

## Realising social rights in the age of digitalisation: opportunities and risks

13th Meeting of the COE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET Collaborative Platform on Social and Economic Rights

28 September 2023, Helsinki, Finland

### Presentation of speakers

*(per order of appearance in the programme)*



**Maija SAKSLIN, Deputy Parliamentary Ombudsman, Finland**

Maija SAKSLIN has been acting as Deputy Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland since 2010 and is serving her fourth term of office. Between 2012 and 2015, she chaired the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. In the early 1990s, she was secretary of the fundamental rights committee, thus contributing to the drafting of the current statutes on fundamental rights in the Constitution of Finland. Her research work consists of, for example, social fundamental and human rights as well of social security coordination in the EU.



**Tiina VALONEN, Senior Specialist, Head of Unit, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Finland**

I am a lawyer by training and since 2015 working at Finland's Non-Discrimination Ombudsman. I have long experience in legality oversight and handling individual discrimination cases. For several years I was also responsible for planning and guiding the Ombudsman's strategic advocacy work in non-discrimination and equality matters. Since 2021 I lead the Ombudsman's unit which is tasked to work against human trafficking and violence against women, as well as the promotion of the rights of foreigners. The expanding impact of digitalization and the use of AI has become increasingly relevant in these areas well. As part of my work I have also been responsible for handling AI-related matters in the Ombudsman's office. This work has included preparing the Ombudsman's statements for legislative preparation, promoting the implementation of the duty to promote equality within government agencies, collaborating with other supervisory authorities, and enhancing the capacity and expertise of the Ombudsman's office in AI-related matters. In 2021-2022, I participated in

an expert group that supported a research project on the equality aspects of AI utilization in Finland (The Avoiding AI Biases project conducted by Demos Helsinki, the University of Turku, and the University of Tampere) in which project an assessment framework aimed at promoting equality in the use of AI was also produced. I am also pleased to be actively involved in the activities of Equinet's AI Cluster. I have over twenty years of work experience in the field of human rights, among others from Amnesty International Finland, the Finnish League for Human Rights and the Council of Europe.



**Jari A. MURTO, Assistant Professor of Labour Law, University of Helsinki, Finland**  
*Moderator*

Assistant Professor Jari Murto explores Finnish labour law systematics which traditionally builds on a three-layered norm structure. The terms of the employment are determined by 1) legislative norms applicable to all employers and employees 2) provisions in collective agreements, and 3) individual employment contract terms. He argues that a fourth category of norms exists. These firm-specific group norms pertain to the relationship between the firm and its personnel or a personnel sub-group. The aim of Murto is to develop labour law theory to accommodate these norms into labour law systematic. The main research interest of Murto in the field of social law consists of transitional labour market and different transitions, especially questions related to lifelong learning. Murto's publications include "Finish Basic Income Experiment in the Context of Finnish Social Law System" (University of Parma publication, forthcoming 2020).



**Gerard Rinse OOSTERWIJK, Digital Policy Analyst, Foundation for European Progressive Studies, Belgium**

Gerard Rinse Oosterwijk is the Digital Policy Analyst for the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS). There, he runs the Digital Programme of FEPS and its Nordic partners investigating AI in the workplace. Before joining FEPS, Gerard served as a political secretary and director of the Vooruit movement in the Brussels Parliament, as well as a senior policy advisor in the European Parliament, where he worked on the Digital Service Tax and several pieces of banking legislation. His experience in the private sector includes roles as an operational manager and marketer at ING Bank, and he was co-founder of a political start-up. Recently, he has been setting up digital initiatives to promote a public space on the Internet. Gerard holds a Master's in European Social Policy from the London School of Economics and an LL.M in Private Law from Leiden University.



**Aída PONCE DEL CASTILLO, Senior Researcher, European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)**

Aida Ponce Del Castillo is lawyer by training. She holds a Master's degree in Bioethics and obtained her European Doctorate in Law, focusing on regulatory issues of human genetics, obtained at the Universities of Valencia. At the Foresight Unit of the European Trade Union Institute, her research focuses on the cross-boundary field between science and emerging technologies, ethical, social and legal issues. Her work has focused on the ethical, legal, regulatory, and social implications of emerging technologies, including human genetics, nanotechnology, neurotechnology, and artificial intelligence. Additionally, she is in charge of conducting foresight projects. She has occupied various seats as an expert in specialised committees, in EU institutions. At the OECD she is a member of the Working Party Working Party on Biotechnology, Nanotechnology and Converging Technologies, and Working Party on AI Governance.



**José María MIRANDA BOTO, Professor of Labour and Social Security Law, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain**

Professor of Labour Law and Social Security at the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. Author of more than 150 papers on Spanish and European Labour Law. Member of several funded research projects on Spanish and European Labour Law for the European Commission, the Spanish Government, the ILO, trade unions, etc. Visiting professor at Université Lyon II Lumière and Universität Wien. Secretary-General of the Spanish Association of Labour and Social Security Law.

He has collaborated in the following reports for the European Commission: “Employee representatives in an enlarged Europe; “Studies on the implementation of Labour Law Directives in the enlarged European Union: Directive 98/59/EC”; “Study on the characteristic and legal effects of agreements between companies and workers’ representatives”; and “Study on out of court settlement mechanisms in transnational labour disputes”.

He was manager of the COGENS Project on Gig-Economy and Collective Bargaining (VS/2019/0084), funded by the European Commission. In 2023, he has been awarded, as leader of a consortium of 15 countries, a new research grant, DIGILARE, about the collective dimension of the digitalisation of industrial relations. From 2019 to 2021, he was a member of the ETUC Observatory of Digital Labour Platforms.

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**Mario VINKOVIC, Professor of Labour Law and Social Security, Holder of the Jean Monnet Chair in EU Labour, Equality and Human Rights Law (2013-2016), Faculty of Law, University of Osijek, Croatia; Member of the European Committee of Social Rights**

Mario Vinković, Ph.D., is full professor and head of the Institute for Labour and Social Legislation, Social Work and Foreign Languages at the Faculty of Law University of Osijek, Croatia. He teaches Labour Law, Social Security Law and EU Labour Law and EU Equality Law. Mario was previously the holder of the Jean Monnet Chair in EU Labour, Equality and Human Rights Law, vice-rector for teaching and students at the University of Osijek, head of the university's Doctoral School and vice-dean for science and international cooperation at the Osijek Faculty of Law. He is a full member of the Croatian Academy of Legal Sciences, a member of the State Judicial Council and between 2011 and 2023 he was director of PhD program in European Studies at University of Osijek. Mario published the books in Croatian: Child labour in international, European and comparative labour law (2008), Fundamental rights and the prohibition of discrimination in the jurisprudence of European and national courts (with professor Snjezana Vasiljevic in 2019), several edited books in Croatian and English, and co-authored a Handbook on discrimination and mobbing in the workplace (in Croatian and English). His research is mostly focused on the problems of discrimination in labour relations, gender equality, transformation of labour relations and labour law, social aspects of human trafficking and child labour, etc.



**Robin ALLEN KC, Discrimination Barrister, Cloisters chambers, United Kingdom**  
***Moderator***

**Robin Allen KC** has specialised in equality, discrimination and human rights law for many years undertaking leading cases in the CJEU and the ECHR. He first worked with the European Commission in 1993 as an expert adviser on the law affecting the most disadvantaged. From 1998 he worked with the Commission on the proposals the Race and Framework Equality Directives. Throughout the 2000s he lectured judges and jurists from across all Member States on the new European equality laws. From 2002 – 2007 he was special legal adviser to the Disability Rights Commission. He was elected to the Bar Council of England and Wales in 2013 and chaired its Equality and Diversity and Social Mobility Committee for six years. In 2018, he set up [the AI Law Consultancy](#) with Dee Masters advising on the regulation of AI. Its work has been referenced by the European Commission, and it has worked with [Equinet](#), the Council of Europe and the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as the UK Government.

The Consultancy is currently drafting UK legislation to control the impact of AI in the workplace.



**Hans DUBOIS, Senior Research Manager, Social Policies, Eurofound**

[Hans Dubois](#) is a senior research manager in the Social Policies unit at Eurofound. He currently works on the project 'Social protection 2.0'. Recent reports include [Unaffordable and inadequate housing in Europe](#) and [COVID-19 and older people: Impact on their lives, support and care](#). His other research topics include non-take-up of social benefits, household over-indebtedness, long-term care, healthcare and quality of life in the local area. Prior to joining Eurofound, he was Assistant Professor at Kozminski University (Warsaw). Hans completed his PhD at Bocconi University (Milan), after working as a research officer at the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (Madrid).



**Christiaan Duijst, Policy Advisor, Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Chair of ENNHRI Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Working Group**

Christiaan has been working at the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (the Institute) since early 2020. His main role is providing policy and legal advice on digitalisation and human rights. He authored several publications, including on the [challenges and opportunities of using algorithms in recruitment](#). He is involved with many of the institute's international activities, including national reports to international human rights body's such as the Universal Periodic Review.

Christiaan is also involved with the Institute's activities on economic and social rights, especially on the right to housing, SDGs and increasingly also social rights in relation to climate. He is the chair of the ENNHRI Working Group on Economic and Social since 2022. Christiaan is trained in public international law and civil law. Before starting at the Institute, he worked on Business and Human Rights related issues for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.



**Tatjana PRIJIC, Assistant Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Serbia**

Tatjana Prijić graduated from the Faculty of Law of the University of Belgrade, employed in the service of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality of the Republic of Serbia since 2017, currently working as an Assistant Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in the Sector for the Promotion of Equality, Cooperation and Projects. The competence of this sector includes assessing the situation in terms of achieving equality of all sensitive social groups; organizing and conducting research, preparation of analyzes and reports; creation and implementation projects; preparation and implementation of all forms of cooperation with public authorities, domestic and international institutions and organizations, the media, Equinet and other relevant entities.

Previously at the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Affairs she worked in the field of employment and protection of persons with

disabilities, where she participated in the drafting and implementation of laws, strategic and planning documents, as well as their harmonization with EU Law. She is an active participant in the EU accession process, within PG 19 and PG 23, is a member of the Equinet working group, she was a member of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the secretary of the Joint Consultative Committee.



**Danilo ĆURČIĆ, Programme Coordinator, A11 Initiative for Economic and Social Rights, Serbia**

Danilo Ćurčić completed bachelor studies in law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Belgrade, and thanks to the Chevening Scholarship program of the Government of the United Kingdom, he completed masters studies in Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the University of Essex. Prior to working in the A11 Initiative, Danilo worked in and cooperated with various non-governmental and international organizations dealing with the topics related to the exercise of economic and social rights of marginalized groups, discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable citizens. Danilo occasionally writes about various human rights topics and issues for different online portals and media, and his main areas of interest are the right to housing and segregation in housing, discrimination and criminalization of poverty as well as the effect of economic policies on the exercise of economic and social rights.

Danilo has been part of the A11 Initiative since its inception.



**Milla VIDINA, Policy Officer, EQUINET  
*Moderator***

Milla Vidina leads Equinet's work on AI and algorithmic discrimination, authoring Equinet's responses to the EU's AI Act and leading its engagement with the Council of Europe Committee on AI. She was previously the Bulgarian Equality Body international affairs unit lead, having worked for civil society organizations, the UN World Food Programme and political campaigns in Bulgaria and the USA. She is a prize-winning Master's graduate from Princeton's School of Public and International Affairs, and is completing a doctoral thesis on the interaction between the EU's AI Act and non-discrimination law.



**Eliza CAMPBELL, Technology & Inequality Researcher, Amnesty International**

Eliza Campbell is a researcher on technology and inequality at Amnesty International. Her work focuses on the emerging and critical ways that many forms of emerging technology impact human rights, particularly with regard to growing global economic, social, and racial inequality. She is currently leading research on the implications of inequality and technology with regard to labour rights, migration, and policing. Previously, she was a scholar and program director at the Middle East Institute, where she examined the impact of spyware, content moderation, and internet shutdowns on marginalized populations around the world. She holds an MA from the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, where she also helped write a book on the human security implications of the Syrian civil war and wrote research on the impact of the digital divide and disinformation online. Eliza was a 2017-2018 Fulbright fellow in Bulgaria, where she examined the use of technology in the humanitarian sector at the border of the European Union, as well as the role of the internet on civil society.



**Sabine SPRINGER, Project Manager, Equality, Roma and Social Rights, Fundamental Rights Agency**

Sabine Springer is a statistician and demographer managing the "Ageing in digital societies" project in the Equality, Roma and Social Rights Unit of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

After her studies in Germany and France, she gained international experience working with UNFPA in Nigeria and as a junior professional officer in Kenya (UN-HABITAT) on a global definition of homelessness.

Moving to Paris to finalise her PhD at the National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), Sabine participated in two European projects on the living conditions of older persons: FELICIE (Future Elderly Living Conditions in Europe) and MAGGIE (MAGGIE-Major Ageing and Gender Issues in Europe). Since 2010, she has been working for FRA and has been involved in different surveys, e.g. on Roma (2011), LGBT (2012) and Fundamental Rights (2018). She also worked on children's rights, youth and older persons.



**DSocSc Ulla Buchert, Social and Public Policy, University of Helsinki, Finland**

Ulla Buchert, DSocSc, works as a postdoctoral researcher at the department of Social and Public Policy at University of Helsinki, Finland. Her research interests cover public health and social welfare services, third sector organizations, digitalization, social inequality, and migration. She has strong research expertise on qualitative research methods, which she has also taught at the University of Helsinki. She is currently affiliated to the DigiIN consortium and the Centre of Excellence in Research on Ageing and Care.

