

Summary of Working Group on Communication Strategies and Practices

13 March 2019, Sofia, Bulgaria

Wednesday 13 March: Working Group Meeting

Welcome

- Ana Dzhumalieva, Chair of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination, Bulgaria
- Mintautė Jurkutė, Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, Lithuania & Working Group Moderator

What can we learn from Equality Bodies' work on Awareness Raising?

Members will share learnings from their recent work, identifying:

- Basic purpose of the activity and target audience
- The main values that you tried to promote through your activity
- What successes you had in the activity (and how you measured that)
- What challenges you faced
- Main tips for equality body colleagues trying to reproduce something similar.

Norway:

1 of 6 campaign videos was presented that was circulated on social media channels (Facebook and Twitter). The aim was to show the meaning of better gender balance in studies and work places.

This work started two years ago after the development of a new strategy by our equality body where we wanted to priorities gender balance and how this could contribute to the improvement of many issues. It could improve the combination between family and career, fathers taking leave and the issue of equal pay. We saw improvement in the work against sexual harassment in work places, in the army and universities after the implementation of this campaign.

We analysed the political programs of the parties to begin with. We found issues where parties could agree or disagree with each other and we invited the politicians along with researcher and the men and women from the campaign videos to an annual conference in October 2018. We dominated the media around 1 week and highlighted that men are less flexible than women at work and the home space.

More awareness was raised in universities and political parties and the Ombud will work towards concrete steps before the elections in 2 years.

LINKS TO VIDEOS:

Female Fire Fighters - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5Mq1gLtJ60>

Male nurses - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKVkd9etLHw>

Germany:

Campaign ongoing for 2 months that was made by an external agency with the hash tag #TalkAboutIt (in German) targeting younger people and their experience with discrimination.

The idea was to raise awareness about discrimination, what you can do and what happens to other people in the society. We wanted to have a dialogue on social media.

The challenge was to create a safe space on social media since personal stories were shared and hate speech could be triggered. The content of the stories was very spread, and we decided to include the issue of bullying and body shaming, although not specifically included in the equal treatment act.

1600 experiences were showed on social media and a separate website was created. The campaign was also shown in collective transport, online ads, Instagram, Facebook. Instagram showed to be very successful for this campaign.

We also had live events, this was useful since it didn't require high costs. We invited famous younger people and had discussions with them for 1 hour talking about different topics. These sessions were posted on Facebook afterwards, and it went very well.

Tips for other EBs: It is possible to reach a younger audience (connect the issues with your audience, in this case bullying and body shaming) and use Instagram! We experienced a lot of hate speech, especially on Facebook, and it was difficult to answer all comments, but we were strict with deleting them.

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [Darüber reden / Speak about it](#)

Sarah Cooke O'Dowd, Equinet

The question was asked if the communication team in each equality body has a specific staff only working on social media?

- This is the case for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Great Britain)
- The Ombudsman for Equality in Finland use the support from an intern which they have on a regular basis
- The Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud in Norway will hire a writer to work on their content for their webpage, which also can be used for social media and used by people for guidance.

Thomas Coombes, Brand Manager, Amnesty International

- In Amnesty we have don't have a specific person working on social media, it is included in the tasks of the staff members working on various media issues.

Ireland:

A broader range of content was shortly presented to show public awareness campaigns developed to raise general awareness about discrimination.

A specific research project on Hate speech online was presented: “Hate track project” which resulted in a final research report. From a communication aspect we wanted to see how we can communicate this project to a wider audience although the topic was limited to the Irish context. We also wanted to target our communication towards public policy makers and to build awareness among policy makers about our equality body and its expertise.

We had an event where we invited representatives from social media, international experts, victims of hate speech online and academics. We used the event as a hook for wider communication. It was the first time we livestreamed the event and it went very well. It was picked up among journalists that could follow the story although they were not physically present. The event brought together people from different places that normally would not discuss about these issues together.

Social media: We used Twitter to highlight particular facts from the report and clips from the event.

A podcast was developed where the audio of the event was edited and made to a podcast. This was an effective way to reach a broader audience and it gives people more space and time to absorb the messages.

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [A more Social Media](#)

General experience of podcasts by members?

- In Slovakia, the National Center for Human Rights has started a podcast and released their first episode.

Sarah Cooke O’Dowd, Equinet

The question about the planning of projects was asked. How far in advance is the communication strategy developed for specific projects?

- For this specific research project in Ireland, we wanted to reach a wider platform, so the planning of the event started before the research was completed, around 4 months ahead.

Austria:

“[Case of the month](#)” aims to raise awareness about the issue of anti- discrimination and highlight the work of our equality body since a lot of people don’t know who we are and what we do, and what potential cases could be. We create three parts of each case: a short story, an image and a case analysis drawing from various disciplines (mainly law, sociology, gender studies). We are trying to measure the output. For instance, a professor during a national conference on the constitutional principle of equal treatment used the cases we presented to showcase the practice of equal treatment law in Austria.

A question was raised by Anne Katrin (Germany) how they deal with the issue of data protection? Since they also use a similar way of presenting cases in Germany.

- The equality body in Austria makes the cases anonymous and don’t mention details at all.

Anna from Czech Republic (Public Defender of Rights) shared that she gathers lawyers from different

departments to have communication meetings where she teaches them how to communicate their cases in a positive way. In order to avoid formal and legal language.

As a general comment it was mentioned and strongly recommended that you, as communication officers should share your communication work with your colleagues who work with legal and policy issues, including the head(s) of your equality body.

Latvia:

A Campaign from 2012 was presented with the purpose to show how one should think when writing their CV and motivation letters and what to say in interviews. This campaign was developed together with a big NGO and a CV online portal for recruitment to get insight about common mistakes that are made by individuals, including persons with disabilities.

A video connected to this campaign was also presented during the meeting. The campaign was not evaluated so we are not sure if the campaign had a real impact or not.

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [Presentation](#)

LINK TO VIDEOS:

[Video Student](#)

[Video Family Status](#)

[Video Disability](#)

[Video Pensioner](#)

Sarah Cooke O'Dowd, Equinet

Do you evaluate your campaigns?

When equality bodies pay an external agency to develop a campaign, we can demand for metrics. This is more challenging for campaigns we create ourselves. You can look for numbers on social media, but to measure the reach or impact beyond those numbers is difficult.

How do you measure social change?

- Great Britain: In the "Britain is fairer" report (mentioned below) we try to evaluate our campaign and. In general, we try to make sure to include concrete recommendations in our reports that we can follow up after it is published.
- Finland (Ombudsman for Equality): I think it is important to follow up a specific project 2-3 years later. We started a campaign about women's rights a while ago and now we see that we have more cases on certain issues without us doing anything. It is challenging to measure the reach and impact immediately after the release of a campaign.

Cyprus:

Awareness raising campaign around the 70-year anniversary of the UNDHR that underlined the importance to protect human rights and the challenges of effective protection of these rights.

It was ongoing from 5 to 12 December 2018. A conference was organised and we created a video including short statements from famous people in Cyprus highlighting the importance of human rights principles in



the society. The campaign positively affected the amount of complaints to the office.

One of the weakness of the campaign was that the promotional material was only in Greek. The limited budget was the main challenge, along with short amount of time. But we choose to do something instead of nothing.

Limited range on social media but the aim was to raise awareness and not necessarily to call for an action.

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [70th Anniversary - Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

LINK TO VIDEO: [Video](#)

A question was asked about how it was possible to include so many journalists in the video? This is very difficult in Norway, how were you able to motivate the journalists?

- They were willing to help us since our equality body has a good reputation in Cyprus. The Commissioner called the journalists and asked them personally.

Portugal (CITE - Commission for Equality and Labor and Employment):

The equality body celebrated 40 years and we developed a campaign on topics related to equal pay, parental leave and zero tolerance of harassment. On International Women's day we highlighted a young sportswoman to highlight the future, what you can do and the need to fight stereotypes in the work place.

National campaign about work life balance – the project was to find EU grants. We worked with social media, newspapers, flyers, posters and banners

Great Britain:

"Is Britain fairer": A UK engagement process that measures the state of equality and human rights. A communication toolkit was developed, in addition to infographics and animations for social media.

This is a good example of how we worked with research and policy and implemented a good communication strategy in order to get the message out there. We recognized that the audience would be very broad, and we decided to launch events around the report.

LINK TO PRESENTATIONS:

[The State of Britain today](#)

[Is Britain Fairer? Disability Rights](#)

COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT: [Is Britain Fairer? Communication Toolkit](#)

Finland (Ombudsman for equality):

A project against hate speech that the ministry of justice was running, and the two Finnish equality bodies joined this project. The problem in Finland is that the government hasn't taken the lead on the issue of racism, discrimination and hate speech etc. The other problem is that people don't understand what hate

speech is and the concept is not clear. People don't even know that it is illegal.

This project included police and prosecutors.

This project included a campaign of what hate speech is and what it means, and 2 videos were created. The challenge was that a large amount of hate was directed to the ministry of justice and the equality bodies after this campaign. Therefore, there were doubts to even launch this campaign. The videos were on TV for 1 week, and for around 2 weeks on social media. We were not able to defend the campaign and we were overwhelmed with the backlash and hate received.

Finland (Non-discrimination Ombudsman):

Hating Mondays is a privilege, because not everyone does not have a workplace to go to. A video was developed by an external agency around this specific concept of hating Mondays with the aim to raise awareness about how individuals with disabilities do not work. The issue is discrimination and the lack of accessibility and we wanted to focus on the fact that there are many people with disability who could work and could hate Mondays as everyone else.

We did it mostly on Facebook (separate page), Instagram and Twitter. There was a good reach in media and morning tv. We are not sure about the actual impact the campaign had in practice. Many NGOs were included in the planning and it was a long process before the campaign was finalised, it took us 1.5 year.

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [Monday mornings](#)

LINK TO FACEBOOK PAGE: <https://www.facebook.com/maanantaikuuluukaikille/>

LINK TO VIDEO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mGcb3AgSos>

Portugal (High Commission for Migration):

We have been promoting since 2015, the Communication Award "For Cultural Diversity", with the purpose of awarding the communication works, published in traditional and digital media, with a relevant contribution to the promotion of cultural diversity; the fight of all forms of racial discrimination; and, in particular, the integration of immigrant, refugee and Roma communities in Portugal.

The Award allows the participation of Media / Journalism professionals, from Local, Regional and National media, content producers, screenwriters and / or scriptwriters, as well as young people aged between 15 and 24 years old.

In 2018, 65 works were submitted – the largest number of works in competition ever registered. And the public ceremony of the Award, in which the winners were announced, was held on February 28th, in Lisbon. We also have organized seminars and workshops for journalists to foster the production of more diverse and inclusive information.

Meetings have been initiated with Portuguese media and national union for journalists and three main broadcast services, and meetings with Facebook Portugal and Spain to talk about ways to combat hate speech online.

Introduction to Hope-based Communication

- *Thomas Coombes*, Brand Manager, Amnesty International

Hope-Based Communications is a practical strategy for building new narratives that win debates and change attitudes. This session will provide an introduction to the science and strategy behind Hope-Based Communications and examples of successful positive communications campaigns.

[Read the short overview about hope-based communication here.](#)

5 main concepts were presented during this session:

- **Problem → Solution**
- **Against → For**
- **Threat → Opportunity**
- **Victims → Heroes**
- **Show that ‘we got this!’**

LINK TO PRESENTATION: [Hope-based communication](#)

LINK TO VIDEOS:

<https://www.openglobalrights.org/hope-guide/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFAMpW0hPNY&list=PLL_jJbfWdIOdZRf88x5tW6PlDnwCALala

Round-Up of Equinet Activities

Election Recommendation

The idea of creating a message about what a good leader is was mentioned by Sarah. “A good leader is...” and the gap would be filled with words that represent the values we want to express in the recommendation.

We can highlight the story of a good leadership in the daily life. What is a good leadership? Ask children and adults.

What is the plan of the members with the Equinet recommendation?

The idea of making the politicians understand to be their better self. It should be explained what the recommendation means for the politicians. #IamBetter #MyBetterSelf was used as examples.

Ask yourself the question: What is the debate we want to have? How does that look like?

Norway:

We will launch the recommendation in the week of the 18 March and invite politicians for a workshop, and also justice committee to discuss the content.

We received feedback from the labor party, and they are confused, nervous and afraid because they cannot find a way to moderate or to protect themselves. They are honest enough to admit that they need

guidelines

Finland (Non-Discrimination Ombudsman):

We will use it, but we don't know how. We had a good panel discussion last week, and we have good clips that can be used together with the recommendation

Slovenia:

We will translate it and raise awareness on social media and try to address the politicians about how to use their own campaigns for the European elections. We need to find a balance with freedom of expression

Follow-up on Hate Speech Seminar

[Read the summary and follow up from the Equinet seminar on how to combat hate speech here.](#)

Norway:

Norway will host this year's international summit on the international day against homophobia and transphobia on 13-15 May.

The Norwegian Ombud will facilitate a session on hate speech and hate crime, and they are looking for speakers who can contribute with their strategic and operational work, best practices and awareness. The audience will be 200 politicians and government officials from all over the world.

This event starts with a high-level meeting on 13 May, followed by a meeting with NGOs. **The question to the members of the working group is if you have ideas and thoughts of politicians from your country that can be invited as speakers to this conference.** They should be able to talk about good practices and policy making. 200 politicians from all over the world will be present.

Send an email to Jon if you have any ideas or thoughts: jon.larsen@ldo.no

Identifying topics for 2020 Work Plan

We asked the participants to write down ideas and thoughts for future topics. These are the topics that were identified by the participants during the meeting:

- How do you convince your boss?
- Sharing more campaigns between each other
- How to use different communication tools (Instagram, YouTube, press conferences etc.)
- How to work with visual material
- Design thinking workshop
- How to communicate with a young audience
- How to evaluate the actions

The way we run the working group WG at the moment where we invite external experts and organize interactive trainings on communication, does it work? The group was very positive to this structure and believes that a follow of the training on narrative building and story telling in the future is necessary.

Summary of meeting and close



Try to apply the tools and ideas that we learned during the training on positive messaging and story telling. Take advantage of the testing in audiences. You can for instance make one audience segment and create a material (video, report etc.) for that specific audience.

You have a big space for sharing content and testing it with your audience. As Equinet we can show how a certain campaign has worked in certain countries for specific audiences.

