria** for successful research and data collection;



- Identify **good examples** of research and data collection across Europe;
- Identify steps to be taken to **address data deficits** with limited resources.

In support of the above overarching aims, in 2019 the Working Group will have the following objectives:

- Meet the capacity building needs of cluster participants through **peer learning, support and exchange**;
- Building upon the findings and learning from the 2018 Complaints Data Questionnaire, prepare **a report** on the collection and use of complaints data by equality bodies;
- Strengthen ties with and build upon the knowledge of **relevant European stakeholders working in the field of data collection and analysis** such as, most notably, the European-Commission-initiated, FRA-led Equality Data Subgroup and the European Institute for Gender Equality;
- Connect with and draw upon the experience of **data collection initiatives within the UN system** such as the UN OHCHR methodology on human right indicators in the context of the tracking progress with respect to the UN CRPD and the attainment of the sustainable development goals;
- Provide guidance and support to the **research project on digitalization and equality** to be commissioned by Equinet in 2019.

#### Expected outputs:

1. The Working Group will meet twice during 2019.
2. 15-20 staff members of equality bodies are anticipated to participate in this Working Group.
3. 1 report on the use and collection of data on complaints by equality bodies.

## CLUSTER

### Freedom of Movement for Article 4 bodies under the 2014 Directive

Directive 2014/54/EU was adopted in order to facilitate the free movement of EU workers and members of their family through a series of measures such as the designation of “one or more structures or bodies (...) for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment of Union workers and members of their family without discrimination on grounds of nationality (...)” When transposing the Directive, over half of the Member States have decided to designate national equality bodies as bodies to promote equal treatment and to support Union workers and members of their family as required by Article 4 of the Directive.

Given that freedom of movement has traditionally not been part of the mandate of most equality bodies, the new function under this Directive raises the need for capacity-building. To meet this need and provide a platform for regular information exchange and updates in the field of free movement, in 2018 Equinet set up a thematic Cluster bringing together equality bodies vested with this new function.

In 2019, the Cluster will seek to fulfil the information and capacity building needs of its members through the following activities:

- Establish a forum for systematic exchange, sharing of best practices and updates on new developments in the field of freedom of movement of workers;

- Establish a channel for structured engagement with and regular information exchange with the European Commission's DG Employment's Unit on the Free Movement of Workers, EURES, as well as with the European Commission-funded network of independent experts on freedom of movement, FreSsco.
- Exchange good practices on and catalogue successful ways for reaching the target group of Union workers and members of their family.
- Explore ways for developing systems for structured cooperation with other existing information and assistance services, such as EURES, SOLVIT, Your Europe, Enterprise Europe Network and the Points of Single Contact.
- Identify the potential of using the new European Commission Recommendation on standards for equality bodies to secure that Article 4 equality bodies are equipped with sufficient resources to fulfil the wide-ranging array of tasks under Directive 2014/54/EU.

Expected outputs:

1. The Cluster will meet twice during 2019, with one of the meetings taking the form of a training.
2. A collection of good practices for reaching the target group of Union workers and members of their family
3. 10-15 staff members of equality bodies will participate in this Cluster.

## **B. ACT AS THE EXPERT VOICE OF EQUALITY BODIES TO ADVANCE EQUALITY IN EUROPE**

### **CONFERENCE**

#### **Sexual Harassment**

In 2017, on the occasion of the European Commission's year of focused actions to combat violence against women, Equinet launched a project aimed at exploring and collecting experiences of equality bodies working on combating violence against women and gender-based violence. One of the outcomes of this project is a report on how equality bodies address gender-based harassment, sexual harassment and violence against women. The other key outcome will be the organization of an event focused on the issue of sexual harassment.

More than a year after the #MeToo movement launched a world-wide discussion on the issue of sexual harassment, it is crucial to discuss the role played by equality bodies for assisting victims of such forms of discrimination and violence. The goal will be to raise awareness on how equality bodies can provide support to victims, promote guidance for institutions to prevent this, and to highlight good practices and address the current challenges in this field. The event will have an intersectional approach, and take into account intersecting identities of victims of sexual harassment (taking into account in particular age, race and ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, gender identity and sexual orientation).

Equinet will organize a one-day public event on the topic.

Expected outputs:

- 45 members of equality bodies will participate in this conference from more than 20 countries.
- At least 30 representatives from other stakeholders will participate in this conference.
- A summary of the conference will be produced and uploaded on the Equinet website.

## **WORKING GROUPS**

### **Policy Formation**

In 2019, the Working Group will:

- Inform and support the Equinet contribution to the UN High Level Political Forum of 2019, focused on “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.
- Discuss and produce an output on a European topic and priority of relevance to be agreed with the Executive Board and Working Group members.
- Support dissemination, follow-up and use of previously published outputs of the Working Group, including the Perspective on equality bodies and hate speech and the output document on equality bodies and SDGs.

#### Expected outputs:

3. The Working Group will meet twice during 2019 with around 15 members present.
4. Contribution to the UN High Level Political Forum on SDGs of 2019.
5. An output relating to relevant European developments to be agreed with the Board and Working Group.

### **Gender Equality**

In 2019, the Working Group will:

- Draft and support the publication and dissemination of a discussion paper on the work done by equality bodies on trans and intersex rights.
- Draft and support the publication of perspectives and inputs for the upcoming European Commission Gender Strategy.
- Contribute to the preparation and organization of an Equinet conference on equality bodies addressing sexual harassment.
- Discuss a European topic and priority of relevance to be agreed with the Executive Board and Working Group members: female poverty and discrimination.
- Further discuss and explore the work done by equality bodies on violence against women.
- Ensure gender mainstreaming in the regular work and activities of Equinet.

#### Expected outputs:

3. The Working Group will meet twice during 2019 with around 20 members present.
4. The Working Group will prepare the content for the discussion paper on trans and intersex issues.
5. The Working Group will prepare the content for opinions on the new EC Gender Strategy.

6. The Working Group will support the organization of the conference on sexual harassment.

## RESEARCH

### Equality in the Digital Age: the consequences of digitalization for (in)equality

Equinet will commission a study on the consequences of digitalization for (in)equality and the role equality bodies can play in this field.

Digitalisation, automation and the use of artificial intelligence has already had a significant effect on today's societies in Europe and this trend is set to continue and even accelerate in the coming years. While many of the effects are positive and contribute to higher living standards, there is an increasing acknowledgment of the possible drawbacks, including a growing risk of rendering certain professions and positions obsolete and redundant; the inherent risk of the vast capacity of automated systems being used for discrimination and profiling on the basis of certain characteristics; or the increasing levels of online hate speech.

To date research has been conducted mainly on the effects of digitalisation for gender equality, but much less on its implications for other groups. This Equinet research paper will strive to fill these gaps and trigger discussions on the effects of digitalisation on equality and collect the experience of and give pointers to equality bodies as to their potential contribution in this field.

#### Expected output:

1. Publication of a study on the consequences of digitalization for (in)equality.

## COMMUNICATION

The Network acts as the expert voice of equality bodies and disseminates their knowledge on equality and non-discrimination to an external audience. Equinet contributes to equality policy and law, based on equality body expertise and recommendations, in order to protect and promote equality across Europe.

In 2019, we will:

- Continue to make visible the work and experience of equality bodies and convey an expert voice on their behalf, in order to promote their important role as watchdogs for equality.
- Generate and disseminate knowledge about equality as a value and goal, developments and innovation in the field, equality legislation and policy, the work and contribution of equality bodies.
- Promote positive narratives developed around values-based messages linked to equality and non-discrimination.

#### Communication Tools:

1. Equinet Website (including European Directory of Equality Bodies)
2. External Newsletter
3. Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, YouTube)
4. Publications (including Annual Report)

## ENGAGEMENT with European and international organisations and stakeholders

As the expert voice of equality bodies aiming to advance equality in Europe, Equinet will strive to engage all relevant European and international organisations and stakeholders and will continue to support key initiatives in the field.

Beyond the Equinet initiatives and activities planned for 2019, this engagement will cover all equality grounds and fields and their intersections with a focus on topical policy and legislative issues such as, but not limited to:

- The EU's actions to tackle the Gender Pay Gap
- The proposed EU Horizontal Directive
- Developments to the EU's policy strategies and action plans in the field of equality (relating to all equality groups)
- The proposed Work-Life Balance Directive
- The European Pillar of Social Rights
- The EU's new Multi-Annual Financial Framework
- The implementation of the UNCRPD by the EU and State Parties and activities of the UNCRPD Committee
- The implementation of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention and the EU's accession

Equinet will continue to engage directly with the **European Commission**, specifically the Equality Directorate in DG Justice as well as other Directorates and DGs responsible for relevant equality and fundamental rights issues. Equinet will also engage with relevant high-level expert groups and networks of the European Commission. In particular, Equinet will sustain an engagement in its role as Observer to the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

Equinet will engage with the **European Parliament (EP)**, in particular with the EP Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and the EP Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, as well as relevant EP thematic Intergroups and Members of the European Parliament interested in the work of equality bodies and in topics relating to equality, non-discrimination and gender equality.

Equinet will pursue and further strengthen its engagement and cooperation with relevant **European Union agencies**, in particular the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)** and the **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)**.

Equinet will continue to support initiatives within the thematic **Cooperation Platforms** established with the FRA, the Council of Europe and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). These currently cover cooperation in the field of: advancing social and economic rights and socio-economic equality and Roma equality.

Equinet will pursue its ongoing engagement with the **European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)** through continued close cooperation with its Members and Secretariat. This will include linking with ENNHRI's working group focusing on the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** as appropriate.

Equinet will also strengthen its engagement with other relevant organisations at European level such as the Council of Europe and its bodies, OSCE-ODIHR, UN OHCHR, European Ombudsman, as well as civil society and social partners.

Subject to the success of the proposal, Equinet will actively engage as partner in the EEA and Norway Grants funded project on ***Strengthening NHRIs and NEBs for greater national implementation of human rights and equality.***

## C. SUSTAIN A RESILIENT, ENGAGED AND INNOVATIVE NETWORK

### COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In order to sustain a resilient, innovative and engaged network, communication will be key, particularly with our members, but also with external audiences. For this reason, we will update our communication strategy and link it to our Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

### BOARD MEETINGS

At least 3 Board meetings will be held at key points during the year when the Equinet Secretariat will report on the state of affairs. Additional ad hoc face-to-face or virtual meetings will be held per necessity. Board Members will take decisions in order to ensure the optimal implementation of the work plan and provide guidance on emerging strategic priorities for Equality Bodies.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The General Assembly of Equinet Members will gather once in 2019 for an Annual General Meeting (AGM), to discuss priority work topics of relevance to equality bodies at European and Member State level. Members will also vote on internal matters relating to the network (including the audited accounts of the previous year, minutes of AGM 2018, the Work Plan for 2020, new Executive Board, and possible membership applications).

### COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

We will continue to prioritise and seek to continuously improve our communication with members. We will further work to sustain active membership communication and engagement through a variety of innovative communication tools.

#### Communication Tools:

1. Members' Forum on website: This section of our website is being newly developed starting in 2018 and will include a host of features that allow members to keep informed of all Equinet activities and European developments on equality and non-discrimination, as well as engage with each other in an accessible and interactive manner.
2. Members' Bulletins: Our internal members' bulletins update equality bodies on the latest Network developments, as well as those at European and international level. We will consider how best to link the newsletters and the members' forum so that information (and work) is not doubled, but that members are as informed as possible.
3. Webinars: Depending on our members' needs, we might develop ad hoc webinars to inform them about European developments.

## ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Equinet's activities are guided and managed by three different entities.

The **General Assembly of Equinet Members** is composed of all the current Members of Equinet. It is the main decision-making body of the network and it decides on matters pertaining to the strategic direction and the general management of the network. For instance, it approves annual Work Plans and multi-year Strategic Plans. It also votes on new Equinet membership applications received during the year and it elects members of the Executive Board.

The **Equinet Executive Board** is the managerial body of the network. It is composed of nine representatives of Equinet Members elected for a mandate of two years by the General Assembly of Members and is presided by a Chair. It works to support the work of Equinet members and their positioning at European level and is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of Work Plans. It also works on the development of strategic visions aimed at ensuring the strength, growth and sustainability of the Network. To that end, it develops proposals for multi-annual Strategic Plans that are submitted in due course to the General Assembly of Equinet Members for approval. It also supervises the work of the Equinet Secretariat.

The Brussels-based **Equinet Secretariat** is the structure responsible for the delivery and effective implementation of the Work Plans proposed by the Board and endorsed by the Members of the Network. Under the direct supervision of the Board, it is responsible for the organisation and the successful delivery of all the activities planned for the year. It also works towards ensuring the best possible representation, positioning and sustainability of the Network. It acts as a point of contact for external stakeholders, funders and other parties working with or interested in cooperating with Equinet and equality bodies.

## **EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK**

In order to better assess and track our progress as a network working towards achieving equality and ensuring non-discrimination in Europe, under Equinet's current Strategic Plan we will develop an evaluation and monitoring framework. This year we will initiate this process and clarify the type of data and indicators we need to collect in order to effectively monitor the work of Equinet in the coming four years. In this way, we will also ensure that our shared vision and mission are better reflected in our day-to-day work.

Efficient tracking systems will be put in place in order to gather the data necessary for the assessment of the reach, effectiveness and relevance of the work of Equinet. The same policy will be applied to the internal working of the Equinet Secretariat in order to identify areas for improvements and act on them.

We hope that this data will help better identify where improvements should or could be brought in the procedures, processes, outputs and communication in order to guarantee inclusiveness and participation from the Membership. Therefore, this evaluation framework will first and foremost be centred around the relationship between Equinet and its Members. It is expected that learning regarding the external impact of our work will also be identified, allowing to extend its potential above its current level.

The analysis of the collected data will be regularly reported to the Equinet Board and a general report on the main findings of the year will be delivered to the Membership (either at the AGM or in a publication disseminated within the Membership). They will inform reporting to our funders and might be used to better showcase Equinet's work in its communication channels.

The data gathered will scrupulously be in compliance with the requirements set out in the new European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).



## INDICATIVE CALENDAR 2019

KEY ACTIVITY	PERIOD
<b>Board meetings</b> I + II + III + (IV online meeting)	
Communication <b>Working Group</b> I + II	
Equality Law <b>Working Group</b> I + II	
Policy Formation <b>Working Group</b> I + II	
Gender Equality <b>Working Group</b> I + II	
Research and Data Collection <b>Working Group</b> I + II	
<b>Cluster</b> on freedom of movement I + II	
<b>Conference: Sexual Harassment</b>	
<b>Seminar:</b> Equality Bodies supporting economic independence and equality for older people	
<b>Training:</b> Building Positive Narratives	
<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
<b>Project:</b> Standards for Equality Bodies I + II	
<b>Research:</b> Digitalisation and Equality I + II	

Q1 (January-March)

Q2 (April-June)

Q3 (July-September)

Q4 (October-December)

## INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR 2019

EQUINET BUDGET 2019				
EXPENSES			REVENUES	
TYPE OF COST	AMOUNT		SOURCE OF REVENUE	AMOUNT
Salary costs	555.000		EC Grant	1.000.000
Meeting costs	355.430		Membership Fees	65.000
rent	70.000			
running costs	11.570			
Bookkeeping	13.000			
Financial Audit	4.000			
Consultancy evaluation	8.000			
research	15.000			
web and digital services	11.000			
Printing	5.000			
Promo material	5.000			
Office material	2.000			
Dissemination costs	10.000			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.065.000</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.065.000</b>
Last year Budget	1.060.000			

EQUINET EVENTS BUDGET 2019			
Cost item	Total items	Price per item	Total cost
flights/year	491	350	171.850
hotel nights/year	616	140	86.240
subsistence	616	40	24.640
Meeting rooms costs	630	80	50.400
social events	310	40	12.400
experts	12	500	6.000
photographer	6	650	3.900
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>355.430</b>