



## NEWS REPORT

**Date:** 23 November 2010  
**Expert:** McColgan, Aileen  
**Title:** Funding cuts at Equality and Human Rights Commission, UK  
**Country:** United Kingdom  
**Context**  
**Issue at stake:** Equality Body funding  
**Ground of discrimination:** all grounds  
**Source:** Equal Opportunities Review Issue 206  
**Field:** Employment, goods and services, etc.

### Content

It was reported in November 2010 that the Equality and Human Rights Commission “has had to agree to a cut in its annual budget of 55%” (to £32 million) as a result of existing and planned cuts to government expenditure in the wake of the May 2010 general election (*Equal Opportunities Review* November 2010, Issue 206, 3). The *EOR* reports a statement on 14 October from the EHRC’s sponsoring department, the Government Equalities Office, [which] says that the Commission will be ‘radically reformed’. It explains that ‘the EHRC’s work will be refocused on its core functions of regulating equality and anti-discrimination law in Great Britain, of fulfilling EU equality requirements and of being a National Human Rights Institution.’ The Commission is responsible for all of the grounds currently protected in domestic law, including gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief and age, as well as for human rights more generally. Staff will be reduced significantly, in particular “the proposed new structure will remove many of the posts dealing with the public, such as caseworkers, advisers, policy officers, grants officers and regional staff, although a new layer of very senior staff will be created”. The Government is also “considering the scope for transferring some of EHRC’s functions and services to government departments or contracting with private or voluntary sector bodies to undertake them.” These functions are expected to include, most significantly, the Commission’s telephone helpline which, according to the *EOR* report, “handles over 50,000 calls per year” and currently advises on the enforcement of rights.



**Internet link source and additional information:**

[http://www.equalities.gov.uk/news/changes announced to geos non.aspx](http://www.equalities.gov.uk/news/changes_announced_to_geos_non.aspx)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200910/jtselect/jtrights/72/72.pdf>