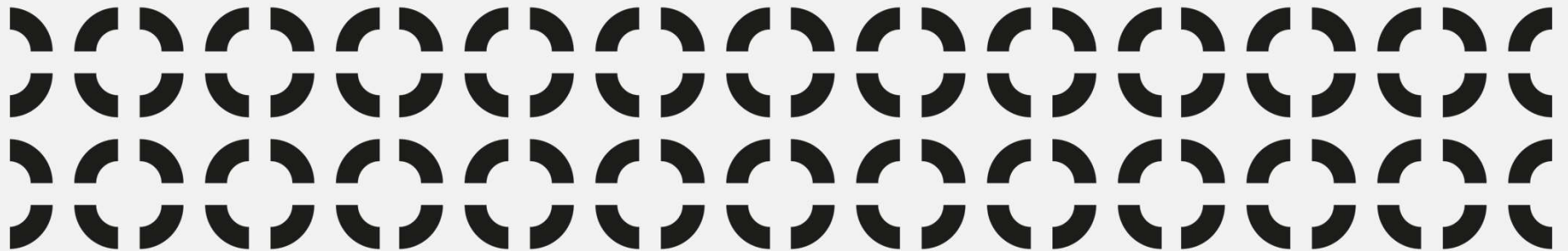


Equality in associations

1.12.2020



Goals for this presentation

- Learn more about equality legislation and how it effect associations
- Learn more about different forms and causes of discrimination
- Provide tools for developing equality in your association.
 - Equality plan
 - Harassment contact persons

The finnish law on Equality

- The finnish Equality Act, Section 8, Prohibition of Discrimination, applies to all: "No one shall be discriminated against: on the grounds of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, health, disability, sexual orientation or any other personal reason.
- Discrimination shall be prohibited regardless if it based on real or assumed characteristic of a person.

On the definition of discrimination

- It is about putting different people in an unequal position or treating people differently because of their personal characteristics – without valid and lawful reason.
- Discrimination can be immediate, in which people are consciously treated differently
- Discrimination is indirect if a seemingly equal rule, ground or practice puts someone at a disadvantage on other grounds.

What is special about organizational activities?

- A community of members of an organization
- Equality, volunteering, side work, leisure (no formal responsibility)
- Activities can be point-by-point participation in events or campaigns (no fixed communities or groups)
- Social media and digital communities
- Traits related to the nature of hobbies (events, activities, celebrations)
- Trustees, and volunteers

Examples of forms of discrimination on association

- Exclusion from the activity, or making it impossible to join the activity
- Various items approved during events or parties (partying, breach of immunity)
- Spreading rumors, face to face and on online platforms
- Sexual harassment in form of persecution, stalking
- Inappropriate way of speaking, unwanted sexual suggestions

Equality plan

- A plan drawn up by the association on how it promotes equality in its activities and prevents and addresses discrimination.
- Central to creating a plan is taking into account the opinions and experiences of the members.
- They can be mapped, for example, by welfare and opinion polls and questionnaires divided into sub-entities
- Someone in association is responsible of each goal
- Measures listed to achieve the objectives
- Measuring the achievement of objectives.
- Different groups that may experience unequal treatment will be considered.
- When advocating issues concerning minorities, members of those minorities should be heard.
- You can also use trusted sources or existing templates.

Examples of themes that can be addressed in the equality plan 1/2

- Transparency of operations
Good governance: transparency, knowing how and what to decide, the opportunity to attend meetings and read minutes of meetings. No grunting, pressure, blackmailing or corruption.
- Costs of participation, and pricing
Participation fees for events such as anniversaries remain reasonable. There should be also free events.
- Communication
Comprehensive, proactive and transparent. Avoid ambiguities and provide timely information. Communicate in relevant languages and always offer the opportunity to be contacted.
- Gender and sexuality
The aim is to get rid of unnecessary gendered practices. Gender or sexual orientation is not assumed or asked unnecessarily.

Examples of themes that can be addressed in the equality plan 2/2

- **Accessibility**

Event communication mentions whether there is unobstructed access to the venue. Not just "unfortunately unobstructed", but how unobstructed (stairs, threshold, etc.). The registration forms ask if the participant needs special arrangements. Designate a person who can be contacted for accessibility issues.
- **Consideration of different background**

All students are encouraged to get involved - creating a culture where everyone feels welcome. Various events are organized.
- **Non-alcoholic**

No activity obliges you to drink alcohol and there is never pressure to drink. Sufficient non-alcoholic events are organized and non-alcoholic alternatives are invested in (other than water alone)

Student humor & singing culture

- An integral part of student culture, colorful and grimaceous in places.
- It depends a lot on how it is interpreted and received, and is context-specific
 - Have participants know what to expect at the event
- The starting point should be that everyone has fun, comfortable and safe to be with.
- Humor fails if it offends someone, someone becomes insecure, or someone finds it difficult or uncomfortable to participate because of it.
- Negative stereotypes and racist jokes and songs replicate discriminatory power structures. Intended to be light, insightful and fun - for everyone.
- Therefore, the treatment of difficult, sensitive, polemical, heavy and otherwise emotional issues should be carefully considered.
- It's about the mood: tasteless jokes negatively affect everyone's state of being.
- Ability to provide feedback and willingness to discuss if disagreements arise.

Student Union Harassment contact person

- The harassment contact person can always be notified if he encounters or detects harassment or inappropriate treatment
- The harassment liaison officer can be asked for advice or assistance on his own behalf or on behalf of another person
- If the contact wishes, the harassment contact person will help guide the situation forward or get additional help
- Be independent and impartial, avoid valuing commentsThe most important task is to consult and provide support to those who have experienced harassment
- All contacts are confidential and will not result in action unless requested to do so by the notifier

Harrasment contact person in associations

- AYY recommends the same principles as in its own operations: independence, impartiality and confidentiality.
- Sanctions or matters of equality and safety are the responsibility of the entire board of the association, so they cannot be outsourced to just one actor.
- There may be either no work at all in the association or difficult cases can employ a lot. It is a good idea for the association's own harassment liaison to monitor the limits of your own endurance and competence, and to guide you if necessary.
- A person's subjective experience and situations are always different from each other. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.
- Let the person tell and define their own experience.
- The accused of harassment always has the right to be heard and to have his or her point of view raised during the proceedings.
- The well-being of the person who has experienced the harassment can be improved without the so-called the other party

Finally

- *Promoting equality requires continuous and purposeful action, but even small actions can make a big difference!*
- *Equality will not be completed either, but it is dialogue within the community and continuous development!*
- Harassment is always a group phenomenon and a problem for the whole community that affects all its members. It affects not only the target of bullying, but also the bully, side followers, and the entire student community.
- Only by listening to members can their needs be mapped.
- Tradition never justifies discrimination.

Thank you, time for questions

- You can be in contact with us!
- Different organizations have different ways to prevent harassment, and we will be happy to discuss them with you.
- Anything you would like to ask?
- Contact information
- Lauri Jurvanen, hairinta-mies@ayy.fi
- Annika Mällinen, hairinta-nainen@ayy.fi