

Equality planning in the City of Vantaa – Lessons Learned

Gender mainstreaming in municipalities: Sharing of the Nordic Experience
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Motto



Equality does not just exist.

It is made.

The demand for Equality is in The Constitution, and in:

1

Gender Equality Act (1986 > > > 2015)

- New layers have been added over the years.
- Strong emphasis on working life.
- 60/40% rule on public decision-making bodies; teaching and education; delivering goods and services; now also gender identity and expression of gender.

2

Anti-discrimination Act (2004, replaced in 2015)

- Before 2015 strong emphasis on ethnic origin; now 13 named grounds for non-discrimination (age, origin, nationality, language, religion, conviction, opinion, political or trade union activity, family connections, health, disability, sexual orientation).

3

Many other laws

For example in

- The Penal Code
- Law on Public Governing
- Law on the Rights of the Patient
- Law on Youth

Act on Equality between Women and Men: gender mainstreaming

4 §

Duty of authorities to promote gender equality

"In all their activities, 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."

.....

Summary

The law calls for not only non-discrimination, but also promotion of equality, and planning is part of this work.

Problem

This is not known in municipalities.

To do

Make the law(s) known, create planning and gradually establish equality work in the whole organisation.

City of Vantaa



The airport city.

Municipality, but Vantaa is de facto part of the Helsinki metropolitan area.

Close to 230 000 people and growing fast; will be the 3rd biggest city in Finland within a few years.

The most multicultural city in Finland (17,7 % New Finns).

Permanent staff 10 169 (women 80 %).

Finnish pioneer in municipal equality work.



Equality work? Mainstreaming? Planning?



Equality work is intentional and outspoken planning, training, studying, assessing etc. for the non-discrimination and promotion of equality in all decision-making and service production.

The ABC of Mainstreaming:

- A. Equality is everybody's business.
- B. Equality must be included in everything we do.
- C. Mainstreaming is ways and means to marry A to B.

(Meija Tuominen)

NB: Mainstreaming is actually sidestreaming unless it is integrated into the main processes of the city.

Planning is also in fact doing, because there is involvement and participation in proper planning. In Vantaa the city level plan is not only a plan – it is also a tool.

The overall city-level plan 2017-2020: "Promoting equality and non-discrimination as a way of working for Vantaa"



1

The Workbook

What is equality and non-discrimination?

2

The Plan for equality work in decision-making and services

("external")

3

The Plan for work with the focus on equality among City staff

("internal")

Part 1: The Workbook (96 pages)



- * Linking equality with the strategic values of Vantaa (innovativeness, sustainable development and inclusion).
- * Explaining relevant laws especially from a municipal point of view.
- * Equality officials in Finland + city-level equality work in Vantaa.
- * Estimating past work and defining main tasks for the council period 2017-2020.
- * Equality? Non-discrimination? Different forms of discrimination. Ways to promote equality in ordinary work.
- * Integrating (checklist).
- * Some methods and tools.
- * "Ten commandments" for local politicians.
- * A vocabulary from A to Ö.

Also many questions and cases to discuss with others, some statistics, links to more info and key NGOs etc.

Part 2: Plan for services (6 pages)



Three categories of action:

1. Good/best practices we need to keep up.

For example: Strong commitment to equality in the strategy.

2. Work that needs intensifying.

For example: Better statistics. Better integration in ESF projects.

3. New things.

For example: Learning gender budgeting. Procurement criteria. Preparing for a future human rights program?

All departments are responsible for the equality of their own services, and developing their equality work.

They have listed their priority targets in equality work during this council period.

As of Autumn 2018 there is intensified work in the Family Services, Physical Education, Library, and on gendered violence.

Part 3: Plan for personnel (4 pages)



- These things are required by Gender Equality law: accounting of the equality situation, a salary study as part of the account; list of measures to be done; estimation of what has (not) been achieved through previous plan and its actions.
- **Joint action between employer and staff (trade unions)**; many standard mechanisms included (incl. Staff Protection). This part of the City Plan is not taken to the City Government for decision-making.
- Indicators: w/m in all staff + in fixed-term work + in biggest profession groups; w/m and age; w/m in superior positions; average pay w/m; extra pay w/m; foreign language speakers %.
- Departments are allowed promoting special measures according to their needs.
- Zero tolerance for unacceptable language and behaviour.

NB: Excuses like "expectations from the public" are not accepted.

Lessons learned



- * There is confusion between universal services and the non-discrimination and equality of services.
- * People have a very different – and often narrow – understanding of equality issues.
- * Gender, equality and non-discrimination are personal, delicate and sometimes painful subjects to work with.
- * If you ask colleagues, the need for equality work is always somewhere else.
- * Gender blindness is a fact, but it is usually not total.
- * There will always be opposition against equality work, and the opposing takes many forms.
- * Equality work must exist in the official governing rules of the city, be managed through normal managing of the organisation, and it must take advantage of existing structures and "normal" work.
- * Coordinating and developing equality work calls for expertise.
- * Co-operation with relevant NGOs is a lot more productive than involving citizens directly.
- * Equality work has a tendency of becoming self-repeating, and those doing it often like to stay on the comfort zone.
- * An Equality Committee is a double-headed sword. No committee on gender equality in Vantaa.
- * National and international co-operation is valuable.