



Berkeley Center on Comparative Equality & Anti-Discrimination Law

*12th Annual Conference
Hosted by University of Ljubljana, Slovenia &
Advocate of the Principle of Equality
2-4 July 2025*

CONFERENCE THEME

The (R)evolution of Equality Law: Reflecting on 25 Years of Anti-Discrimination Law in Europe & Beyond

The adoption of the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC) and the Race Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) in 2000 marked a transformative moment in the EU's commitment to combatting discrimination and promoting equality. These directives – followed by other legislation in subsequent years – established a robust yet broad and general legal framework prohibiting discrimination on grounds including race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender, and sexual orientation using a variety of conceptual tools to challenge discrimination in employment, social protection, education, and access to goods and services.

However, since the implementation of these directives, the realization of the full vision of EU law and policy in this field has faced significant challenges. The EU's legal framework often struggles to capture the complexities of intersecting identities, such as multiple and intersectional discrimination, based on several protected grounds. Moreover, while the directives address overt and localized instances of discrimination, they perhaps remain less equipped to dismantle structural and systemic inequalities that perpetuate disadvantage across different social spheres and generations. Profound changes in the technological landscape, particularly the emergence and mainstreaming of different manifestations of artificial intelligence, have raised new questions concerning equality and anti-discrimination.

The commemoration of 25 years of this (r)evolution of anti-discrimination law in Europe and beyond presents an opportune moment to reflect on the achievements, limitations, and future potential of equality law globally.

Day 1

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

2 July 2025

Time

Programme

10:00

Opening Remarks

*Video address of the President of the Republic of Slovenia
Nataša Pirc Musar*

*David Oppenheimer, Tilen Štajnpihler, Miha Lobnik,
Miro Cerar, Joy Milligan*

10:15

Opening Plenary

*Claude Cahn, Laura Cahier, Indira Boutier, Jim Fitzgerald,
Barbara Giovanna Bello, Nomfundo Ramelakana*

11:30

Coffee Break

11:45

Workshop Period 1

1:00

Lunch

2:15

Workshop Period 2

3:30

Coffee Break

3:45

Opening Keynote

Hon. Dr. Neža Kogovšek Šalamon

4:45

Town Hall 1: On the Future of the Center

6:00

Cocktails & Cultural Event

Day 2

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

3 July 2025

Time

Programme

9:00

Keynote 2

Nika Kovač

10:00

Plenary 2

*European Equality Bodies Network
Members*

11:15

Coffee Break

11:30

Workshop Period 3

12:45

Lunch

2:00

Workshop Period 4

3:15

Coffee Break

3:30

Plenary 3

Marie Spinoy, Lucy-Ann Buckley, Petra Foubert, Lisa Waddington

5:00

Workshop Period 5

6:30

Cocktails & Dinner

Day 3

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

4 July 2025

Time

Programme

9:00

Keynote 3

David Oppenheimer

10:00

Plenary 4

*Daris José Lewis Recio, Tena,
Simonovic Einwalter, Jim
Fitzgerald, Tamas Kadar, Sara
Benedi Lahuerta*

11:15

Coffee Break

11:30

Workshop Period 6

12:45

Lunch

2:00

Town Hall 2: On the Future of the Center

3:00

Plenary 5

*Panos Kapota, Linda Senden, Elena
Ghidoni, Mariangela D'Acri,
Dolores Morondo Taramundi, Anju
Anna John*

4:15

Closing Remarks

*David Oppenheimer, Tilen
Štajnpihler, Miha Lobnik, Miro Cerar*



DAY 1

Presentations & Abstracts

OPENING PLENARY

Launch of the “Equality For All” Initiative: Global Network of Universities in Support of Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Legislation

Pursuant to the publication of *Protecting Minority Rights: A Practical Guide to Developing Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination Legislation*, the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), the Equal Rights Trust and the Berkeley Center on Comparative Equality & Anti-Discrimination Law (BCCE) have joined forces to set up the Equality for All initiative, with the participation of academic researchers and law faculties worldwide. This initiative is thought of as a global multi-university network connecting university law faculties, academic researchers, legal clinics, research centers and students to advance collaborative work on the adoption and implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation at national level.

Following a series of global consultation meetings held since October 2024, this panel discussion is envisioned as the official launch of the Equality for All initiative. This panel will serve as a platform to introduce the network, engage with participants, and discuss past and future collaborative projects among members of the initiative. It will focus on the following main objectives:

1. Present the Equality for All initiative, outline its mission and core objectives, and highlight the structure of the Network and possibilities to engage ;
2. Discuss past experiences and future collaborative projects among the members of the initiative ;
3. Invite participants to join the initiative, including through open discussion among panelists and attendees.

Through these objectives, this panel seeks to build momentum to mark the official launch of Equality for All initiative, inspire participation by and engagement with universities, law faculties, legal clinics and research centers, and lay the groundwork for long-term collaboration with the network.



[Claude Cahn \(Chair\)](#)



[Laura Cahier](#)



[Indira Boutier](#)



[Barbara Giovanna Bello](#)



[Jim Fitzgerald](#)



[Nomfundo Ramelakana](#)

WORKSHOP PERIOD 1

Workshop 1.1

← links for abstracts and bios included!

Lisa Waddington, *Exploring the link between (in)accessibility and disability discrimination in legislation and case law in Europe*

Katarzyna Widlas-Klimsiak, *Systemic Discrimination in Healthcare: Legal Perspectives on Mental Health Equality in Poland within the EU Legal Framework*

Micheline Lee, *The Inclusive Equality model, Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme, and the significance of sexuality in the struggle for equality*

Workshop 1.2

Furaha-Joy Sekai Saungweme (Co-Chair), Costanza Hermanin (Co-Chair), Her Honour Mrs. Simone Walker-McFarlane, Jackie Menjo, Amanda Aziz, *BCCE's Gender Justice Working Group: Comparing Recent Legislation on Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, Including Harassment*

Workshop 1.3

Sophie Bols, *#NotAllMen (Have Access to Justice): Masculinity and Intersectionality in EU Externalisation Migration Policy*

Tamara Thermitus, *Intersectional leadership and its challenges*

Barbara Giovanna Bello, *Twin transitions and anti-discrimination law: An EU perspective on the intersection of class and migrant status in 25 years of anti-discrimination law*

Workshop 1.4

Nicolás Rodríguez Rioseco, *'International Law and Nationality as an accepted characteristic of discrimination in border control'*

Cathérine Van de Graaf, Ivo Gruev, *A religious intolerance test: Is the European Court of Human Rights fulfilling its counter-majoritarian mandate?*

Ofra Bloch, *SFFA and the Memory Wars 27 Journal of Constitutional Law (forthcoming)*

Workshop 1.5

Shreya Atrey, *Racial Discrimination Law as Anti-Transformation*

Colm O'Cinneide, *The Stagnation of Equality Law*

Marie Mercat-Bruns, *The search for adequate tools to promote inclusion: EU law at a crossroad?*

Workshop 1.6

Karen O'Connell, Linda Senden, *Proposal for a BCCE International Law Reform Working Group*

Workshop 1.7

Joy Milligan, *Constitution of Racial Repair*

Ivana Isailović, *Gender and political economy in EU equality law*

Lucy Vickers, *25 years of protection against religion and belief discrimination: nothing but trouble?*

WORKSHOP PERIOD 2

Workshop 2.1

← links for abstracts and bios included!

Angelo Capuano, *Computer Says No: Investigating bias based on class and race in Large Language Models and the challenges of regulating AI's 'digital chameleon'*

Vibeke Blaker Strand, *Implementation of the burden of proof rule under EU/EEA non-discrimination law: domestic obstacles and emerging potential in the face of new technology*

Sangh Rakshita, *A Difference of Kind, Not Just Degree: A Substantive Equality Approach to Combat Algorithmic Discrimination*

Workshop 2.2

Greta Bosch, Almas Shaikh, *Decolonising in/of/for Praxis*

Margot Young, *A Complex of Equality*

Miha Lobnik, Mitja Blažič, *The History of Slovenia's Progress on Marriage Equality*

Workshop 2.3

Biljana Kotevska, *Is Anything Intersectional if Everything Is? A critical look at approaches to intersectional discrimination in south-east Europe*

MariaCaterina La Barbera, Ximena Pardo Fuentes, *Unveiling Structural Inequalities in Citizenship Law: An Intersectional Analysis of Two Decades of Spanish Case Law*

Karen O'Connell, *The context lens: How legislation can effectively address intersectional discrimination*

Workshop 2.4

Nozizwe Dube, *Capturing Harm, Fostering Anti-Subordination: New Directions for EU Equality Law*

Türkan Ertuna Lagrand, *Gender-Based Asylum through the Transformative Jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union*

Marie Spinoy, *The Shifting Boundaries between Direct and Indirect Discrimination in the Case Law of the Court of Justice*

Workshop 2.5

Marzia Barbera (Chair), Kristin Henrard, Marek Szilvasi, Maros Matiaszko, Lilla Farkas, Tamas Kadar, Istvan Haller, *Prearranged Panel: Strategic litigation challenging systemic discrimination against the Roma: lessons from European apex courts*

Workshop 2.6

Barbara Havelková, *Against poverty as a discrimination ground*

Stefanía Rainaldi, *Structural Discrimination as a Gateway to Addressing Poverty in the Inter-American System of Human Rights*

Roni Rosenberg, *Cyber Crimes: Addressing Gender Inequality*

Workshop 2.7

Ivana Isailović (Chair), Eva Brems, Shreya Atrey, Shahab Saqib, Colm O'Cinneide, *Conversations on comparative equality law: legal scholarship and transformative praxis*

OPENING KEYNOTE

Hon. Dr. Neža Kogovšek Šalamon

Global challenges in anti-discrimination: Between traditional biases, political turmoils, and technological advancement

The speech will address global challenges in the field of anti-discrimination. The challenges are multifaceted and deeply rooted in historical, social, legal, and economic systems. These challenges vary by region but share common themes that hinder progress toward equality. Deep-seated social attitudes normalize racism, sexism, homophobia, casteism, xenophobia, and ableism. Cultural traditions or religious beliefs are sometimes invoked to justify discrimination. Embedded bias remains one of the main causes of discriminatory practices, as it is often built into the fabric of institutions (e.g., legal systems, education, policing, healthcare). Marginalized groups still lack access to decision-making positions, perpetuating cycles of exclusion. Many countries have anti-discrimination laws on paper, but they are poorly enforced or undermined by judicial bias. Corruption or lack of judicial independence often hinder victims' ability to seek justice. People who belong to more than one marginalized group (e.g., women of color, LGBTQ+ refugees, disabled ethnic minorities) face compounded discrimination. Many policies address discrimination in a siloed way, failing to consider intersectional experiences. In many regions there is limited or no disaggregated data to measure discrimination. Collecting identity based data can be politically sensitive or pose risks to vulnerable populations and privacy principles. Growing populist and authoritarian movements often scapegoat minorities. Politicians sometimes stoke division for electoral gains, undermining social cohesion. In this year we have seen some extreme steps, such as the prohibition of diversity and inclusion policies in the United States, where the current administration even issued a list of prohibited terms. Should we want to abide by this list, there would be nothing left to discuss at this conference. Further challenges are caused by the technological advancement, that can benefit us all in many areas, however, algorithms also perpetuate or amplify biases if not carefully designed and audited. Digital platforms are often used to spread hate and misinformation, with limited accountability. What can be the way forward in these circumstances? Overcoming global anti-discrimination challenges is possible at least to some extent. It requires a multi-layered, sustained, and inclusive approach that combines legal reforms, policy innovations, education, and active participation from civil society, governments, and international organizations. The speech will further outline ideas on how these challenges could be tackled.



Hon. Dr. Neža
Kogovšek Šalamon

TOWN HALL: PART 1

The future of our Center

Agenda:

- Introduction of Joy Milligan, incoming Faculty Co-Director of the Center
- Mission Statement
- Review of the Governance Proposal:

The Leadership Team

The primary role of the Leadership Team would be to provide advice and guidance in collaboration with the Berkeley Directors about significant operational decisions relating to the Center's ongoing activities, and participate in the oversight of the Centre's program of activities, while respecting the ultimate responsibility of the Berkeley Directors for the management of the Center. .

For example, the Leadership Team would participate in the consideration of any bids to host the annual conference and would help identify future hosts for discussion and consideration by the Advisory Committee. The Leadership Team would participate in the review of preparations for the annual conference, eg concerning its themes, panels and system for selecting presenters. The Leadership Team would also help ensure oversight of the functioning of the working groups, eg participating in decisions on the appointment of working group chairs when required.

In order to function efficiently, the Leadership Team would be a smaller group that meets regularly and retains good lines of communication with the Berkeley Directors.

The Leadership team, not including the Berkeley Directors, would consist of three members selected by the Advisory Committee from among their membership for three-year terms.

Advisory Committee

The primary role of the Advisory Committee would be to help make strategic decisions that relate to the overall direction and evolution of the Center, including major decisions concerning the Center's membership, structures and resources. This will normally be on the basis of proposals from the Leadership Team. For example, the Advisory Committee would recommend the final decision on the future hosts of the annual conference, following a proposal from the Leadership Team. The Advisory Committee would recommend the final decision on setting up (or disbanding) working groups.

The Advisory Committee would meet several times annually. It could consist of:

Three leaders drawn from the Directors of the Working Groups (3)

One of the editors-in-chief of our journal (1)

A representative of our two most recent and next annual meetings (3)

One member from each of the six continents, to be elected via an electronic ballot of members (6).

The Berkeley Directors (2-4)

Principles for Membership

Aside from the Berkeley Directors, members of the Advisory Committee would serve staggered 3-year terms, with one-third leaving the committee each year. The election of members could take place via an electronic ballot of members.



DAY 2

Presentations & Abstracts

KEYNOTE 2

Nika Kovač

Founding Director of The Research Institute of 8th March

Defending Equality: From Attacks on Diversity to the Fight for Reproductive Rights

Across Europe and the U.S., equality and diversity are increasingly under attack by authoritarian forces — from rollbacks on LGBTQ+ rights to threats against reproductive freedom. In this context, community-driven movements have become a powerful answer. This session highlights grassroots responses to these challenges, with a spotlight on My Voice, My Choice — a successful Slovenian lead pan-European campaign defending reproductive rights and bodily autonomy. Nika Kovač, coordinator of the pan-European campaign My Voice, My Choice and other successful Slovenian campaigns, will explore how grassroots, transnational solidarity can protect and advance equality — and why collective action is our strongest response to rising authoritarianism.



[Nika Kovač](#)

PLENARY 2

Experience and Achievements in the Work of Equality Bodies

The purpose of the plenary panel is to present experience of equality bodies in protecting against discrimination in Austria, Belgium, Slovenia and Sweden. Although all EU members have implemented the five EU anti-discrimination directives, there are certain differences in their national legislations. These differences are reflected both in their mandates or powers and in the practices of their work. The institutional framework of these bodies is also diverse.

Representatives of equality bodies will present their key achievements to date (over the past five years), either at the systemic level of protection against discrimination and promoting equal treatment and equal opportunities or regarding individual cases of identifying discrimination. They will explain the obstacles they have encountered in developing and operating equality bodies themselves and/ or in establishing national systems for protection against discrimination.

Lastly, we will listen to reflections on future challenges and whether these are of more legal or perhaps more sociological/social character.

Lars Arrhenius, Head of Swedish Equality Ombudsman

Patrick Charlier, Director of Belgian Equality Body Unia and Chair of Equinet

Sandra Konstatzky, Head of Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment

Miha Lobnik, Head of Slovenian Advocate of the Principle of Equality

Katharina Rank, Austrian Disability Ombudsperson - Legal Officer and Acting Deputy Chief of Staff

WORKSHOP PERIOD 3

Workshop 3.1

← links for abstracts and bios included!

Pieter Cannoot, *Protecting Non-Binary Persons Against Discrimination in (and through) EU Law: Time to Overcome Blind Spots*

Mukta Sathe, *Gender pay gap in the 21st Century: An insurmountable obstacle or a golden opportunity to rework global economic systems?*

Tetyana (Tanya) Krupiy, *When the Water Does Not Reflect The Image: Solutions to Gaps in the Protection from Algorithmic Discrimination in the Equality Act 2010 (United Kingdom) and Beyond*

Workshop 3.2

Mark Bell (Chair), **Helen Meenan**, **Christa Tobler**, **Elaine Dewhurst**, *Book Talk: Realizing Protection from Age Discrimination: International, Regional, and National Perspectives*

Workshop 3.3

Continuation of discussion of the European Equality Bodies Network Members

Workshop 3.4

Nina Peršak, *Gender equality and criminal justice: recent regulation of gender-based violence in Slovenia and EU*

Wendy Pena-Gonzalez, *Proportionality of punishment: guarantee or threat for equality?*

Laura Carlson, *States' Use of Human Rights Justifications to Limit Human Rights in the Context of Migration*

Workshop 3.5

Alexandra Timmer (Chair), **Jet Tigchelaar**, **Romee Klis**, **Lorena Sosa**, **Brenda Oude Breuil**, *Prearranged Panel: Reclaiming Bodies: Corporeality and Social Exclusion*

Workshop 3.6

Snjezana Vasiljevic, *EU Directive 2024/1385 on combating violence against women and domestic violence*

Nevenka Prešlenkova, *Implementing Rights of All Persons with Disabilities in Slovenia*

Tilen Štajnpihler Božič, **Kristina Krajnc**, *Tracing the EU Concept of Discrimination in Slovenian Case Law*

Workshop 3.7

Nausica Palazzo, *Marital Status Discrimination: A Comparative Law Analysis*

Simeon Beckett, *Hate speech laws: how a desire to protect vulnerable groups can backfire and lead to increased discrimination*

Eliana Zatschler, *Restrictions on the fundamental right of the EU citizens to move freely across the EU*

WORKSHOP PERIOD 4

Workshop 4.1



links for abstracts and bios included!

Stephanie Bornstein (Chair), Sara Benedí Lahuerta, Alex Patrick, Yvette Pappoe, *Intersectional Issues in Pay Equity, a Presentation by the Working Group on Pay Equity and Living Wage*

Workshop 4.2

Helen Meenan, *'Do you know where you're going to?' Reflecting on the evolution of age discrimination Law in the European Union*

Virginia Marturet, *Challenges of the Power of the New Longevity: A ge discrimination in the workplace, and more, in Argentina.*

Clément Lanier, *A Specific Ground: Age Discrimination Before the ECJ and the ECtHR*

Workshop 4.3

Panos Kapotas (Chair), David Oppenheimer, Laura Carlson, *Organizing a Multi-University Course on Comparative Equality Law*

Workshop 4.4

Kaja Gajšek (Chair), Neža Kogovšek Šalamon, Barbara Rajgelj, Gal Gračanin, *Freedom of hate (speech) – human dignity as a central object of protection in the prosecution of hate crimes*

Workshop 4.5

Christoph Garbers, Aisha Adam, *Equality in Crisis: Success and Failure in the Most Unequal Society in the World*

Cathi Albertyn, *The Evolution of Constitutional Equality Norm in South Africa and Its Influences on Equality Law*

Workshop 4.6

Raoul Rombouts, *Passive Bystanders or Workplace Allies? Bystander's Presence and Impact in Belgian Equality Bodies' Case Files*

Zuzana Andreska, *The role of organizational ombuds in sexual harassment cases: future of anti-discrimination policies?*

Melanie Schleiger, *Power to Prevent: Sexual harassment law reform in Australia and the impact of collective advocacy*

Workshop 4.7

Shahab Saqib, *Anti-Discrimination Law as an Ideology*

Vanessa Bliecke, *Formal, substantive and inclusive Equality The understanding of equality as a tool to combat stereotypes*

Venera Protopapa, Lilla Farkas, *European responses to autocratic attacks against marginalized groups: a hierarchy of protection?*

PLENARY 3

25 Years of the Prohibition of Discrimination Based on Disability, an Evolving Scope of Protection

With the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Employment Equality Directive comes twenty-five years of the inclusion of disability as a protected ground in the anti-discrimination directives. On the occasion of this anniversary, the BCCE's Disability Rights Working Group has organized a blog symposium with the Oxford Human Rights Hub, inviting experts to consider the implications of the Court of Justice's case law for the scope of protection for persons with disabilities. This panel builds further on these exchanges.

In a first presentation, Marie Spinoy presents the legislative framework and some key evolutions in the understanding of disability in the first landmark cases. The next two presentations each hone in on a recent disability-related case and the principles that can be drawn from it. Lucy-Ann Buckley considers the case of *VL v Szpital Kliniczny*, which brings out interesting questions concerning different treatment between persons with disabilities and adds a new perspective to the protection against intersectional discrimination. Petra Foubert discusses *J.M.P. v. AP Assistenzprofis*, where a person with a disability applies an age-based differentiation and considers this case in light of the CRPD. Lastly, Lisa Waddington contemplates the most recent years of case law and assesses what they tell us about the scope of protection against discrimination based on disability.



Marie Spinoy
(Chair)



Petra Foubert



Lucy-Ann
Buckley



Lisa
Waddington

WORKSHOP PERIOD 5

Workshop 5.1

← links for abstracts and bios included!

Sara Vancleef (Chair), Ilse Samoy, Michelle Schouteden, Petra Foubert, Marie Spinoy, Wannes Vandenbussche, *Is the Pendulum Always in the Middle? The Use of General Evidence and Tort Law for A Balanced Enforcement of Anti-Discrimination Law*

Workshop 5.2

Micheline Lee, *The Inclusive Equality model, Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme, and the significance of sexuality in the struggle for equality*

Sergio Sulmicelli, *"Not a grave"! Substantive Equality for People Living with HIV/AIDS: Proactive Measures to Fight Stigma*

Bostjan Vernik Setinc, *The right to vote for persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities*

Workshop 5.3

Ramona Vijeyarasa, *Is there a right to equitable paid parental leave for mothers and fathers? A view from international and EU law*

Jule Mulder, *The dialogue between the Courts- revisited: An analysis of the CJEU case on the religious discrimination and the legal developments in the Member States*

Sarah Ourednickova, *An East-West Divide on LGBTIQ+ rights? Comparing the development of LGBTIQ+ rights in Austria and the Czech Republic*

Workshop 5.4

Cathérine Van de Graaf, Beril Önder, *Article 14 under review: Investigating the lack of systematic review of discrimination complaints by the ECtHR*

Sarah Schoentjes, *Intersectionality, discrimination, and structural oppression in the ECtHR case law on reproductive violence*

Selin Altay, *Bringing Reproductive Justice to the Judgements of ECtHR through Polymorphous Queer Biokinships*

Workshop 5.5

Natalie Sheard, *Algorithm-facilitated discrimination: a socio-legal study of the use by employers of artificial intelligence hiring systems*

Lior Volinz, Iva Ramuš Cvetkovič, *Weaponizing anti-Discrimination law – how a controversial definition of anti-Semitism shields Israel from accountability*

Antonio Gomes Moreira Maués, *Affirmative Action and Race Inequality in Brazil*

Workshop 5.6

Mark Bell (Chair), Esther Janssen, Alexandra Timmer, Karin de Vries, Judy Walsh, *Round Table: Visions for the Future of National Equality Laws*

Workshop 5.7

Joy Milligan, Bertrall Ross, *Book Talk: Democracy and the Constitution: Addressing the Legacy of Exclusion*



DAY 3

Presentations & Abstracts

KEYNOTE 3

David Oppenheimer War on DEI

Hours after his January 2025 inauguration, U.S. President Trump declared war on diversity. He ordered the closing of all diversity initiatives in government, education, and business and declared that all DEI programs were illegal. He was dramatically expanding the reach of a 2023 Supreme Court decision that banned the use of race in college admissions.

President Trump has taken the position that after that court decision: any policy that promotes diversity; any policy, publication, or academic course (whether in elementary school, secondary school, or university) that recognizes or examines the value of diversity; any policy or statement by a school or university employee that says favorable things about diversity; any practice or publication that celebrates the accomplishments of persons other than white men; any scientific research that focuses on the experience of women or people of color or LGBTI+ people, and any book that is critical of racism or other forms of discrimination other than antisemitism or discrimination against white men, is illegal.

President Trump has ordered all entities, private or public, including private businesses in the United States and private businesses and state entities outside the United States that conduct business with U.S. entities to immediately cease all such activities. In the name of preventing illegal discrimination against white men and combatting antisemitism he has blocked previously awarded funding to U.S. universities for scientific research, in amounts of over one billion dollars, and has demanded the right to oversee all hiring, tenure, and admissions decisions at several leading universities.

President Trump's policies threaten sixty years of progress in science and in U.S. civil rights law; an abandonment of due process of law in state actions; the academic freedom and independence of universities and research institutions; freedom of speech, expression, and assembly; and liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Professor Oppenheimer's key note address will set out the primary actions taken by the Trump administration that constitute a war on diversity, and the consequences for those who teach and study comparative equality law in the United States and across the globe.



David
Oppenheimer

PLENARY 4

Reinforcing equality: the evolving role of standards for equality bodies

As we mark the 25th anniversary of the Race Equality Directive and Framework Employment Directive, this panel focuses on the critical role of Equality Bodies and the potential of new binding standards for these bodies.

Equality Bodies play an essential role in combatting discrimination, advancing equality, and promoting positive social change. The number of these bodies in Europe has proliferated since the early 2000s, driven in large part by the adoption of the Equality Directives. However, not all of these Equality Directives require the establishment of such bodies, while those which do lack specificity, detailing only a limited set of competencies that Equality Bodies must possess. Against this backdrop, two new EU Directives on Standards for Equality Bodies, adopted last year, have the potential to be transformative.

This panel will explore how legal frameworks and institutional practices can contribute to tackling inequalities at both individual and systemic levels. Drawing on Equinet's recent publications, including the Legal Digest on Standards for Equality Bodies, as well as insights from key experts and practitioners, the panel will assess current challenges and innovative approaches to ensuring robust enforcement of equality law at national and EU levels.

The session will discuss the role of Equality Bodies in the context of the changing realities of equality law, for instance as a result of technological and environmental challenges, and the global drive for adopting comprehensive equality laws.



Daris José Lewis
Recio (Chair)



Tena Simonovic
Einwalter



Jim Fitzgerald



Tamas Kadar

WORKSHOP PERIOD 6

Workshop 6.1

← links for abstracts and bios included!

Carla Spinelli, Arianna Abbasciano, *Strengthening gender equality through local governance: The GenerelnComune pilot project in the Puglia region, Italy*

Yun-Hao Hsin, *Balancing Protection and Autonomy: The Development of Regulations on Protecting Female Seafarers under the Seafarer Act of Taiwan*

Aminayanasam Tekena-Fubara, *Reforming Equality Law to Address Gender Inequality in Nigerian and Cameroonian Boardrooms*

Workshop 6.2

Eva Brems, *Procedural obligations in the case law of an Equality Body: The Dutch Human Rights College and the ‘careful handling of complaints’*

Kim Rubenstein, *Dismantling structural and systemic inequalities perpetuating inequality – the role of Job-sharing Representatives in Deliberative Bodies of Power*

Meghan Finn, *Hidden Biases, Clear Harms: South African Equality Law’s Response to Algorithmic Discrimination*

Workshop 6.3

Katarzyna Sękowska-Kozłowska, *Education against Gender-Based Violence: Lessons Learned from the GRIEVIO Baseline Evaluation*

Danai Nikolakopoulou, *Bearing the burden: examining the implementation of EU law on workplace sexual harassment in Greece*

Davide Tomaselli, *Whose (R)evolution? At What Cost? EU Equality Law Reviewed Through a Queer Materialist Lens*

Workshop 6.4

Sophie Girardini, *What is a “good mother” and what a “bad mother”? Analysing the European Court of Human Rights approach to compounded stereotypes on motherhood*

Caroline Joelle Nwabueze, *European Regional Courts and Liberalism in Religious Controversies: Which yardstick for equality at workplace? A Comparative Analysis with the National Industrial Court of Nigeria*

Jane Calderwood Norton, *Political opinion and discrimination law in New Zealand*

Workshop 6.5

Niels Petersen (Chair), Tainá Garcia Maia, Shubhangi Roy, Kelley Loper, *Book Talk: Equality’s Guardians*

TOWN HALL: PART 2

The future of our Center

Agenda:

- Continuation of Town Hall 1
- Focus on Governance Structure:

The Leadership Team

The primary role of the Leadership Team would be to provide advice and guidance in collaboration with the Berkeley Directors about significant operational decisions relating to the Center's ongoing activities, and participate in the oversight of the Centre's program of activities, while respecting the ultimate responsibility of the Berkeley Directors for the management of the Center. .

For example, the Leadership Team would participate in the consideration of any bids to host the annual conference and would help identify future hosts for discussion and consideration by the Advisory Committee. The Leadership Team would participate in the review of preparations for the annual conference, eg concerning its themes, panels and system for selecting presenters. The Leadership Team would also help ensure oversight of the functioning of the working groups, eg participating in decisions on the appointment of working group chairs when required.

In order to function efficiently, the Leadership Team would be a smaller group that meets regularly and retains good lines of communication with the Berkeley Directors.

The Leadership team, not including the Berkeley Directors, would consist of three members selected by the Advisory Committee from among their membership for three-year terms.

Advisory Committee

The primary role of the Advisory Committee would be to help make strategic decisions that relate to the overall direction and evolution of the Center, including major decisions concerning the Center's membership, structures and resources. This will normally be on the basis of proposals from the Leadership Team. For example, the Advisory Committee would recommend the final decision on the future hosts of the annual conference, following a proposal from the Leadership Team. The Advisory Committee would recommend the final decision on setting up (or disbanding) working groups.

The Advisory Committee would meet several times annually. It could consist of:

Three leaders drawn from the Directors of the Working Groups (3)

One of the editors-in-chief of our journal (1)

A representative of our two most recent and next annual meetings (3)

One member from each of the six continents, to be elected via an electronic ballot of members (6).

The Berkeley Directors (2-4)

Principles for Membership

Aside from the Berkeley Directors, members of the Advisory Committee would serve staggered 3-year terms, with one-third leaving the committee each year. The election of members could take place via an electronic ballot of members.

PLENARY 5

Transformative equality in practice: gender representation, equal pay and crisis response

In a global context of polycrisis that drives ‘exponential inequalities’ (Atrey and Fredman, 2023), the structural limitations and contradictions of equality law can no longer be ignored (Morondo Taramundi, 2020). The disproportionate impact of ongoing crises on the most marginalised groups, especially women, migrants and low-income populations, has re-ignited a long-standing debate on the need to reassert the transformative potential of anti-discrimination law.

This panel outlines the key elements of a transformative equality approach and traces the conditions for its effective implementation in different domains: gender representation in leadership positions, equal pay and the gender pay gap, and the gender impact of crisis responses. These domains represent old and new challenges for European anti-discrimination law. While equal pay and gender balance in corporate boards have been recently addressed by two EU Directives (the Equal Pay and Pay Transparency Directive 2023/970 and the Directive on Gender Balance on Corporate Boards 2022/2381), a crisis approach to inequalities is still missing at European level. This is so, despite evidence that equality mechanisms and standards are quickly sidelined in decision-making processes that take place during crises. Even though EU law has incorporated some transformative concepts and mechanisms (i.e. intersectionality), the results have often been partial, inconsistent or ineffective.

Drawing on the findings from the Horizon Europe RE-WIRING project, the papers collected in this panel explore these challenges, providing illustrative examples of how a transformative equality approach would work in practice.



Panos Kapota
(Chair)



Linda Senden



Elena Ghidoni



Mariangela
D'Acri



Dolores
Morondo
Taramundi



Anju Anna John