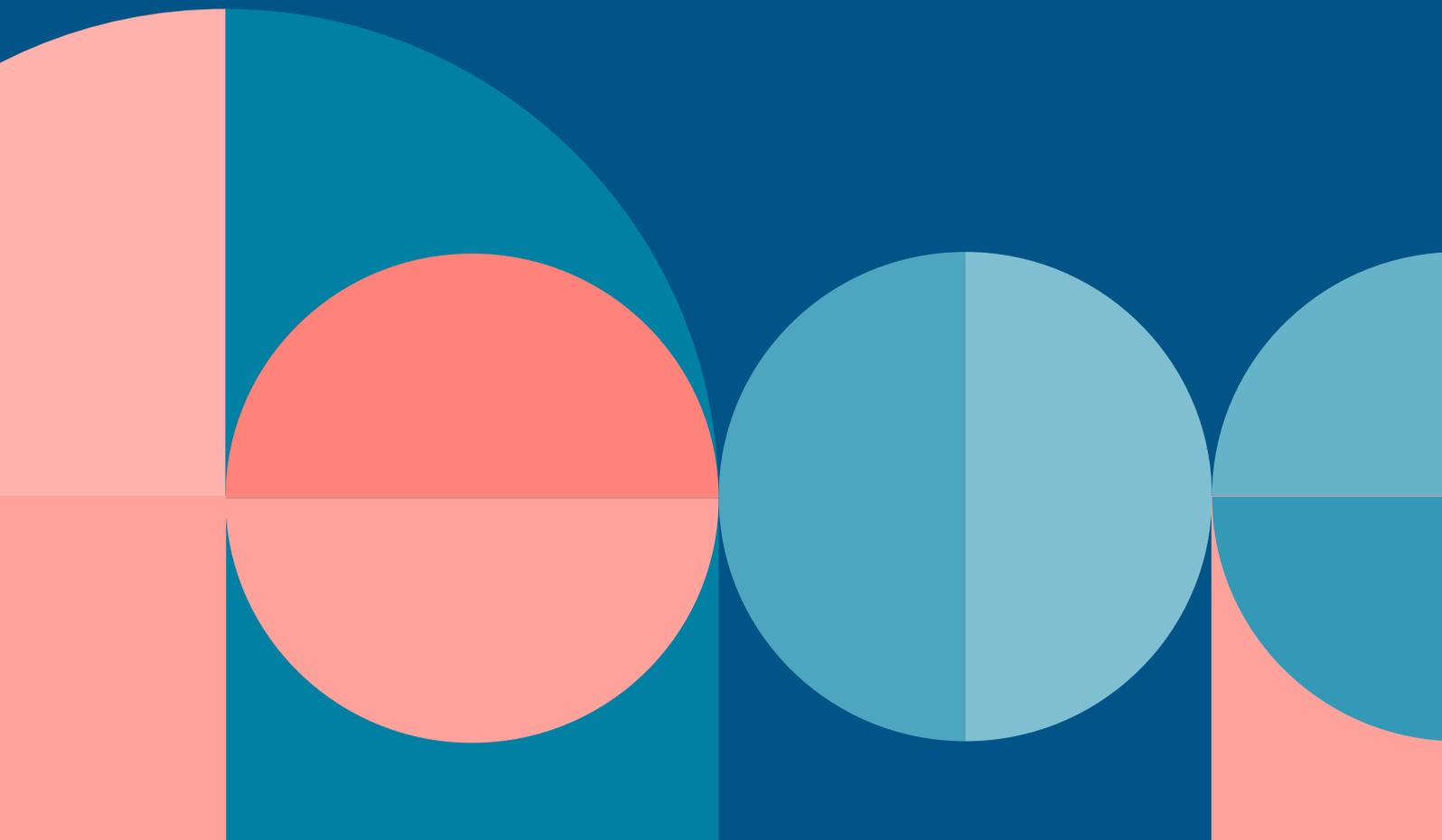


Municipalities as promoters of good relations between population groups

Good tools and practices



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Preface

Guide to promoting good relations between population groups

This guide has been prepared for municipalities to support them in their work to promote good relations between population groups. Relations between population groups affect everyday life at the local level. **In their capacity as public authorities, municipalities are close to people's everyday lives and for this reason; they play a key role in the work to support good relations.** Relations between groups involve issues pertaining to equality, non-discrimination, immigrant integration and vitality of a municipality as well as the wellbeing and

safety of its residents. When discussing relations between population groups, the focus is on attitudes, sense of security, interaction and inclusion.

Good relations mean that there is positive interaction between population groups residing in a municipality and that the groups respect and trust each other. The aim is to prevent and reduce tensions between population groups. Tensions and conflicts can be addressed so that they do not cause fear or degenerate into crime.



GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS



Organisations



Family and close friends



Public authorities



Decision-makers



Businesses



Jobs



Media

The concept 'population group' refers to a broad range of different characteristics on the basis of which individuals can be categorised. Some of the characteristics (such as gender, native language, disabilities or ethnic background) are relatively permanent whereas others (such as age, study or work, family relations, housing type or identity) can change during one's life. **When talking about population groups, we should keep in mind that individuals are not only representatives of social groups but they also have a variety of important relationships,** through which their own identity and contact with the outside world are built.

It has been noted that many municipalities need support in setting strategic and concrete objectives and indicators for relations between population groups and this issue is discussed in the guide¹. Good relations are a sum of many factors and the causal relations between them are not always clear-cut. **Relations between population groups have been described as a piece of soap that easily slips through your fingers.** The guide presents examples from municipalities of different sizes, taking into account that the need for support greatly depends on the resources available to the municipality.

The purpose of the guide is to provide tools for more systematic work to promote good relations. The work should be based on knowledge of the state of relations between groups in the municipality and on inclusive discussions on the matter together with stakeholders and population groups living in the municipality.

A wide range of different actors, such as associations, tenant committees and companies, operate in a municipality. By actively engaging in the work to promote good relations, a municipality can strengthen the operating environment of these actors. At the same time, different actors recognise the role of a municipality in the process and expect it to promote good relations.

Typically, municipalities only pay attention to the issue after polarisation between population groups has led to conflicts.

The importance of good relations is usually understood in the context of immigrant integration. **Relations between groups concern all people and all communities and strategic work to improve them contributes to the wellbeing and equality of municipal residents in a broad range of different areas.**

EXAMPLE: *In the past, the work against racism was seen as a part of immigrant integration. Public debate and numerous studies have highlighted the fact that in addition to immigrants, other population groups, such as the Roma, the Sámi, and people of colour as well as religious and linguistic minorities also face racism². Understanding the extent of racism and its impacts serves as a link between anti-racism and more extensive work to promote equality.*

Material for promoting good relations at municipal level



Hurtful words, destructive deeds – A guide to action against hate acts locally



Vastaanottokeskukset ja hyvien väestösuhteiden edistäminen. TRUST-hankkeen ensimmäisen vaiheen tuloksia ja havaintoja (Reception centres and the promotion of good relations. Results and observations from the first phase of the TRUST project, in Finnish). The publication includes a description of the community mediation model applied in Forssa.



Yhteiselön avaimia – Virikkeitä kunnille hyvien väestösuhteiden edistämiseksi (Keys to co-existence – Tips for municipalities for promoting good relations, in Finnish)



VOTA – hyvien väestösuhteiden suunnittelutyökalu (VOTA – A tool for planning good relations, in Finnish)



Kuka muu muka? Opas hyvien suhteiden edistämiseen ja muukalaisvihan torjumiseen (Am I a stranger? Guide to promoting good relations between population groups and combating xenophobia, in Finnish)



Yhdenvertaisen kunnan tekijät -verkkokoulutus eOppivassa (Building equality at the municipal level – online course in eOppiva, in Finnish)



Material from the City of Helsinki related to equality

Preparing the guide

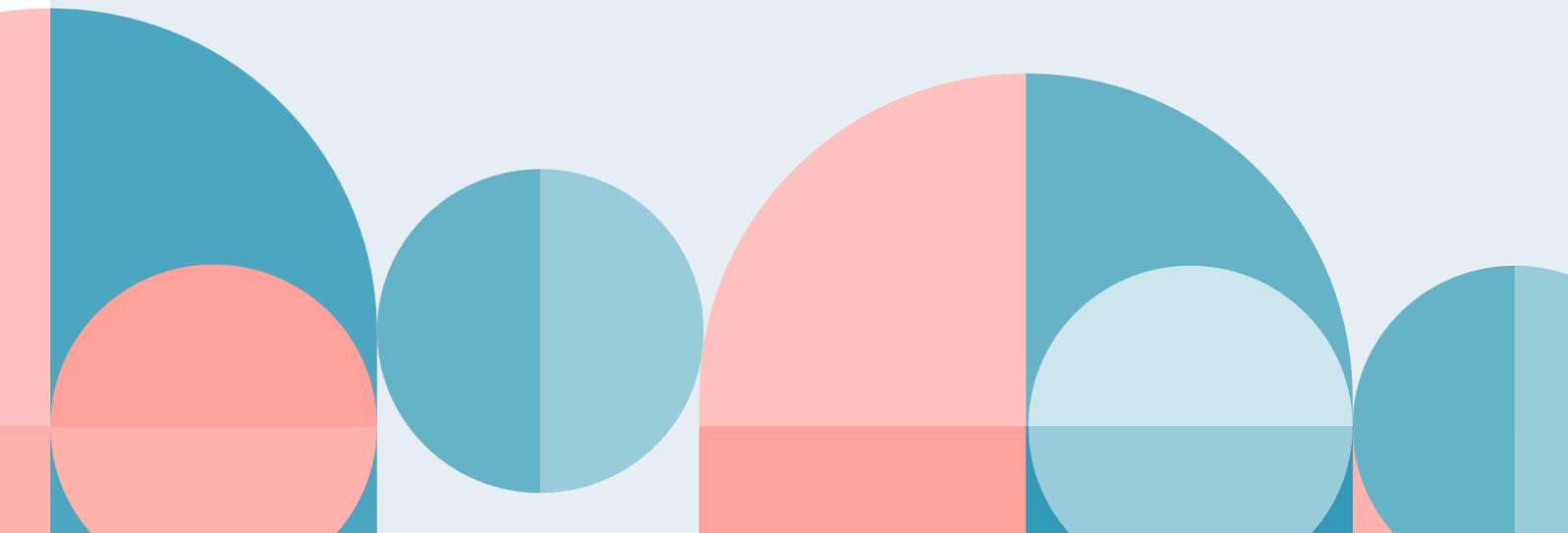
In spring 2022, the Ministry of Justice convened a pilot group, which primarily comprised of representatives of cities and other municipalities. Municipalities that have actively worked to promote good relations between population groups, especially within the framework of immigrant integration, were invited to join the group. This guide is based on the discussions carried out in the group and on the examples collected for the work. More examples surely exist.

The following parties took part in the work of the pilot group: Welfare District of Forssa, City of Hämeenlinna, City of Kajaani, City of Kotka, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, City of Lappeenranta, City of Oulu, Municipality of Pyhäjoki, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, City of Uusikaupunki, Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Uusimaa, City of Vaasa, City of Vantaa and Municipality of Ylitornio. The Ministry of Justice would like to thank all participants for their active contribution.

At the central government level, several ministries cooperate in matters that are

relevant to the relations between population groups. Promoting equality and good relations is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice, while the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for planning, developing and steering the promotion of immigrant integration at the national level and for coordinating it with other policy areas and with the promotion of good relations. Relations between population groups are also discussed in the Internal Security Strategy of the Ministry of the Interior and the Suburb Programme of the Ministry of the Environment.

The pilot group and this guide are part of the implementation of the project Drivers of Equality coordinated by the Ministry of Justice. The aim of the project is to develop tools for equality and non-discrimination planning and for implementing the plans. This also included creating a guide for promoting good relations in municipalities. The project also supports the Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups (2021–2023) outlined in the Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government.



Municipalities and good relations between population groups

Two different levels can be identified in the work to promote good relations: the strategic level and the operational level. The main purpose of the guide is to provide tools for municipalities that would open up opportunities for goal-oriented work to promote good relations. At the same time, the guide also offers practical tips supporting the implementation of the strategies.

Nearly all municipalities are already carrying out measures that can be considered to promote good relations; however, much of the work has been project-based rather than systematic in nature. The focus of individual actions has been on finding solutions to specific problems. There are numerous examples of such projects involving schools, sports facilities, immigrant integration, support for associations and public trans-

port. Practical implementation has often been the responsibility of non-governmental organisations and tenant committees, while municipalities have enabled the work by providing facilities and funding.

Some municipalities have already become interested in doing goal-oriented work to promote good relations. This represents a new way of thinking that the promotion of good relations is understood as a municipal obligation.

The municipality must lead the work supporting good relations and find parties that implement the objectives set in the strategy.

PROMOTING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS IN A MUNICIPALITY



Obligations of the municipality in the promotion of good relations

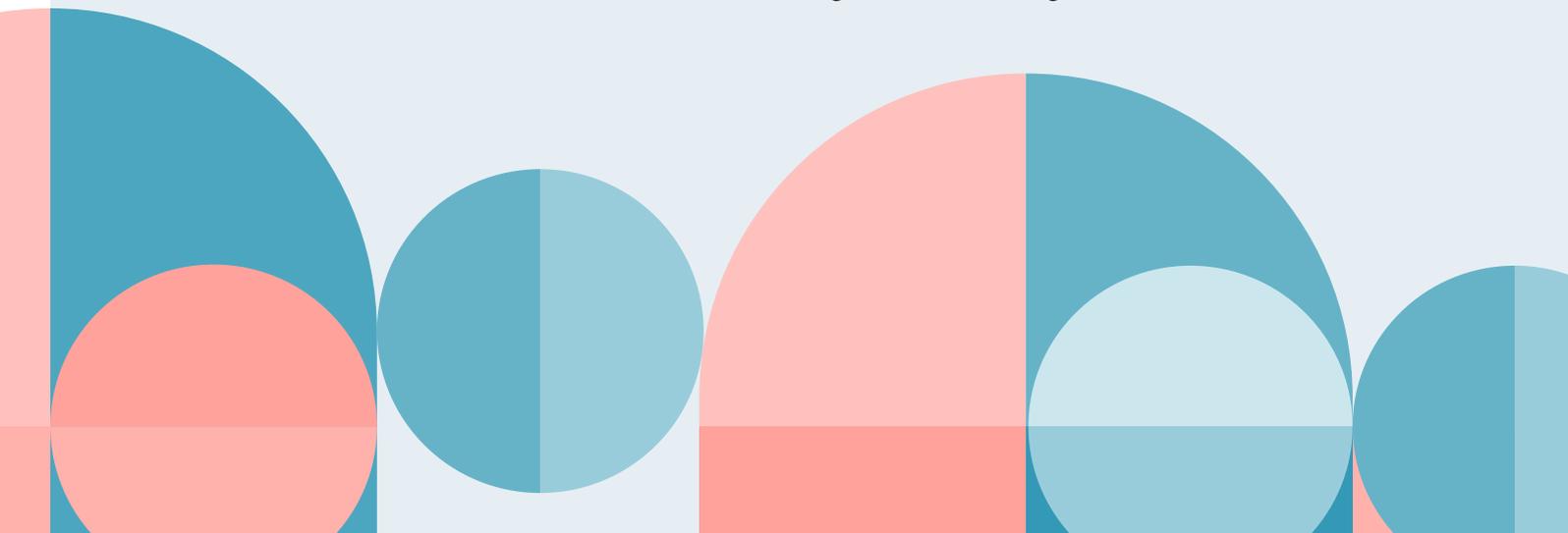
The work to promote good relations between population groups is primarily based on two acts. The first of them is the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014). Its purpose is to promote equality, prevent discrimination and enhance the legal protection of victims of discrimination. The Act is a key instrument in the work to ensure equal opportunities for different groups, and good relations are a part of this.

Under the Non-Discrimination Act, the authorities, such as municipalities, must evaluate the realisation of equality and non-discrimination in their activities and take the necessary measures to promote equality. Municipalities must also draw up non-discrimination plans, which provide the opportunity to develop the relations between different groups at the municipal level. The non-discrimination plan is often combined with such documents as the gender equality plan.

Legislation on immigrant integration is also relevant to relations between population groups. **Under current Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010), municipalities must, as part of immigrant integration, promote equality and non-discrimination as well as positive interaction between groups (section 29 of the Act).**

In the Act, there are also references to the promotion of good ethnic relations, which is one component of the work to promote good relations.

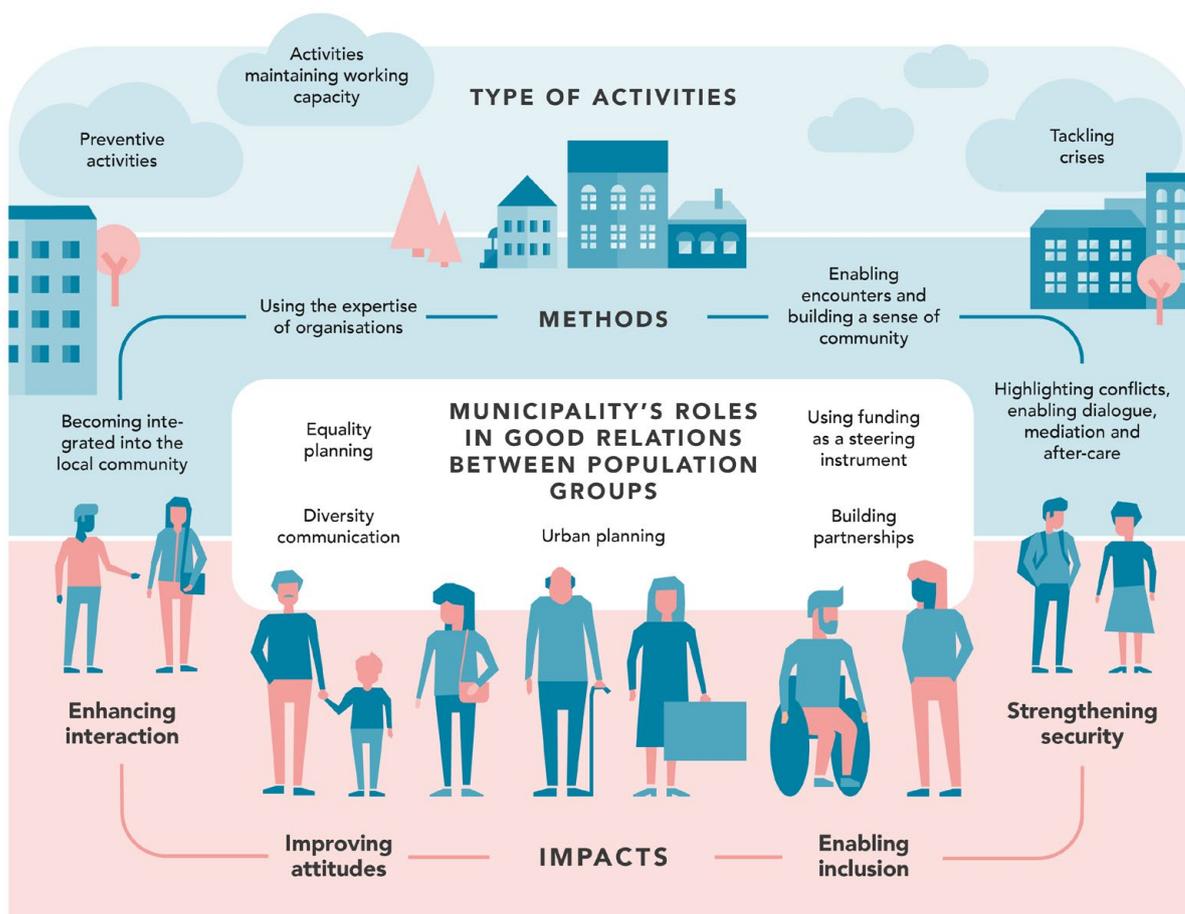
Under the legislative proposal to reform the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration³, municipalities should set objectives and measures supporting them in their planning work. These objectives and measures should also concern good relations, amongst others⁴. A municipality should also appoint a multisectoral cooperation group at the local level to plan and develop the promotion of immigration and immigrant integration as well as good relations⁵.



Under this legislative framework, the promotion of good relations is linked to a broad range of different local government tasks and strategic plans regularly drafted by municipalities. These include

- municipal strategy
- language strategy (particularly in bilingual municipalities and municipalities in the Sámi region)
- wellbeing report and plan
- equality and non-discrimination plans
- plans to promote immigrant integration
- security plan
- interaction plan

In particular, the wellbeing reports play a key role in municipal decision-making and the prominence given to good relations in the reports provides a basis for the preparation and implementation of long-term plans. Furthermore, information on the impacts of the relations between population groups steers decision-making and education offered in municipalities.



At the same time, combining the statutory obligations of municipalities with the work to promote good relations also provides tools for addressing problems arising from the relations between groups. The obligations enable decision-makers to examine municipal programmes from a broader perspective so that such matters as the multiplier effects of the non-discrimination and security plans can be considered. Systematic work to promote good relations opens up the big picture for setting goals and considering measures.

KEY QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO ENSURE COORDINATION BETWEEN MUNICIPAL OBLIGATIONS AND THE WORK TO PROMOTE GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS:

How can the work to promote good relations between population groups be combined with the statutory obligations of a municipality? What monitoring data on the state of the relations between groups is available to municipalities?

Local government resources are limited. How should they be focused to improve the relations between groups? What motivates municipalities to pay more attention to good relations?

Do municipalities recognise how their decisions and actions impact different population groups? Do they actually enhance equality between municipal residents? Do they have any impact on interaction between people living in the municipality and on their inclusion?

Are the relations between population groups considered in municipal documents and decisions?

Is the work to promote good relations on an effective and strategic basis?

Local government tasks and the role of the relations between population groups

Municipalities have a great deal of potential for promoting good relations between population groups as a part of the residents' wellbeing and impacting it. With the introduction of the health and social services reform and the establishment of the wellbeing services counties, many of the existing local government tasks become more relevant in terms of relations between population groups.⁶

TASK OF THE MUNICIPALITY	ROLE OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS
<p>Promoting skills and culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic education and early childhood education and care • education leading to qualification and liberal adult education • cultural, youth, library and sports services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring equality • identifying and combating racism and discrimination • interaction between professionals, students and families • spaces providing more physical and psychological safety
<p>Promoting vitality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local business policy and the ability to attract companies and labour • promoting immigrant integration • support for people who are difficult to employ, outreach youth work, work in villages and urban districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • municipal image and reputation work • attachment to the municipality and municipal identity • prevailing attitudes and security situation • identifying and addressing racism and discrimination in the workplace • work against social exclusion
<p>Promoting local identity and democracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities to participate • sense of community, interaction • non-governmental organisations, residential activities • representative democracy and decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-discriminatory and accessible spaces • making space for differing views and discussing difficult issues • diverse ways to participate • enabling active municipal citizenship • openness of decision-making • positive encounters between local residents from different backgrounds
<p>Developing the living environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • urban planning, land use planning • transport and public transport • housing • environmental services, environmental protection and sustainability • security and preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considering the needs of different population groups in urban planning (security and accessibility) • influencing decisions concerning the living environment • preventing segregation, interaction between groups • safe public spaces and transport connections

Strategic basis and prerequisites for promoting good relations

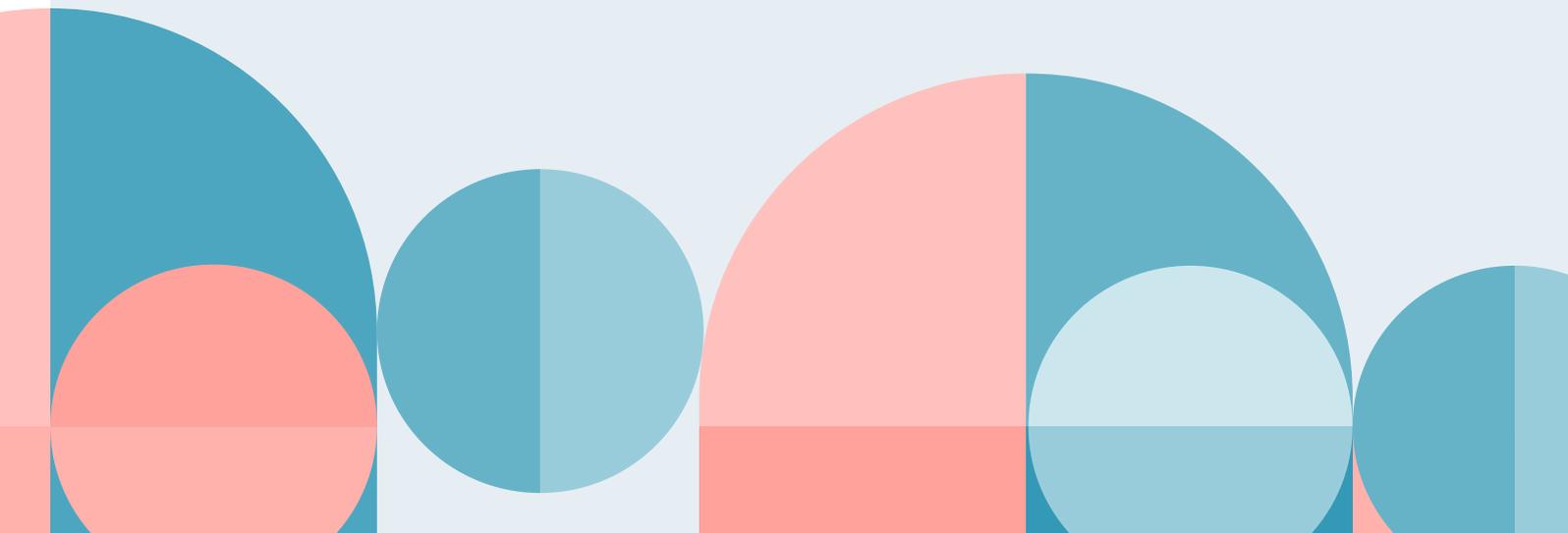
When municipalities take a broader strategic look at the relations between population groups, individual measures become part of a wider approach, which makes the work to promote good relations visible. It is possible to contribute to this approach and monitor its results.

The following matters that have been found useful in the work to promote good relations in municipalities should be considered as the basis for the strategic work:

- It is recognised that good relations are in the interest of the municipality.
- Municipal decision-makers are willing to promote good relations.

- The work to promote good relations is understood in a broad context, which also includes municipal welfare services, housing, land use planning, educational, youth, security, and cultural services.
- The municipality communicates clearly what is meant by the relations between population groups and specifies the groups concerned.

The above themes are discussed in more detail below. They are accompanied by a list of questions that the municipality should address to achieve its strategic objectives. Decisions taken in municipalities to promote good relations are highlighted as examples under each section.



Good relations in the interest of the municipality

Objective: Municipal decision-makers are committed to taking measures promoting good relations that support municipal identity. The municipality has been able to boost its vitality and enhance its image.

Identified benefits

It has been recognised that good relations help the municipality to boost its vitality and make it a more attractive place to live. Relations between population groups impact the image of the municipality and its attractiveness as a place to move to and the building of municipal identity.

This also impacts the supply of international labour, and attractiveness of the municipality as a destination and a place of residence for foreign workforce. Good relations help to boost the supply of labour and vitality of the municipality and enhance the sense of community and security among local residents.

Within the framework of its business services, the municipality can support companies and work communities in such areas as the management of a diverse work community.

Issues to be addressed

- How can the municipality commit itself to long-term work to promote good relations? Is there a willingness to engage in continuous efforts to achieve visible improvements in the relations between population groups?
- What kind of structures and forums are established in the municipality to change attitudes, build trust, enable dialogue, etc.?
- How are minorities considered in municipal strategies and in the preparation of the strategies?

EXAMPLE 1. GOOD PRACTICE: 'Ukilaistuminen' Immigrant integration action plan 2020–2023



UKILAISTUMINEN. Report on the implementation of an immigrant integration action plan prepared in 2021 (available in Finnish)



The integration action plan helps the City of Uusikaupunki to implement its "Oikeanlaista kemiaa" strategy and wellbeing plan (available in Finnish)

The plan describes the process of 'Ukilaistuminen' (becoming a resident of Uusikaupunki). It included cross-administrative preparation and implementation.

The key components of the action plan were drawn up in cooperation with the city's administrative branches. In accordance with the city's strategy, they are based on growth, as the inflow of new residents is boosting the population of Uusikaupunki.

The way in which the 'good life' of each resident of Uusikaupunki is supported is a key part of the strategy. It comprises mutual respect, acceptance and new ways of working together.

The action plan was presented to the city executive after which it was approved by the city council. Implementation of the plan is monitored on an annual basis by collect-

ing progress reports and reports on development priorities from individual administrative branches.

The action plan includes information on what is required at different levels of the municipality to ensure good relations and how being a resident of Uusikaupunki is a part of the residents' other identities.

The plan provides a link to the city's wellbeing programme (which also covers the young, people with disabilities, the elderly and immigrants).

According to the plan, teachers will be hired for teaching Finnish as a second language to support early childhood education and care, and city employees will be provided with language interpretation guidelines. In basic education, support will be made available to 'valmo' groups helping individuals to build their own identity and learn their own language.

New residents of Uusikaupunki are referred to a walk-in service point where everybody is welcome irrespective of their age.

The programme provides information on the health board decision concerning the health care of undocumented mothers and children and a link to the website of the city's business services (ukilife.fi/en) where the process of becoming a resident of Uusikaupunki is communicated in a positive manner.

Creating a strategy or programme for improving good relations

The process requires the support of the municipal management and a **PARTY THAT ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROCESS AND STEERS IT IN A CONSISTENT MANNER** and will share the participants information about good relations between population groups.

PEOPLE FROM ALL SERVICE FUNCTIONS OF THE MUNICIPALITY SHOULD BE INVITED TO JOIN THE PREPARATORY PROCESS TO DETERMINE which matters should be included in the strategy (such as early childhood education and care, basic education, services for associations, sports services, youth services, business services, support for small entrepreneurs, and housing services).

At the drafting stage, it is not always necessary to decide whether the participants are responsible for matters concerning the relations between population groups in the municipality. Instead, it should be **IDENTIFIED IN WHICH PHENOMENA AND PROBLEMS THE ASPECT OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN GROUPS ENRICHES UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION.**

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES SHOULD BE DESIGNATED for the selected measures **AND A TIMETABLE FOR THEM SHOULD BE SET. ADHERENCE TO THE TIMETABLE SHOULD BE MONITORED BY THE MUNICIPALITY.**

The work should make the **CONNECTION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY'S STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS** and its other strategies, plans and programmes visible. Many thematic areas, such as the non-discrimination and equality plan, the immigrant integration programme and the security plan, can be brought under the population relations strategy.

COMMUNICATING the objectives of the completed strategy or programme to the **MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES AND RESIDENTS.**

EXAMPLE 2. PROGRAMME CREATION PROCESS: Regional action plan to promote equality and good relations between population groups

Subchapter 4 of the Forssa regional integration programme 2021–2024
(available in Finnish)



The municipal management has given its approval for the preparation of the plan and the responsible party has been appointed to draw up the plan. It includes the creation of a multisectoral regional network for relations, coordinated by a joint municipal authority. Existing regional measures have also been mapped as part of the work to promote good relations between population groups. The resulting stronger justification for providing the actions in question with resources and for documenting them will be incorporated into the plan.

The purpose of the plan is to put forward measures for development within the framework of relations between groups and municipal obligations in the field of promoting these relations. In addition, proposals for concrete measures, which are linked to the basic work in different sectors and can be justified by the benefits generated by the perspective of relations between groups, will also be put forward.

The plan includes monitoring tools and methods for mapping good relations as well as subchapters on developing inclusion, community work, community mediation competence and the municipal residents' skills in promoting good relations.

The perspective of promoting equality as a part of immigrant integration and the work to promote good relations is also included in the programme.

Extensive work in municipal administrative branches to ensure good relations

Objective: The discussion on and examination of the relations between population groups within the municipality concern a broad range of groups, people's participation and wellbeing. The work will highlight the link to municipal welfare services and educational services, youth work, security work, and cultural services.

Identified benefits

The impacts of measures taken by the local government, regarding relations between population groups in different administrative branches, are highly relevant to the prevention of discrimination and segregation, promotion of inclusion, housing services and industrial policy.

Promoting good relations broadens the understanding of immigrant integration as a more extensive process and enhances the capacity of the municipality to provide all residents with services. Even though the processing of good relations does not arise from the basic prerequisites for integration, it does nevertheless support it. Wellbeing of municipal residents should serve as the starting point.

Cross-cutting examination helps to identify areas where work to promote good relations and resources for the work are needed on a focused and prioritised basis.

It helps to identify population and minority groups living in the municipality more extensively and to identify minority residents, such as people with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, racialized individuals and ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

Issues to be addressed

Municipal community:

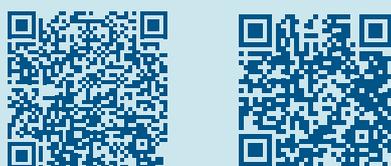
- Who is a municipal resident and which services should be provided? Which groups should not be provided with these services?
- Which actions regarding equality and relations between groups should be responsibilities of the municipality?
- How is immigrant integration understood: as services or as the ability of the society to receive people and, within the framework of the service system, provide all municipal residents with services?

Resources:

- How to build multisectoral cooperation between the authorities? How to provide the work with resources?
- How to prioritise groups in need of special support in funding?
 - Has positive discrimination been practised (section 9 of the Non-discrimination Act)?
- How to unlearn the 'same for all' thinking and thus enhance substantive equality?

EXAMPLE 3. GOOD PRACTICE:

Yhdessä kotoutuva Oulu (Jointly integrating Oulu), immigrant integration programme 2022–2025 and immigrant council (available in Finnish)



The integration programme is guided by the following five thematic principles: equality, children and young people, interaction between groups, influencing and participation, and skills and employment. The chapter on good relations also discusses the context of Oulu under general principles guiding the relations between population groups, while separate targets are set for monitoring.

The impact of Oulu's integration programme and the city's immigrant council is understood more broadly than as a matter that exclusively concerns immigrants. In the city's decision-making, the immigrant council is seen as a resource playing an important role in inclusion and in influencing municipal decision-making. Different administrative branches of the city know how to request statements from the council, which acts as a representative for speakers of foreign languages. The council is also requested to give statements for strategies and plans covering administrative branches. Inclusion was emphasised while establishing the council. Comprehensive representation in the council was ensured by organising an open application process for interested parties, which were invited to prepare the criteria for good membership and desired types of organisation together.

The language used in the council is seen as a gateway to genuine inclusion. The council has two working languages (Finnish and English) and interpretation can be provided when needed.

EXAMPLE 4. GOOD PRACTICE:

Kohtaamiskoulutus (Encounter training), City of Vaasa

The encounter training was provided as a two-day personnel training seminar for the employees of the City of Vaasa. Encounter, diversity and customer service situations were the themes discussed at the seminar. The focus of the training was on encountering immigrant customers and customers with disabilities and the aim was to enhance positive customer encounters and improve the customers' service experience. After the training, a need for a regular personnel training model on the same topic was recognised.

The training included lessons on how sensitive customer service can be enabled from the perspective of the city's statutory tasks so that each customer can be encountered in the correct manner. The participants also learned how municipal residents are encountered in practical service situations and how to ensure that the encounters are equal and non-discriminatory.

Review: Relations between population groups in housing

Relations between population groups often become apparent when it comes to issues regarding housing and land use planning. In municipalities, cities and residential areas, mobility and travel, public spaces and services as well as housing locations are closely linked to the relations between groups and how they develop.

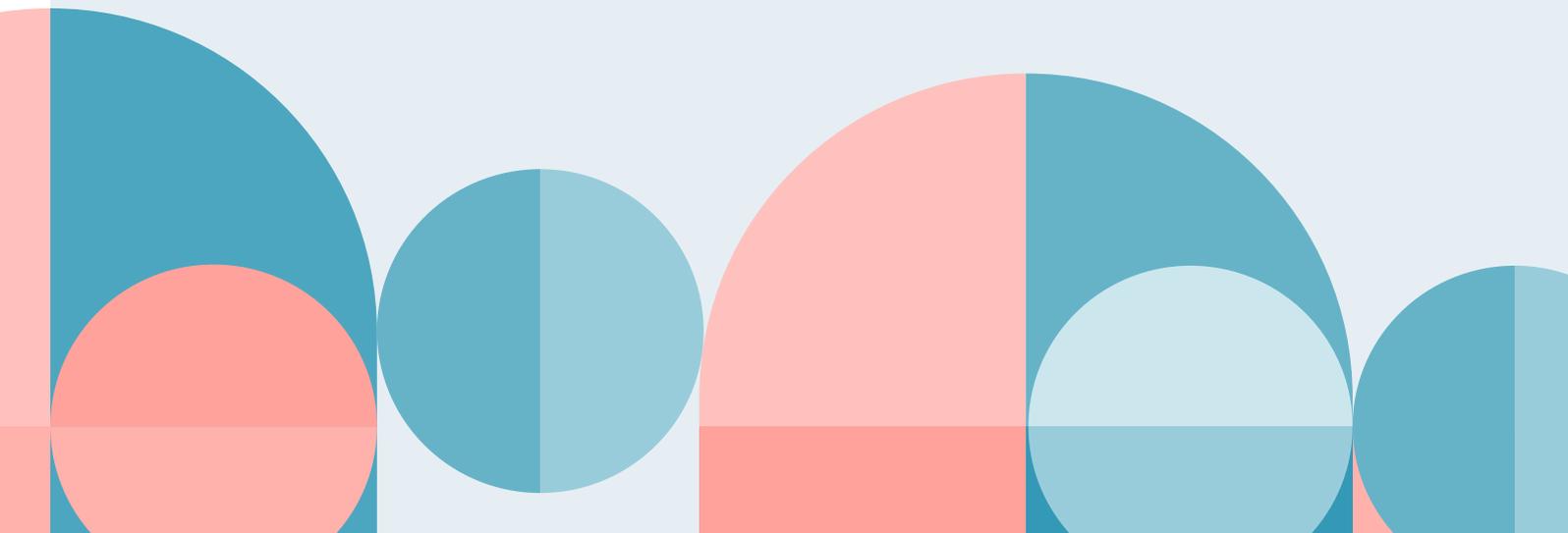
The segregation of residential areas is discussed a lot, especially when it concerns immigrants settling in specific areas. By considering relations between groups, it is possible to prevent excessive differences and tensions from forming between residential areas. This consideration can also be used to facilitate conflict resolution when necessary.

There are situations where housing-related tensions and polarisation arise between resident groups, especially if there is no common language and people feel that they are treated unfairly. For this reason, such

bodies as the Community Mediation Centre offer services and materials for preventing and resolving conflicts (www.naapuruussovittelu.fi).

In Finland, there are simultaneously municipalities (mostly large cities), in which the population has divided into well-off and disadvantaged residential areas over time, and smaller municipalities, in which this kind of development has been slower. In large cities, segregation has been driven by the existing rental housing stock and people's natural desire to live close to the members of their own communities. In smaller cities and municipalities, the supply of public rental housing stock may be limited and the buildings may be located in specific residential areas. As a result, people in need of rental housing concentrate in specific areas and use the services available there.

New resident groups moving to a municipality may potentially create new small business activities in vacant business premises, diversifying the range of services available and enhancing the sense of community in the area. A stronger sense of community may lead to the establishment of associations, with which the municipal authorities can cooperate. Constructive cooperation with the associations and resident activists is essential for sustainable regional development.



At the same time, the municipality may decide, for example, that teaching Finnish as a second language is only provided in specific daycare centres and schools. Families settle close to these facilities, leading to a situation where foreign-language children are placed in the daycare centres and schools of specific areas of the municipality. As a result, they have few contacts with Finnish-speaking children. Thus, the decision that at first appeared resource-wise and easy may, in the medium-term, lead to an undesirable situation and changing it will require more resources than the original decision.

Issues concerning housing and the relations between population groups are linked to long-term regional development, which is often difficult to anticipate and which can be addressed with goal-oriented work to improve the relations between groups.

For example, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities has developed [a tool for assessing the impacts of municipal decisions](#) (available in Finnish)



Below are some of the issues that municipalities should consider when addressing the relations between population groups and deciding how to prevent segregation:

- *How to maintain the diversity and vitality of residential areas and to ensure that the areas are attractive to business enterprise?*
- *Which local government services should be concentrated in specific service points in the long term?*
- *Should additional resources be allocated to areas in which they are needed, according to socio-economic indicators?*
- *Has the municipality tried positive discrimination to prevent regional segregation?*
- *What opportunities does the municipality have to enhance the community mediation skills of housing operators?*

EXAMPLE 5. GOOD PRACTICE:
Tsemppari cooperation model used in Vantaa

Tsemppari is a model for cooperation between immigrant organisations and the city authorities developed in Vantaa over a period of seven years. In the model, the authorities visit immigrant organisations and provide services at times that have been agreed beforehand. As the services provided by the authorities have increasingly moved online and as fewer services are offered in residential areas, a need for more advice on integration was recognised. This is why many immigrant associations have been established specifically in suburbs where a large number of immigrants live.

It has been clear for many years in Vantaa that immigrant associations possess cultural and language skills that should be utilised. Foreign-language communities and associations are seen as having the potential to complement the work of the authorities, thus creating new channels for encountering customers.

In the Tsemppari model, associations provide support in the use of public services, help people with applications and documents, and refer customers to services in their own languages and in Finnish. The City of Vantaa has introduced the Tsemppari model to boost the competence of organisations when it comes to integration support work.

The associations have become increasingly professional in character, and new sources of funding have enabled them to hire

employees. The associations involved are familiar with the municipal service structure, and decision-makers and associations have worked together to ensure the continuation of the model.

This cooperation has resulted in numerous new projects, in which the associations have been actively involved in and have planned and implemented together with the City of Vantaa. This long-term project cooperation has enhanced mutual trust while strengthening the relations between population groups and bringing the work of the authorities closer to people.

*Project: Tsemppataan! Multilingual guidance and counselling www.tsemppataan.fi. Previous projects based on the same philosophy: *Tsemppataan yhdessä* and *Tsemppataan töihin*.*

The culture of working together developed in the Tsemppari model has also been adopted by many other projects, such as 'Neuvova Vantaa'. In this project, multi-lingual advice services are developed and it is based on the partnership thinking and networking methods used in the Tsemppari model. www.neuvovavantaa.fi. (in Finnish).



[Description of the Tsemppari model \(in Finnish\)](#)



[Video: Vantaan Tsempparit \(subtitles in English\)](#)

EXAMPLE 6. GOOD PRACTICE:
Developing urban planning from the perspective of equality and non-discrimination in Helsinki



[The Tool for Promoting Equality and Non-Discrimination in the Urban Planning of Helsinki](#)

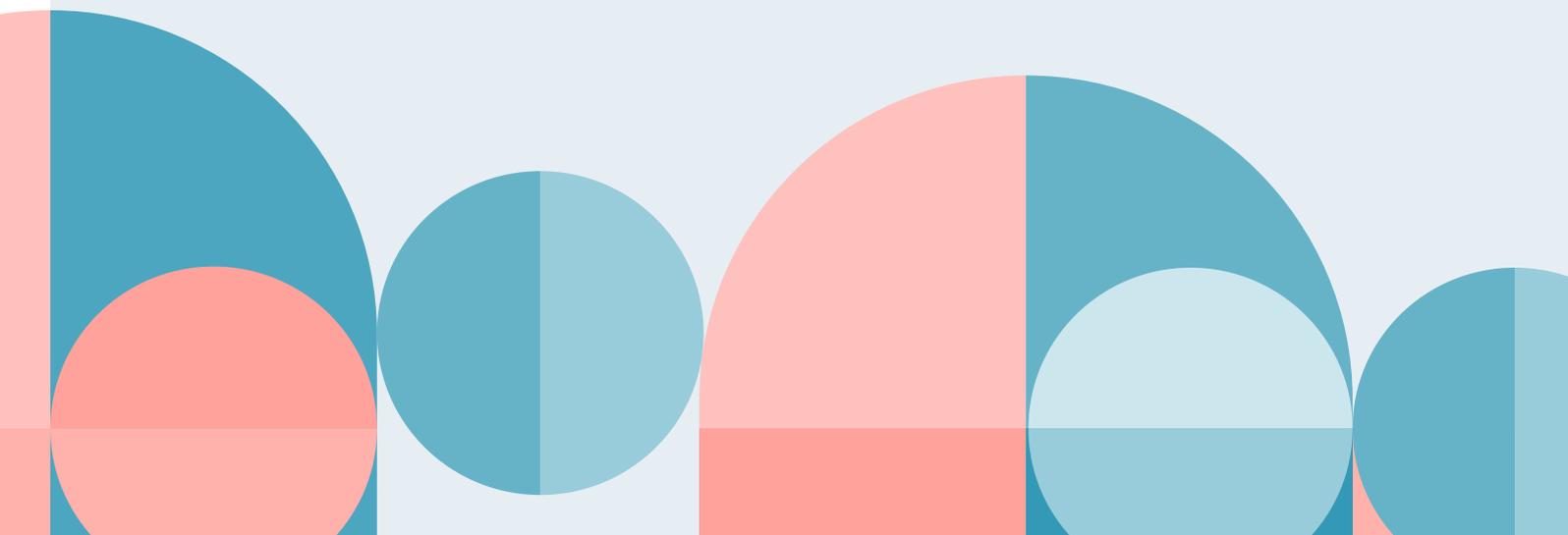
The City of Helsinki has compiled a research review, which brings together and produces information on potential equality and non-discrimination issues in urban planning. The review serves as a basis for further examination and for more detailed studies on the significance of the planning perspective based on examining population groups in urban planning.

The City of Helsinki has also produced a tool to promote practical aspects of equality and non-discrimination in urban planning in the Finnish capital. Extensive consultations with Helsinki residents from many different backgrounds and population groups played a key role in the preparation of the tool. The tool is formed as a set of questions.

The purpose of the questions is to support cognitive work in urban planning. Some of the questions are primarily intended for management and strategic planning, while others are intended for personnel and implementation planning.

The tool can also be used in other cities. The prime purpose of the tool is to ensure that different groups are included in the decisions made during urban planning.

Developing urban planning is a part of the City of Helsinki's equality and non-discrimination plan.



Activities of the civil society

Objective: The municipality has extensive activities of the civil society that complement the services provided by the authorities. Cooperation between the municipality and associations is based on trust and interaction.

Identified benefits

Associations are an important part of the local sense of community. Supported by municipalities, associations can remain active, and local government assistance also helps new associations to get started and establish themselves.

In a municipality, communities with different backgrounds are seen as a resource and an opportunity to build trust and strengthen attachment to society.

Associations provide valuable information on what is happening in the communities living in the municipality and how the municipalities can, together with the associations, respond to the needs of the residents better.

Issues to be addressed

- How can a municipality encourage and support communities in the establishment of associations?
- Are local government authorities able to identify the key people of the communities? Would this build trust for the basis of constructive cooperation?
- Can a municipality facilitate and support the opportunities of people, who are not in the associations, to produce activities for each other?
- How to encourage existing organisations and sports clubs to include immigrants in their activities?
- Would it be possible to provide basic courses on association activities for speakers of foreign languages or residents belonging to other minorities?

EXAMPLE 7: Community grant for immigrants living in Hämeenlinna

The City of Hämeenlinna has traditionally provided small grants to immigrant communities in the city as a part of its annual budget. The grants enable people who speak different languages to get involved and meet at public events without the need to provide interpretation for the entire event.

The recipient does not need to be a registered association, as being an active organisation is enough. The grant helps to reach communities that promote encounters in their own residential areas or with other people living in Hämeenlinna.

On application, the city grants a small sum for organising an event that promotes multiculturalism. The city also provides advice on setting up an association and applying for funding so that the associations know how to seek financial assistance in the future.

EXAMPLE 8: Language support volunteers in Pyhäjoki

In Pyhäjoki they decided to make residents' hidden language resources available to the entire community so that they could be used at public events organised by the municipality and associations. Volunteers are invited to participate by identifying the hidden language skills of individuals participating in different events and by asking them to assess their language skills in the project's start-up forms. Anyone, who can speak Finnish and some other language so well that they can help others to communicate, can act as a language support volunteer.

For Finnish and foreign-language speakers, working as a language support volunteer has been a positive experience. Volunteering gives foreign-language speakers the courage to use Finnish. The presence of volunteers also reduces the nervousness felt by the event organisers and participants. The volunteers can be identified by language support vests and button badges listing the languages that they speak. The presence of language support volunteers can be announced in advance in an advertisement for the event, and in a small municipality, they soon become familiar faces.

innokyla.fi/fi/toimintamalli/kielitukivapaaehtoisia-tapahtumiin (in Finnish)



Communicating the importance of good relations

Objective: In the municipality, the decision-makers, authorities and residents understand what relations between population groups are about and whom they concern.

Identified benefits

Good relations can be used as a tool that takes into account different population and minority groups and their needs. With good relations, the needs of local residents are fulfilled better.

The work to promote good relations neutralises public discussion on such issues as integration and immigration, thus highlighting the broadness of the issues involved and the diversity of the population groups.

The work to promote good relations serves as a tool for enhancing the residents' wellbeing and sense of security.

Issues to be addressed

- How does the municipal management recognise the benefit generated by the work to promote good relations and how does it commit to promoting it?
- How can the decision-makers better outline the role of the municipality's tasks and the services it provides in promoting relations between population groups?
- How can the causal effects of the relations between population groups be illustrated and measured? These chains are not always clear or obvious.
- How to express the operating logic of relations between groups in an approachable way?
- How to extend the discussion on the relations between groups to cover municipal structures?
 - Does the discussion help to identify the need for additional guidance and training on the topic?

EXAMPLE 9: Joint activities for everybody in Pyhäjoki

In Pyhäjoki, they aimed to organise joint activities and encounters for people who speak different languages to avoid separate groups from forming. People living in the municipality need to get to know and meet each other. This led to the following question: Where could we get to know new people? What would be the best way to support interaction?

Initially, the project came under the auspices of the municipality's business director – the aim is to commit others to the implementation and continuation of the activities. The activities have been strongly supported by the municipal management. Leisure and cultural services of the municipality, associations and companies have acted as project partners. Usually at least one association is involved in the planning and implementation of the events. Working together has encouraged associations to be more active and provided them with experience in organising activities for new target groups.

Some of the associations have started organising activities that are more open. When necessary, the municipality has provided marketing assistance and facilities for the activities. At the same time, the participants have become familiar with the associations.

The local language resources and the types of terminology and jargon that are used have been taken into account in communications. The words used to advertise the events and how people are invited to join have also been considered in the imple-

mentation process. The emphasis has been on clarity, simplicity, local examples and the address of the venue.

The activities have been marketed in several languages (Finnish, English and Russian) since the beginning, and food culture events, workshops, game evenings, language cafés and study excursions (involving picking mushrooms, berries and wild herbs as well as cycling) have been organised.

People have also got to know each other through shared activities, which have made encounters possible.

Experimenting with a broad range of different ideas and activities provides information on what interests and appeals to different individuals and groups. The plans may also be changed, if necessary.

Topics related to this have been offered to the local media. This way, readers have the opportunity to engage in self-reflection and enhance their own understanding before joining the activities. This in turn gives people the time and space to broaden their perspectives.

The activities will continue in cooperation with the library, leisure services and associations.

Toiminta jatkuu yhteistyössä kirjaston, vapaa-aikatoimen ja yhdistysten kanssa.

www.pyhajoki.fi/en/events-and-training

At the bottom of the page there is a link to a list of previous events, training sessions and study trips.

EXAMPLE 10: A survey on the atmosphere and on perceiving Oulu as one's home town

An atmosphere survey is being conducted in Oulu for immigrants living in the city. The aim is to repeat the survey every two years in order to obtain comparative data and to assess integration services. The survey was carried out for the first time in 2020 and it will be repeated in 2022.

The survey, approved by the city's management team, includes questions about services and their accessibility, inclusion, racism, and the overall atmosphere in Oulu.

The results of the first survey were considered in the preparation of the current immigrant integration programme as well as the evaluation of the previous programme and the services included in it.

The results have prompted the city to consider how people moving to Oulu are provided with information about their participation and how they can influence decision-makers and processes.

EXAMPLE 11: Kotofoorumi to promote good relations between population groups in Hämeenlinna

Within the framework of the Kotofoorumi concept enabled by the City of Hämeenlinna, a party can organise an event relevant to immigrant integration or improving the relations between population groups. The Kotofoorumi brand is already a well-established part of the integration activities in Hämeenlinna. It receives funding from the city budget. As the concept is already well-known, partners know how to ask whether they can organise kotofoorumi events. The responsibility for organising an event is shared between the city and the event organiser.

The events are organised a few times each year, and the organiser selects the theme and arranges the event, which reflects their views and values. Some of the events are informal cultural or discussion events, while others are of a more formal nature and organised by partners of the municipality, such as preparatory hearings for the municipal integration programme or election debates.

The city gives the organisers access to the Kumppanuus-talo space and assists with informing about the event in various languages on the Myintegration website www.myintegration.fi/en/home.

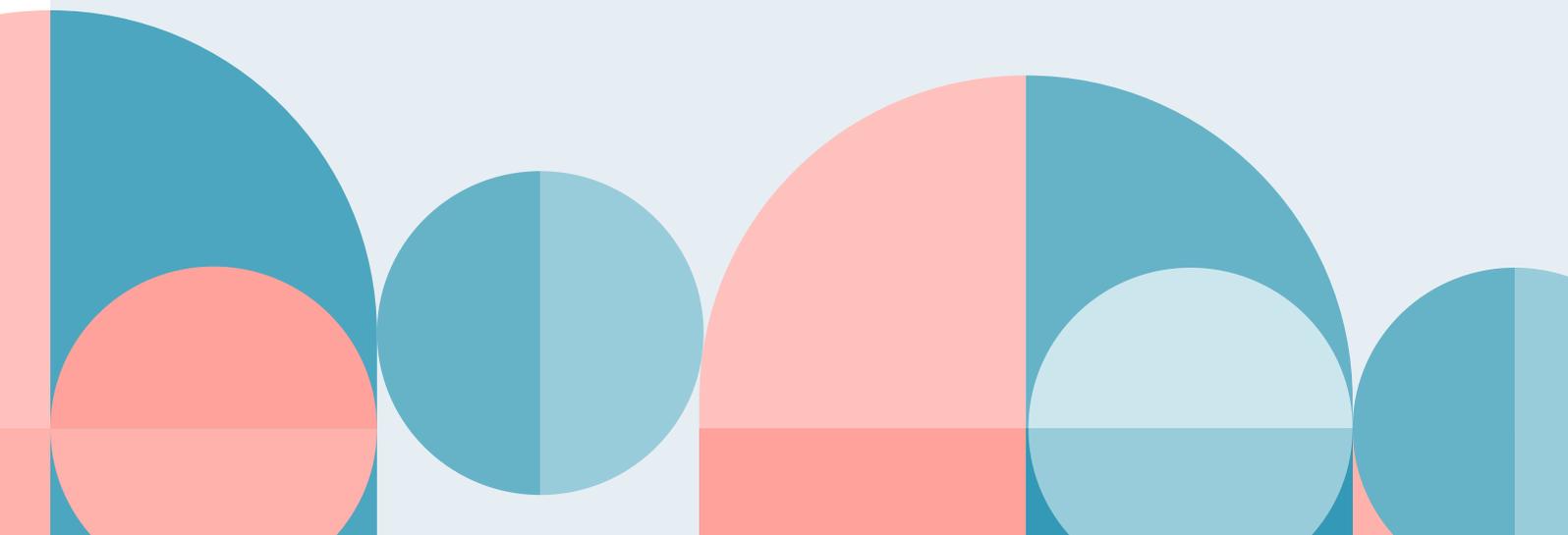
In conclusion

The work carried out by municipalities to promote good relations between population groups contributes significantly to equality and wellbeing among local residents. It supports municipal identity and attachment to the municipality of residence. The work concerns all residents, regardless of their age or population group.

Relations between population groups are often associated with the integration of immigrants and the receptiveness of society. They are one important dimension of these relations. Other dimensions include the impact of the relations on the overall atmosphere and development of the municipality, as well as the residents' sense of security and participation in the local community.

The premise of the guide is to support the change needed to turn the small-scale activities involving relations between groups into established, goal-oriented and strategic municipal work to promote good relations.

The commitment of the municipal management to develop good relations and its integration into other municipal work and programmes plays a key role in systematic work. Relations between population groups concern the whole society. Associations act as key partners in the interface between municipal residents and municipal authorities. By combining these components with the objectives of promoting good relations and communicating them, a municipality is able to build good relations in a systematic and long-term manner.



References

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² *Discrimination in Finland 2017–2019. Data report. Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Reports and guidelines 2020:20. (Available in Finnish)*



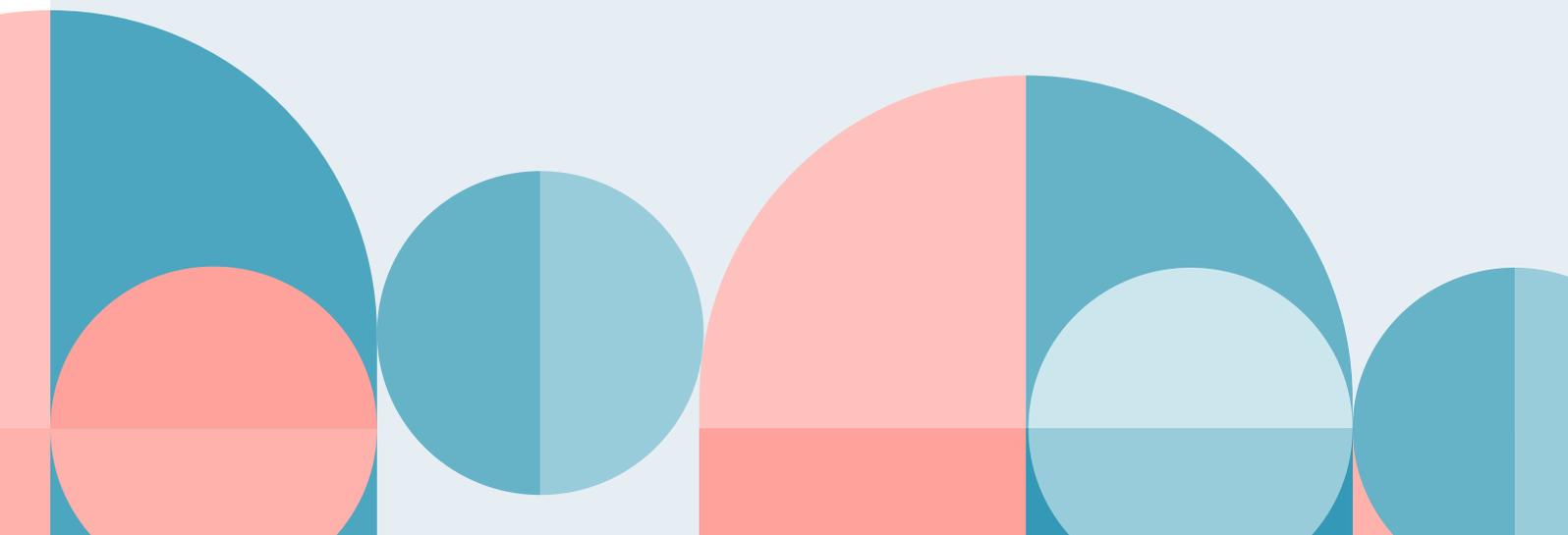
³ [Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle kotoutumisen edistämisestä annetuksi laiksi ja siihen liittyviksi laeiksi.](#) (Available in Finnish and Swedish)

⁴ *Ibid.* s. 110.

⁵ *Ibid.* s. 136.



⁶ [kuntaliitto.fi/ajankohtaista/2017/mita-kunta-tekee-sote-ja-maakuntauudistuksen-jalkeen.](#) (Available in Finnish and Swedish)





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