

Why join **EQUINET**, the European Network of Equality Bodies

◇ *Co-operation is the way forward*

In an increasingly integrated Europe, it is in the interest of all actors in society, not in the least of those who experience discrimination, that European legislation is applied in a uniform way and that the anti-discrimination laws, policies and practices of the EU Member States are approximated at the highest possible level. That is why co-operation between specialised Equality Bodies in Europe is essential.

◇ *What is EQUINET?*

EQUINET is the European Network of Equality Bodies. It seeks to develop co-operation and facilitate information exchange between Equality Bodies across Europe to support the uniform implementation of EU anti-discrimination law and the leveling-up of legal protection for victims of discrimination.

The aim of EQUINET is to help Equality Bodies fulfill their mandates by establishing a sustainable network and resource base for the exchange of legal expertise, enforcement strategies, training and best practice as well as a platform for dialogue with the European institutions.

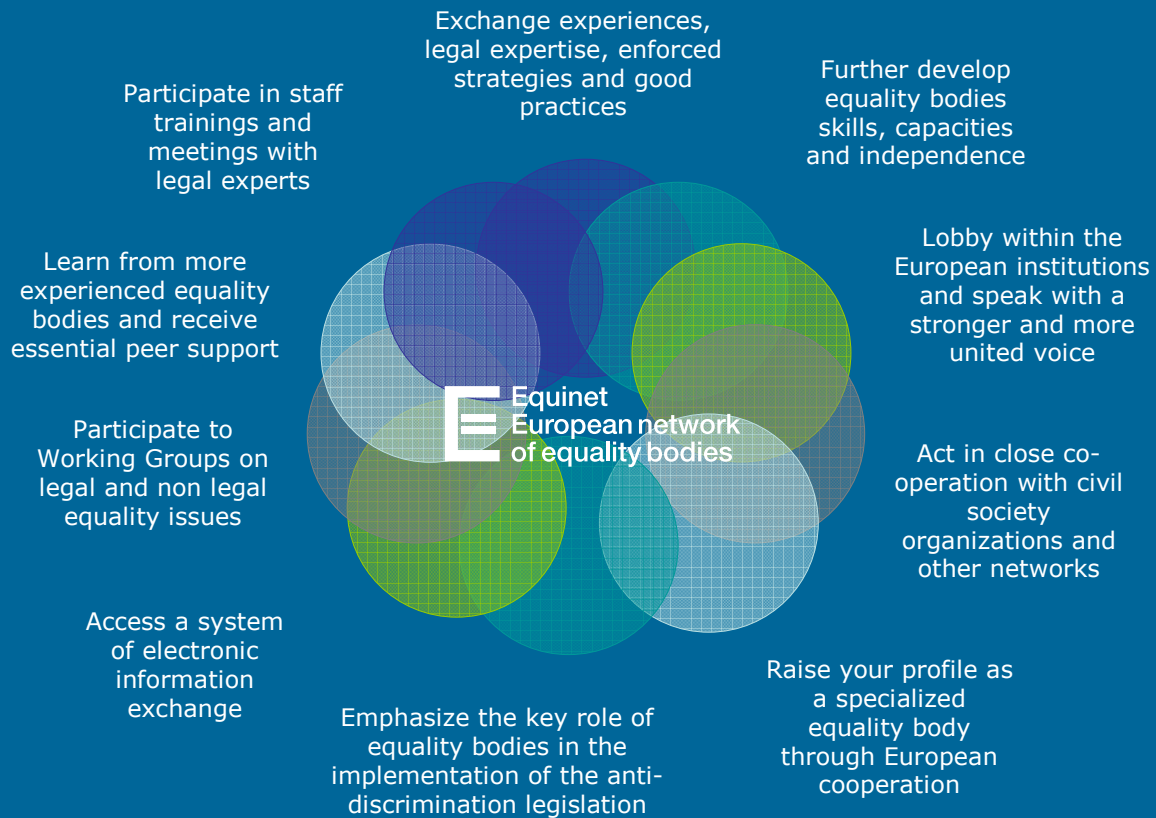
◇ *Who should join EQUINET?*

EQUINET has gone a long way since its inception as a project (2004-2006) initiated by only a few national equality bodies. The aim of these equality bodies was to stimulate co-operation and exchange of expertise amongst themselves and with the European institutions.

This 'bottom-up' approach proved hugely successful; over the last years, EQUINET has grown into an ambitious network of 32 organisations from 29 European countries (EU Member States, accession States as well as EEA States).

EQUINET members are defined by their status as independent, specialised Equality Bodies, with a legal basis and a specific mandate to assist victims of discrimination and non-equal treatment, to give independent advice and to conduct independent investigation. Some members have the status of designated Equality Body under article 13 of the Racial Equality Directive, and some have this status under amended Gender Equal Treatment Directive, even if most have a wider mandate than race and include all or most discrimination grounds mentioned in the European Directives (sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation). Where there is no single Equality Body EQUINET has several members, who share the same identity, covering different grounds.

◇ *Why should you join?*



◇ *Supporting you as a member.....*

The modus operandi of the network is threefold: working groups; training sessions for staff of specialised Equality Bodies; a system of information exchange including a database of information on the work of the specialised Equality Bodies and sources of national, European and international law and policy.

EQUINET supports the emergence of a dialogue between European Institutions and the specialised Equality Bodies. In this way national and European policy debates are linked, enhancing the further development of pro-active antidiscrimination and equality law and policies.

European exchange enhances the enforcement strategies of the specialised Equality Bodies. It also fosters their independence and strengthens their unique position to promote equality through awareness building, enforcement and leveling up of European and national equality laws, as well as development and implementation of policies to promote and ensure equal treatment and combat discrimination.

www.equineteurope.org