Equality Bodies and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

70 Years of Human Rights – Leave No One Behind
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the role of equality bodies
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SDGs – a view from equality bodies

- Dual approach: mainstreaming equality and targeting specific equality groups
- SDG 5 and SDG 10: clear equality goals
- SDG 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 17
- SDG 16: specific relevance for equality bodies
## Equality bodies – the potential

### Functions laid down in EU Directives

- Independent assistance to victims of discrimination
- Independent surveys and reports concerning discrimination
- Recommendations on discrimination issues
- Exchange of information with European bodies

### The work of Equality Bodies relevant for SDGs

- Enforcing legislation
- Providing policy advice
- Supporting good practice by duty bearers
- Building a knowledge base
- Awareness-raising and promotion of the value of equality

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The work of equality bodies on SDGs

- Awareness of the SDGs, but early stages of engagement
- Stronger awareness of the key equality SDGs (SDG 5 and 10)
- Preparing for wider engagement – strategic thinking and staff training
- Strong alignment between the daily work of equality bodies and the targets set for SDGs (enforcement, policy advice, support to good practice, knowledge, awareness-raising, equality data)
Ways of engagement

• Effective deployment of the mandate
• Use of specialised equality expertise to inform the implementation of SDGs – specific added value in underlining the equality dimension of SDGs and their targets
• Interaction with governmental coordination structures, stakeholder engagement
• Involvement in Voluntary National Reviews
The necessity of standards

- Challenges to equality bodies threaten their effective work

Standards:

- Express a commitment to promoting and defending the fundamental value of equality
- Ensure that all EBs have a wide mandate, a minimum set of functions and a minimum level of independence and resources;
- Enable a more effective contribution to implementing equality legislation and creating equal societies, including work on the SDGs
- Acknowledge the potential and contribution of equality bodies as specialist institutions and ‘European good practice’
International and European references

- EU Directives
- UN Paris Principles (for NHRIs)
- CoE Commissioner for Human Rights Opinion
- By analogy: Standards for Data Protection Authorities
- ECRI GPR No. 2
- EU standards

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Three key pillars for standards

Equality bodies

- Mandate
- Functions
- Competences
- Independence and effectiveness
- Accessibility
- Coordination and cooperation
- Institutional architecture

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Some noteworthy provisions – EU Recommendation

- Call to go beyond EU law
- Detailed recommendations on functions, esp. on assistance
- Relatively weak and vague on independence (‘MS should consider’ in soft law v. ‘shall (ensure)’ in the GDPR)
- Stronger and more detailed on resources
- Accessibility, incl. local/regional offices
- Reporting requirements for EU MS
- Important development... but compared with DPAs...?
Some noteworthy provisions – ECRI GPR No.2.

• More detailed, especially with its Explanatory Memorandum
• ‘Equality bodies should function without any interference from the State, political parties or other actors and should not be given any instructions by them...’
• Guarantees for leadership, accountability, structure and operations
• Detailed competences
Way forward

Renew and strengthen the equality infrastructure

Enable the full potential of equality bodies

Champion equality as a fundamental European value

Implement European standards for equality bodies

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Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?