



18 November 2013

PLAN FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SERVICES OF THE CITY OF HELSINKI IN 2013–2016

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1

Operational programme for the promotion of equality

The City of Helsinki's strategy programme for the 2013 - 2016 council term approved the operational programmes to be drawn up during the council term. One of these programmes is the operational programme for the promotion of gender equality.

The operational programme for the promotion of gender equality is composed of two parts. The first part is composed of this plan for the promotion of gender equality in the services of the City of Helsinki in 2013 - 2016 and the equality planning of city departments and enterprises that will be based on the plan. The second part is composed of human resources policy-based gender equality planning. These are complemented annually by instructions given out to city departments and enterprises, as part of which, the equality plan may be updated as needed.

Helsinki has a long tradition in promoting equality. The city's first Equality Committee was appointed in 1986. Since 2006, Helsinki has drawn up a city-wide equality plan, which has included both a human resources-related section and an operational section that covers the city's services. The present services-related equality plan (previously operational) for 2013 - 2016 is the fifth of its kind. Based on international and national recommendations and development projects, it has been determined that in order to promote equality in municipalities, the drawing up of separate plans for the promotion of services-related, or operational, equality and the promotion of human resources-related equality is justified.

The plan for the promotion of equality in the services of the city in 2013 - 2016 was drawn up in cooperation with the Equality Committee, appointed by the Helsinki City Board and the City of Helsinki Personnel Centre. The human resources-related equality plan will be drawn up, in cooperation with personnel organisations and the city of Helsinki Personnel Centre.

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**PROMOTION OF GENDER
EQUALITY IN THE SERVICES
OF THE CITY**

**The state
governs**

CEDAW

UN Beijing Declaration
and Development

Act on Equality

**Municipalities'
commitments**

European Charter for
Equality of
Women and Men in

CITY OF HELSINKI

City Council
City Board
Equality Committee

Committees and boards
Audit Committee

Strategy
programme for the
2013-2016

Operational programme for the promotion of
equality

Plan for the promotion of gender equality in the services of
the City of Helsinki

Plan for the promotion of gender equality in the
human resources policy of the City of Helsinki

**CITY DEPARTMENTS AND
ENTERPRISES**

Personnel centre
City departments' and enterprises' management

Equality planning of
city departments and enterprises

Instructions

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2 Promotion of equality as policy-making

2.1 Planning requirements of the Act on Equality between Women and Men

In this plan, equality refers to equality between women and men, as described in the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986) and to the equality of gender minorities, as interpreted by the Ombudsman for Equality. The Act on Equality between Women and Men is based on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The convention is monitored by the UN CEDAW Committee, which has provided important interpretation instructions for the convention in its general recommendations: for example, the committee has defined that violence directed at women is discrimination against women, which is prohibited by the convention (nr 19/92).

The City of Helsinki's services-related promotion of equality is based on section 4 of the Act on Equality between Women and Men. The Act on Equality between Women and Men was amended in 2005 (232/2005), so that the systematic promotion of equality between women and men also applies to municipalities. According to section 4 of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, authorities must promote equality between women and men purposefully and systematically, and must create and consolidate administrative and operating practices that ensure the advancement of equality between women and men in the preparatory work undertaken on different matters and in decision-making. In particular, circumstances which prevent the attainment of gender equality must be changed. In the availability and supply of services, the promotion of equality between women and men must be taken into account.

According to section 4a of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, the proportion of both women and men in municipal bodies, but excluding municipal councils, must be, at least, 40 percent, unless there are special reasons to the contrary.

According to section 6b of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, educational institutions, excluding primary schools, must prepare a gender equality plan annually, in cooperation with staff and student representatives.

The Act on Equality between Women and Men also regulates the promotion of gender equality among personnel. According to section 6a of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, an employer who has personnel of, at least, 30 employees working in employment relationships must annually draw up an equality

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plan that deals, in particular, with pay and other terms of employment. The gender equality plan shall be prepared in cooperation with personnel representatives.

2.2

Commitments of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life

In addition to the planning obligation of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, the City of Helsinki has committed itself to promoting services-related equality by signing the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life in 2008. The European Charter for Equality for Women and Men in Local Life was drawn up in 2005-2006 by European municipalities and municipal organisations, coordinated by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and supported by the EU gender equality programme.

By signing the European Charter for Equality for Women and Men in Local Life, a municipality or city commits itself to drawing up and implementing a gender equality plan that covers services and functions and is reviewed and amended as necessary. The gender equality plan must state the primary focus areas and planned measures for equality promotion, and the resources reserved for them. Signatories also commit themselves to sharing information about the gender equality plan and evaluating its implementation.

The European Charter for Equality for Women and Men in Local Life is divided into three sections, which are: I Principles, II Implementation of the charter and its commitments and III Democratic accountability.

Link to the European Charter for Equality for Women and Men in Local Life:

www.kunnat.net/fi/asiantuntijapalvelut/tuke/tasa-arvo/peruskirja/Sivut/default.aspx

2.3

Mainstreaming of the gender perspective in decision-making and administration

According to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the mainstreaming of a gender perspective refers to the comprehensive application of a gender perspective, so that the implications for women and men of any planned action are assessed in advance, in any area and at all levels.

Finland committed itself to the mainstreaming of the gender perspective by ratifying the United Nations Beijing Development Program in 1995. According to the Council of Europe's definition, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective is a strategic approach that is used to develop administration and operating procedures that support the promotion of gender equality, as part of other policy-making activities.

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3 The strategic premises of equality

3.1 The ethical principles of the City of Helsinki strategy plan

The City of Helsinki strategy plan for the 2013 - 2016 council term states that *equality between women and men is a basic right for all humans and a basic value for the society. The city is equal and just. The city systematically carries out gender impact assessments and promotes equality and justice in all its operations. Gender, equality and environmental impacts are taken into consideration in the city's decision-making processes.*" (page 3, 27)

3.2 The City of Helsinki's vision on equality

Equality between women and men is a basic right for all humans and a basic value for the society. However, perfect equality between women and men has not yet been achieved, as is evident by the fact that social, political, economic and cultural inequality still occurs. Inequality between women and men can be removed by changing social structures and the stereotypical social views on genders that are prevalent in our society. Stereotypical impressions on masculinity and femininity that are adopted early in life strengthen the kind of social structures that result in inequality.

At the same time, the city must prevent multiple discrimination, which refers to discrimination based on, for example, both a person's ethnic background and their gender.

3.3 Equality promotes well-being

Gender and the assumptions and expectations associated with it have an effect on operating decisions. Taking gender into account, when examining the users of a service, also improves the information basis of decision-making. Considering the gender perspective in the organisation of services leads to more appropriate allocation of resources and, thus, improves cost-effectiveness and impressiveness.

The equality perspective improves our understanding of the users of a service and promotes the development of more customer-oriented services. Considering gender from the perspective of regional, economic and social status may also lead to new innovations. The well-being of the residents of Helsinki improves when gender equality is promoted by considering the different situations and potentially different needs of genders.

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4 The focus areas of the equality plan

Part 3 of the European Charter for Equality for Women and Men in Local Life includes a total of 30 articles on gender equality. Article 12 focuses on public procurement and contracts, while articles 13 to 23 focus on the service delivery role. The City of Helsinki commits itself to promoting equality by removing obstacles to gender equality in the following areas:

Public procurement and contracts	article 12
Education and Lifelong Learning	article 13
Health	article 14
Social Care and Services	article 15
Childcare	article 16
Care of other Dependants	article 17
Social Inclusion	article 18
Housing	article 19
Culture, Sport and Recreation	article 20
Safety and Security	article 21
Gender-Based Violence	article 21
Human Trafficking	article 23

As with the objectives and measures of the city's strategy programme for 2013 - 2016, these equality-promoting areas will be incorporated into the equality promotion of city departments.

Focus areas that promote equality in the city's services

- Early childhood education promotes the realisation of gender equality, with both its contents and structures. Education methods cannot be based on stereotypical concepts of gender. (articles 6 and 13)
- Services and projects offered by the city to young people, for the purposes of education and entering employment, as well as services and projects that fall under the Youth Guarantee, shall support the realisation of gender equality, with both their contents and structures. (article 16)
- The different needs of women and men shall be taken into account in the health, medical and social services offered. Stereotypical attitudes and assumptions related to gender shall also be recognised and avoided in



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offering services. More equal distribution of care responsibility among genders shall be promoted. (articles 14 and 15)

- Girls and boys, as well as women and men, may have different experiences and interest regarding exercise and recreation. The city must ensure that the services that are offered cater to everyone and that everyone has access to all facilities. (article 20)
- Stereotypical attitudes may influence the development of interests. Because of this, the city shall challenge gender-related stereotypes in sports activities. (articles 6 and 20)
- The work methods related to helping the victims of domestic violence and the prevention of domestic violence shall be regularised. (articles 21, 22 and 23)
- Gender equality shall be promoted in the implementation of the new legislation concerning services for the elderly. (article 17)
- The city shall promote the integration of immigrant women and men, while considering their special needs and family situations. (article 18)
- The city shall promote gender equality in city functions related to housing, planning, traffic and sustainable development, as well as the upcoming metropolis report. (article 19)
- Gender impacts shall be assessed in the preparation of acquisitions. (article 12)

5 Equality planning of city departments and enterprises

5.1 Mainstreaming as a starting point

The equality planning of city departments and enterprises shall be based on the mainstreaming of the gender perspective. The planning of the City of Helsinki's services and the preparatory work used as the basis of committee decision-making shall be developed so that they promote gender equality. Preparation and decision-

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making must make use of statistical data broken down by gender¹. The mainstreaming of the gender perspective shall be realised on the entire organisational level, in individual work units and in the work of individual office-holders.

Equality planning related to services shall be discussed in the management groups of city departments and enterprises. These discussions shall determine the measures with which the objectives of the focus areas of this city services-related equality plan and other issues related to gender equality can be promoted in each city department and enterprise. The results of this work shall be presented as part of financial and operating plans, either as separate equality plans or in the form of separate accounts on the planned measures.

5.2

Gender impact assessment (GIA) and Preliminary Impact Assessment (PIA)

The *Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) method* was developed to promote equality in operations and services. The method aims to ensure that the possible impacts of decisions and measures on different genders are assessed in advance. Some solutions related to the production of services are gender neutral, but some may in reality treat different genders unequally. This is why analysing solutions in advance “using gender glasses” is important.

Gender Impact Assessment shall be incorporated into other statutory Preliminary Impact Assessments (PIA) in decision-making. In 2011, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities issued a recommendation on Preliminary Impact Assessments in municipal decision-making. The recommendation states that the preparation and making of decisions must take into account the impact that the decision will have on the residents of the municipality, the environment, the organisation, personnel and the economy. Preliminary Impact Assessment may include, for example, the consideration of effects on health and welfare in decision-making, as required by the Health Care Act. According to section 11 of the Health Care Act (1326/2010), when planning and making decisions, municipalities shall assess and take into consideration any effects that their decisions may have on the health and social welfare of residents.

The City of Helsinki Economic and Planning Centre’s instructions for the City of Helsinki budget for 2014 and financial plan proposal for 2014 - 2016 state that a Preliminary Impact Assessment is mandatory.

¹ City of Helsinki Urban Facts (TIEKE) has compiled statistical data, broken down by gender, on their website. http://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/tasa_arvo/



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"Gender Impact Assessment means that the impacts of measures or services are assessed from the perspective of both women and men. The aim is to prevent unwanted impacts, in regards to gender and promote gender equality. The assessment may explore, for example, how a measure affects the position and resources of women and men in our society. "

The assessment may be used as the basis for making corrective proposals, in order to reduce discrimination and undesirable impact and in order to remove obstacles for equality. A Preliminary Impact Assessment may also be carried out if it includes a Gender Impact Assessment.

6 Coordination, responsibility and monitoring of equality promotion

6.1 Coordination

The City of Helsinki Personnel Centre (excluding the Human Resources Division of the City of Helsinki Executive Office as of 1 January 2014) is responsible for the coordination of equality promotion – meaning both services-related equality promotion and human resources-related equality promotion. The Personnel Centre is also responsible for the administrative duties of the City of Helsinki Equality Committee. To promote the equality planning of services, the Personnel Centre shall organise a meeting of the equality work contact persons appointed by each city department and enterprise. The Personnel Centre also organises GIA training.

6.2 Responsibility and monitoring

The Personnel Centre and the Equality Committee shall monitor the implementation of the equality plan in the chosen focus areas and, generally, in the operations of city departments and enterprises. For the purpose of this monitoring, the Personnel Centre will draw up a form template for city departments and enterprises, with which equality promotion measures can be easily reported. At the same time, the form will be used to gather systematic information for the basis of reporting on the status of equality promotion in the city. The realisation of equality promotion may also be monitored by other committees and boards, the City Board, the Helsinki City Council and the Audit Committee.

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6.3 The Equality Committee supports and reports

The City of Helsinki Equality Committee serves as an expert body in the city's equality promotion efforts. The Equality Committee appointment decision (Khs 18 February 2013) for 2013 - 2014 states the tasks of the 10-person committee.

The Committee shall:

- monitor and evaluate the realisation of equality, both among city personnel and in relation to services offered by the city
- operate in cooperation with city departments, by supporting the objective-oriented and systematic promotion of equality in their operations
- make proposals on how to promote and carry out work for equality
- make sure that statistics and information on gender equality is available to both decision-makers and municipal residents
- report on the city's human resources-related equality promotion and the realisation of functional equality in the target areas defined by the committee.

The City of Helsinki Equality Committee shall report on the realisation of the city services equality plan to the City Board at the end of its 2013 - 2014 and 2015 - 2016 terms.

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