



# The European Commission Recommendation on Standards for Equality Bodies

Legal Seminar  
30 November 2018

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# Equality Bodies under EU Equality Law

- Set up by Member States under EU equality law “for the promotion of equal treatment”
  - the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC)
  - the Gender Equality Directives (2004/113/EC, 2006/54/EC and 2010/41/EU)
- Competences
  - to provide independent assistance to victims of discrimination
  - to conduct independent surveys
  - to publish independent reports and to make recommendations on any issue relating to such discrimination

# Current challenges for Equality Bodies

- **Unequal access to protection** for citizens across Europe
- Issues of **efficiency** and **independence**
- Lack of **financial, staff and technical resources**
- Issues of **coordination and cooperation**
- Lack of appropriate **focus** on (and resources for) the equality mandate (*if there is a multi-mandate institution*)



# The Commission Recommendation Rationale

- contribute to **fill the gap** between equality bodies
- provide practical assistance to equality bodies in realising their **full potential** and ensure that they can perform their functions **independently** and **effectively**
- provide practical assistance to improve equality bodies' capacity to **enforce EU Equality Directives**
- strengthening equality bodies in order to develop and **advance EU Equality law**

## **I. Mandate and functions**

- Standards concerning the grounds and scope covered by the equality mandate, and the functions of the equality bodies

## **II. Independence and effectiveness**

- Standards concerning independence, resources, complaint submission, access and accessibility of the equality body/ies

## **III. Coordination and cooperation**

- Standards clarifying the role of equality bodies in the national infrastructure and at the international level

# I. Mandate and Functions

*Member States should ensure that equality bodies:*

- Cover various **grounds** of discrimination among various **fields**
- Provide **independent assistance**: ability to investigate, obtain evidence and engage or assist in litigation in cases of discrimination
- Carry out **independent surveys**, independent research and data collection
- Publish independent **reports** and issue **recommendations** on legislation and public policies taken into account by public authorities
- **Promote equality and diversity**, through training, information, advice, guidance and support to duty bearers, institutions and individuals, and raising awareness activities

## II. Independence and Effectiveness

*Member States should ensure that equality bodies:*

- consider the **organization** of equality bodies and allocation of **budget** to ensure **independence**
- have transparent rules governing the **appointment procedures** of staff and board positions
- are provided with the adequate **human, technical, physical and financial resources** and **infrastructure** to perform their tasks
- offer a **simple and confidential procedure** for citizens to submit complaints
- perform activities to **increase awareness** of the existence of equality bodies and their functions

## III. Coordination and Cooperation

*Member States should ensure that equality bodies have the capacity to:*

- **coordinate** with each other (*in case there are several equality bodies in one Member State*)
- **network** with other equality bodies
- engage in a **dialogue** and **cooperate** effectively with relevant national **authorities, civil society organisations** and national **bodies** (*e.g. : National Disability Frameworks, National Roma Contact Points, managing authorities of European Structural and Investment Funds*)





# Thank you!

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