

# The University of Helsinki Equality and Diversity Plan 2021–2024, I

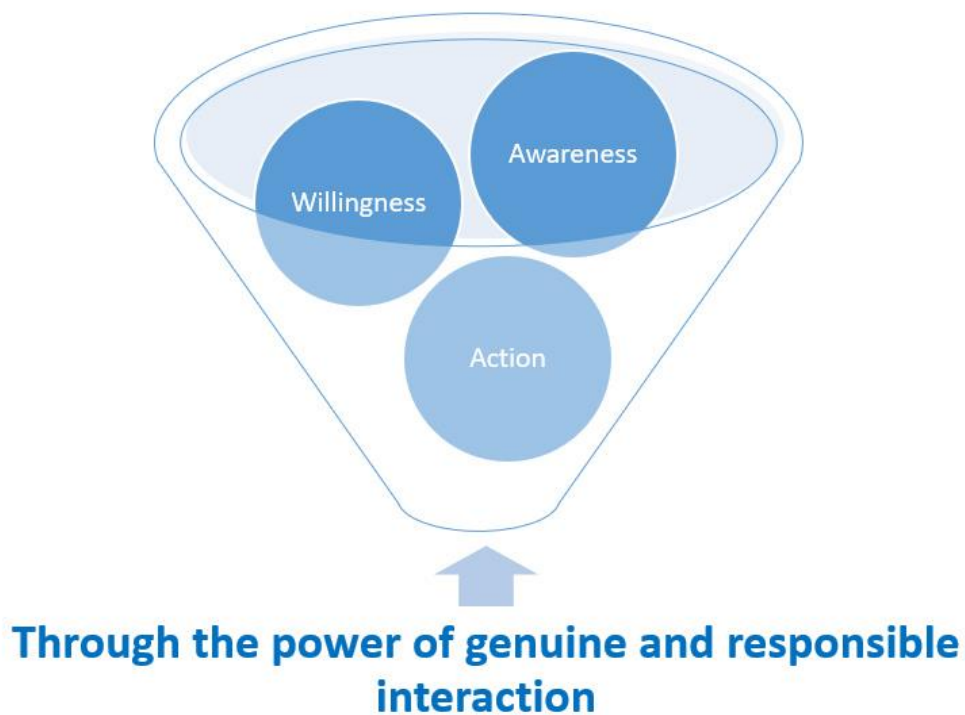
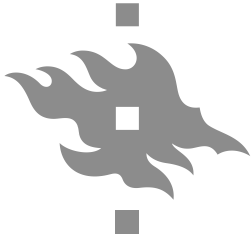


Figure 1: Through the power of genuine and responsible interaction

Approved by the Equality and Diversity Committee on 12 January 2021.

Rector's Decision HY/225/00.00.06.00/2021



## Foreword by the chair

What do equality and diversity mean at the University of Helsinki?

The question above is intentionally challenging. Challenging because equality and diversity mean different things, in different contexts, to different people, also at the University of Helsinki. For students and staff, these things may be viewed from various different perspectives even though there are also likely to be many similarities. But we all share the same goal: open interaction. We aim to achieve open and responsible interaction by promoting awareness, organising topical training and acting to promote a shared and positive will with regard to equality and diversity.

From the outset, it has to be said that the current Equality and Diversity Plan has been a meaningful cooperation project. The University has an estimable tradition of drawing up the plan, since the first equality plans were already drawn up in the 1990s. All members of the University community were asked to comment on and provide ideas for the current plan. We managed to engage various parties in the writing process in addition to the members of the Equality and Diversity Committee. I want to thank everyone involved for their work!

Our everyday work and interaction are guided by the shared values of the University: truth, *Bildung*, freedom and inclusivity. Our shared activities are steered by the University's new Strategic Plan for 2021–2030: *With the power of knowledge – for the world*. Measures referred to in this plan have been drawn up taking the University's strategic choices into account.

The first part of this Equality and Diversity Plan aims to comprehensively describe the current situation regarding equality and diversity at the University of Helsinki. Also discussed are the particular focus areas to which resources will be invested in the coming period. To many readers, the most important things will perhaps be the concrete measures that we, to the best of our abilities, will aim to implement during the period 2021–2024. It serves us well to stop at this stage to consider how, on occasion, grand speeches are made, and important plans drawn up, on equality and diversity but without putting forward any concrete measures. As the chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee, I dare say that many of the issues discussed in the Committee this period have been very concrete indeed. As an example, I could mention various training and other events, such as the Minna Canth equality training and the Helsinki Pride events. During the period, we have been particularly proud of the wide participation in and good reception of our training events on implicit bias.

Equality and diversity efforts have also been going on outside the University community. Our work has received new ideas from (and given ideas to) our international networks, such as the League of European Research Universities (LERU) and the UNA Europa university alliance.

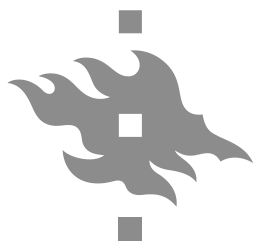
So, what is the answer to the purposely challenging question above? We answer thus: At the University of Helsinki, equality and diversity mean the equal and non-discriminating promotion of the study- and work-related wellbeing of all members of the University community in such a way that all members can proudly say that they belong to the world's best University community. As stated in the aforementioned University Strategic Plan: "Our success hinges on a healthy, equal and engaged University community."

Finally, I hope you enjoy reading this plan – let's keep interacting!

Helsinki, 12 January 2021

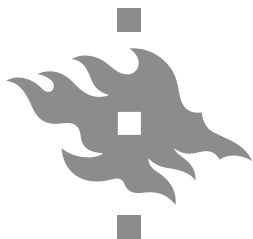
Tom Böhling

Vice-rector



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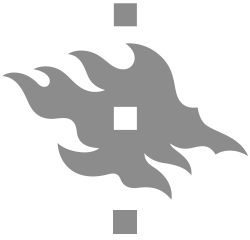


Figure 1: Heart hands, photographed by Susanna Puomio

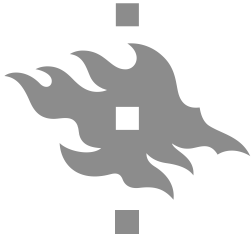
## 1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SITUATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

### 1.1 Equality and diversity surveys 2019–2020

#### *Workplace wellbeing survey 2019*

Workplace wellbeing at the University of Helsinki is monitored with the help of a survey carried out at two-year intervals. The goal of the shared university workplace wellbeing survey is to shed light on the state and strengths of staff wellbeing in different faculties and departments as well as aspects of wellbeing in need of improvement. The survey offers a tool for monitoring the development of workplace wellbeing and for carrying out benchmarking between universities. Above all, it helps select aspects of workplace wellbeing in need of improvement within the University and its units. The overall response rate of the workplace wellbeing survey was 56% in 2019. The survey was conducted in Finnish, Swedish and English. 61.3% of the respondents were women, 34.6% men and 4.1% had selected 'other'.

The surveyed areas were social interaction in the unit, individual work content and competence, working conditions, working with immediate supervisors and strategic leadership on the University level. The response options were on a



scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best score. The results can be considered to be at an acceptable level when the mean score is more than 3. The results improved compared to the survey conducted in 2017. The best scores were given to competence and content of work (mean 3.81) and the work of immediate supervisors (mean 3.87). The most negative assessment was given to strategic leadership on the University level (mean 3.0). Community and collegiality in the immediate work community was assessed as fairly good (mean 3.67). However, there is still room for improvement in terms of addressing difficult matters (mean 3.26), although the score for this area also saw improvement from the previous survey, where the corresponding mean score was 2.93. The mean for the claim equality is achieved in our unit was 3.64 in 2017 and 3.78 in the 2019 survey. The mean score for the item in our unit, difficult issues are raised and they are also addressed improved from 2.93 in 2017 to 3.26. The mean score for the item *during the last year, I have not experienced harassment, bullying or other inappropriate treatment* also improved slightly, from 4.23 to 4.28.

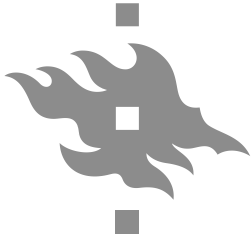
#### *A survey on the exceptional circumstances 2020*

A survey carried out in May and June 2020 explored the views of members of the University community concerning the impact of the exceptional circumstances on their work. The survey examined staff experiences in eight areas. The questions focused on remote work, work-life balance, work equipment, the functioning of services, and community communications in the exceptional circumstances. A total of 2,490 individuals responded to the survey, making the response rate for University staff as a whole 28.6%. Of the respondents, 654 identified as male, 1,663 as female and 10 as non-binary. There were no clear differences between the means and distribution of responses by men and women. However, the responses of those identifying as non-binary differed from those of women and men. A total of 41% of the respondents stated that remote working had had a positive effect on their occupational wellbeing. However, some had found it challenging to work in the exceptional circumstances. Teaching and research staff found the exceptional circumstances more stressful than specialist and support staff. International staff too felt stressed by the transition to exceptional circumstances. The majority of the respondents said that they had developed good practices or approaches that had helped them cope in the exceptional circumstances. 45% of the respondents said that they had made a digital leap in the new circumstances. The role of supervisors was considered crucial for occupational wellbeing. Respondents also underlined the need for support from the work community and for inclusivity in the exceptional circumstances.

#### *Survey for units on equality and diversity issues 2019–2020*

Feedback received from unit management indicated a wish for measures to decrease unconscious bias. It was noted that positive development has occurred in the gender and nationality distribution at senior researcher level. Increasing attention has been paid to issues related to ethnicity and multiculturalism as well as multilingualism. The Equality and Diversity plan was considered good as such, but it was felt that more attention than before should be paid to the visual layout and recognisability of issues. The aims of the plan should be better highlighted and they should be presented in a positive manner. For the purposes of monitoring the goals and measures presented in the plan, there should be a centrally developed and research-based monitoring and research tool available at unit level. The increased transparency of salaries was lauded. In student admissions, it is important to pay attention to how the student community reflects the demographic and social background of residents in Finland. A strong wish was expressed that the unit-level perspective – and, for example, the work of equality and diversity groups – would be better taken into account both in the text and in the measures. The exceptional circumstances of 2020 should also be visible in conjunction with remote teaching, and their effect on equality should be discussed. There were also demands to develop the equality of student admissions. The promotion of equality and diversity should be done from a wide perspective to better highlight social and economic disadvantage, health challenges and disabilities. There were calls to pay more attention to fixed-term employment and the status of grant-funded researchers, even though it was recognised that they have developed in the right direction.





### *Survey of the University community on the upcoming equality and diversity plan*

A survey open to the entire University community on the attainment of the previous period's objectives and to get new ideas and comments was implemented in late spring and early autumn 2020. A total of 57 responses were received. In addition, responses were requested from the University's head union representatives and the Student Union of the University of Helsinki. Among other things, the respondents asked for more ambitious and concrete measures. Likewise, it was pointed out that measures should be more effectively measurable. Concrete anti-racism measures were requested to be considered as well as the inclusion in the text of an intersectional perspective (how intersecting differences, such as class, racialising practices, age, disability, health and sexuality affect the social status of various groups and individuals). Some respondents also suggested highlighting the student perspective more. Another suggestion was conducting an extensive survey on, for example, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and health as well as experienced racism in the University community. It was also suggested that more attention be paid to using English in various forms of communication. The Student Union wished in particular that structures promoting equality be strengthened and better communicated alongside the prevention of racism and removal of structures discriminating against gender and sexual minorities. In addition, the Student Union stated that equality and diversity efforts must be rendered increasingly open and accessible to students by, for example, developing communication on topical issues and engaging students. Furthermore, the Student Union pointed out that the majority of the measures have been promoted but they could still be made more concrete to enable the measuring and monitoring of results.

### *Student feedback surveys*

In the University's Bachelor's Graduate Survey 2020, 39% of the respondents (2,805 respondents in total, on a scale of 1 to 5) gave a score 4 and 38% a score 5 to the statement *I feel comfortable at my university*. With regard to the statement *Equality and diversity are achieved well in our University*, the corresponding numbers (for 2,787 respondents) were 40% and 44%. The statement *During the last year, I have not experienced harassment, bullying or other inappropriate treatment* was answered by 2,793 respondents, with 10% of them giving a score of 4 and 77% a score of 5. The corresponding percentages for the statement *The University takes differences between people into account (e.g., cultural background, skills, experience and working capacity)* (2,777 respondents in total) were 34% and 39%. In conclusion, the situation can be said to be good but there is still work to do.

According to the wellbeing survey conducted by the Student Union of the University of Helsinki (March 2019, n=1,773), on questions measuring the experience of belonging to a group, the most feeling of group belonging was experienced in relation to the student's own degree programme followed by the year of study and the student association. The survey also asked how many of the respondents (208) had experienced inappropriate treatment or bullying at the University: 14 respondents answered in the affirmative. During the last year, various mental health services had been used by 31% of the respondents.

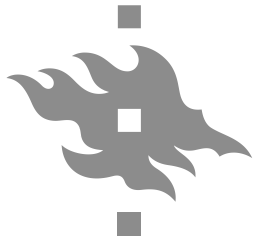
## **1.2 Report on thematic measures 2019–2020**

The themes selected were the promotion of leadership work, wellbeing and multicultural awareness.

### *Promotion of leadership work*

Subthemes included recruitment, salaries and career development, fixed-term employment contracts and age equality. The below report is presented in the order of the selected measures.

Cooperation with various bodies and supervisors: In spring 2020 a cooperation meeting was held with the Academic Affairs Council of the University. The meeting was attended by the chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee and



the equality advisor. The themes discussed included topical equality and diversity matters and prevention of racism. Moreover, in 2019, the Committee focused on the preparation of the University's new Strategic Plan during which time it, among other things, analysed from its frame of reference the answers of the University community to the strategy survey. Strategy work was conducted in cooperation with the following committees in particular: sustainability and responsibility committee, svenska verksamhetsnämnden (committee for the development and coordination of instruction in Swedish), facilities committee, delegationen för den svenska verksamheten (delegation for Swedish-language operations) and the occupational health and safety committee.

Network of equality liaisons: The network of equality liaisons is made up of equality and accessibility liaisons assigned to the University. Liaisons have been assigned for human resources and student services. At first, joint meetings were organised for them but in 2020 cooperation meetings were launched to better crystallise the job descriptions of equality liaisons and accessibility liaisons. The job description of equality liaisons was focused specifically toward campus operations, while that of accessibility liaisons was focused toward special arrangements related to studies.

Equality lecture recordings: Many equality lectures were recorded. They were primarily published on Unitube, where they can also be accessed by parties external to the University. In accordance with the 'Simply trilingual' principle, the recordings were made in Finnish, Swedish and English. Recordings were made, for example, of the 'Hyvän työn iltapäivä' seminar on job satisfaction and the Helsinki Pride event.

The development of salary surveys: Salary survey statistics and data were updated in the Equality and Diversity Plan 2019–2020. The Committee monitored the development of equal pay and aimed to influence this. See the statistical appendix.

Age equality: Unit directors and immediate superiors were trained in age management. Towards the end of 2019, BIAS English-language training events on implicit bias were organised on campuses.

Workplace wellbeing survey: See section 1.1 above.

Recruitment, salaries and career development: One of the human resources managers drew up material for appointment committees for academic positions from the perspective of equal and non-discriminatory recruitment. In addition, the aim was to promote monitoring through pilot projects so that observers would be assigned to appointment committees. Studying the equality and diversity implications was discussed from the perspective of the university lecturer career model at the University of Helsinki. See the statistical appendix.

Fixed-term employment contracts and grant-funded researchers: See the statistical appendix.

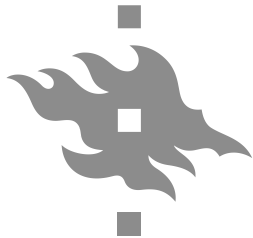
#### *Promotion of wellbeing activities:*

Subthemes were *diverse learners and equal assessment, support for studying and teaching at units, reconciliation of work, studies and family life, accessibility and equality of sexual and gender minorities*. The below report is presented in the order of selected measures.

Workplace wellbeing survey See section 1.1.

Anonymous examinations: The mapping of which faculties have arrangements in place for taking examinations anonymously was conducted during the period 2017–2018. The matter was brought up in some contexts but could not be genuinely promoted as yet.





Training event on challenging supervision and teaching situations: Training on challenging guidance and counseling situations continues to be organised annually. The events are extremely popular. Training is provided, among others, by the head of security, the harassment liaison and counselling psychologists.

Degree programmes: The Committee participated in the meeting of the Academic Affairs Council with the theme *prevention of racism*. The intention is to continue these meetings during the next period.

Accessible communications: The University has drawn up guidelines for accessible teaching, including issues such as special arrangements for examinations. Disabled applicants have been able to apply for special arrangements related to the entrance examination. When designing various facilities, the special needs of staff and students with sensory and mobility disabilities have been taken into consideration as much as possible, in cooperation with the Facilities and Properties sector of the University of Helsinki. A training event on special arrangements at the University and what else they entail in addition to additional time to complete an examination was organised in 2019. In addition, the Committee participated in promoting the application of the new Web Accessibility Directive of the EU and the Act on the Provision of Digital Services. An accessibility group was established to promote issues related to accessibility.

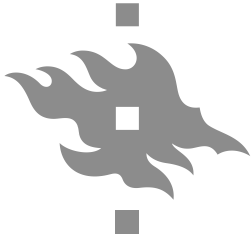
Recognition of gender diversity: The possibility of increasing unisex toilet facilities was discussed together with Facility Services. For example, the new UniSport facilities in Kluuvi are equipped with a unisex changing room. The Committee aimed to provide information and raise awareness of gender diversity in various contexts. The possibility of including the option *other* for gender on various forms was investigated. With regard to sexual and gender minorities, one of the most visible activities related to equality and diversity efforts was the programme organised during Helsinki Pride Week. Awareness was also raised by flying rainbow flags on campuses as well as at some units. The Equality and Diversity Committee successfully organised the events in collaboration with Helsinki University Library. The commitment of the Library leadership to the activities was also instrumental in the organisation of the events. In 2019 the theme was *Do we hear the critical voice?* and in 2020 *Bold role models at the University*. Diversity issues were increasingly highlighted at the University with the increase in international students and staff. The promotion of inclusion and inclusivity were themes running through 2019 and 2020.

Support for studying and teaching at units: The University's units have continued to be responsible for monitoring that its equality and diversity policies are followed in student admissions, student feedback, grade distribution, (student) recruitment for research projects as well as the assessment of research and teaching. The equality advisor is a member of the University's designated expert panel for special arrangements. The panel processes applications from students regarding, among other things, special arrangements for examinations. See the statistical appendix on students.

Reconciliation of work, studies and family life: Due to the exceptional circumstances caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, telecommuting increased considerably in 2020. According to the guidelines for the exceptional circumstances: "As a rule, the University's staff will telecommute. If necessary, research, distance teaching arrangements and related support activities as well as customer service activities may also be carried out on the University premises." For example, due to family circumstances, working in two shifts was made possible so that "specialist and support staff can work more flexibly, on weekdays between 5.00 and 22.00. If necessary, they can also work on Saturdays until 18.00 and take a day off during the week."

*Promotion of awareness of multiculturalism:*

Subthemes were *international activities*, *ethnic equality and multilingualism* and *equality of religion and belief*. The below report is presented in the order of the selected measures.



**Awareness of multiculturalism:** In order to promote multiculturalism, the Committee organised the implicit bias training event in autumn 2018 in collaboration with the TASOVA ('equality in regional development') project in the Faculty of Educational Sciences. In 2019 more implicit bias training events were organised in collaboration with equality liaisons on campuses. The events were extremely popular. Their contents included, for example, a human library and a privilege walk as well as personal experience speeches. In addition, one equality and diversity meeting discussed tackling racism and attended an Academic Affairs Council meeting to address the matter.

**LERU's Gender group and UNA Europa:** The Committee continued its active participation and lobbying in LERU's Gender group, which changed its name to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The EDI group discussed, for example, recruitment. As a result of this, a pilot project was organised at the University to have observers in appointment committees that make recruitment proposals for various positions at the University. The observer group contained one equality advisor and one human resources manager. In 2020 UNA Europa was launched, with joint activities among eight European universities in a campus-like network. The University of Helsinki is the chair of the Diversity Council of UNA Europa. The activities of the Council focus on promoting equal student mobility between universities as well as sharing good practices. The chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee is also the chair of the Council, while the equality advisor serves as its secretary. Other members include a representative of gender studies and the University's UNA Europa coordinator.

**Language practices:** The University of Helsinki has established 'language troops' who, among other things, implemented the *Simply trilingual* campaign to disseminate information about good language practices.

**Multi-faith prayer rooms:** The equality advisor participated in the work of a group established by Teaching and Learning Services, among whose objectives was the creation multi-faith prayer rooms on all campuses. The group achieved its goal. However, the exceptional circumstances of 2020 prevented the wider use of the rooms and the planned information campaign on their existence.

### 1.3 Guidelines for the promotion of equality and diversity and the organisation of equality and diversity activities at the University of Helsinki

#### *Prevention of discrimination and harassment*

The University has issued guidelines on the prevention of inappropriate treatment and harassment at the University of Helsinki. The guidelines are available both on the Flamma intranet and the Instructions for Students website. The guidelines name the staff and student liaison officers and provide more detailed instructions on what staff and students should do if they believe they have witnessed harassment. A training event on challenging guidance and counselling situations was organised for teachers and academic administration staff in 2019 and 2020. Training events have been popular. In the training, the guidelines mentioned above were reviewed and harassment was discussed from a legal, psychological and safety perspective.

#### *Organisation and resources for equality work*

Equality and diversity efforts are an integral part of the University's quality management efforts initiated during autumn 2020. The Maikki Friberg equality award of €6,000, awarded annually, is a visible and important feature of equality efforts at the University. Otherwise, the University has not allocated dedicated funding to equality and diversity activities as they have been integrated into the University's general operations. Equality efforts at the University are coordinated by an equality advisor, whose duties include communication about equality and diversity matters and serving as a liaison and as the secretary of the Equality and Diversity Committee. In addition, units, such as faculties, have employed equality and accessibility liaisons, who are responsible for the communication of equality and diversity issues. The job description of the liaisons has been developed particularly during autumn 2020



by, for example, developing the areas of responsibility of equality liaisons by campus and clarifying the duties of accessibility liaisons with regard to, for example, special arrangements for studies. Units have not been required to draft their own equality and diversity plans, as they are covered by the guidelines of the University's Equality and Diversity Plan. Nevertheless, the units have organised their own equality and diversity activities such as various events focused on equality.

#### *Indicators of equality and diversity efforts*

Data protection legislation prohibits the processing of personal data belonging to special categories, including personal data that reveal racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religion or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, and data concerning health, sexual life or sexual orientation. Understandably, this presents challenges, for example, to monitoring the status of equality and diversity. Work for equality requires information on the concepts of equality and diversity and their meaning, on legislation regarding equality and non-discrimination, on good practices to promote equality both from Finland and abroad as well as on ways of recognising and preventing discrimination. Research information on equality issues as well as up-to-date statistics are key tools in the work for equality. International cooperation to promote equality in research and university education is crucial. At the University of Helsinki, thinking about indicators takes place particularly in the LERU and UNA Europa networks.

#### *Promotion of equality and diversity at faculties and independent institutes*

See section 1.1 above on equality and diversity surveys.

#### *Gender studies*

Gender studies continued to be offered as a discipline during the period 2019–2020 at the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies of the Faculty of Arts. Other faculties also provide teaching and conduct research in gender studies. The expertise of gender study researchers is utilised in equality and diversity efforts in various contexts and from various perspectives. In addition to gender studies conducted at various faculties, these perspectives are also offered by, for example, disability studies.

### **1.4 Evaluation of surveys and measures 2019–2020**

The Equality and Diversity Plan of the University is drawn up for a four-year period. The most recent plan was drawn up to cover the years 2017–2020. However, the plan is updated every two years. Consequently, this section focuses on the assessment of the second part of the period, 2019–2020. There were 17 measures in all for the period in question. The focus areas were the same for the whole four-year period. In the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture on the promotion of equality and diversity in higher education institutions, the University of Helsinki received maximum points, although it also received constructive feedback on the modesty of the efforts. The assessment of results was seen as a positive. The activities in 2019 focused on participation in the drawing up of the University's new strategic plan. Among other things, the committee drew up an analysis of the responses received from the University community on equality and diversity matters as well as an environment analysis. Equality and diversity issues have been taken into account well in the new strategic plan. The annually awarded Maikki Friberg equality award brought the Equality and Diversity Committee visibility within the University while participation in the Helsinki Pride event brought it visibility outside the University community. The Equality and Diversity Committee aimed to monitor concrete and topical measures in its meetings. It also participated in the *Diversity and Inclusion* session of the University's International Advisory Board. In cooperation with Teaching and Learning Services, the Committee managed to add three questions regarding equality and diversity matters to the bachelor's graduate survey (UniHow). As a whole, the Committee managed to promote the selected measures well in the exceptional circumstances of 2020.

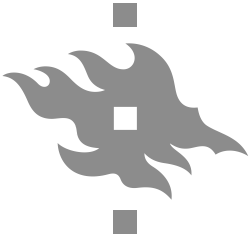


Figure 2: Opening carnival 2013, photographed by Linda Tammisto

## 2. FOCUS AREAS AND MEASURES 2021–2024

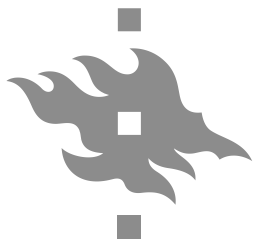
Inclusion and a thriving  
study and work culture

Equal leadership work

Social equality efforts

Figure 2: Focus areas 2021–2024





The focus areas and measures selected for the plan are based, by section, on the four strategic policies chosen by the University and the Equality and Diversity Committee's chosen vision *Through the power of genuine and responsible interaction – willingness, awareness and action*. The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for the organisation of all the measures, with the equality advisor assisting in this to ensure that the efforts are undertaken together with the responsible party referred to in each measure. With regard to scheduling, in most cases measures will be developed throughout the period. However, a possibly more exact timetable has been indicated for measures in section 2.4. Monitoring of measures and their impact is undertaken in each Equality and Diversity Committee meeting.

When measures are implemented, the measures presented in the University's implementation plan for 2021 (period 2021–2024) will also be taken into account, including item 6. Facilities fit for their purpose, 11. An acknowledged, attractive and accessible environment of continuous learning, 12. A strong global influence, 13. Active and full community participation regardless of language or cultural background, 18. A thriving work and study community, 20. Responsibility and sustainability integrated into the operations culture.

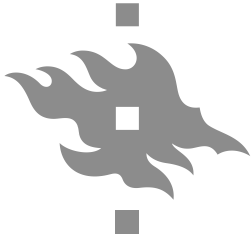
## 2.1 Promotion of inclusion and a thriving study and work culture

In this section, the strategic focus area *our University is the best place to study and work* will serve as the starting point. This section will discuss the matter from the perspectives of cultural sensitivity and anti-racism, equality of religion and belief, accessibility, special arrangements and equal assessment practices, and the promotion of equality of gender and sexual minorities. Tangible development measures include inclusion training as well as multilingualism and linguistic diversity (see section 2.4).

### Promotion of cultural sensitivity and anti-racism

It is important that the University actively advocates cultural awareness and opposes racism. Cultural awareness means consciousness of both one's own cultural background and an understanding of other cultures. Cultural sensitivity represents open and appreciative encounters without prejudices or presumptions. The promotion of anti-racism means that the University recognises and identifies discriminating attitudes and operating models manifested at the University. Anti-racist efforts at the University require that the experiences of members of minorities are heard and structural deficiencies addressed. The intersectional approach helps in shedding light on the fact that even at the University people are positioned with regard to each other according to various social categories. These include ethnicity, language, gender, class and functional capacity. The University must identify, for example, socioeconomic or linguistic obstacles to applying to the University as well as recognise that an individual may simultaneously belong to a number of underrepresented groups.

The University's language principles promote the active use of both national languages, Finnish and Swedish, as well as English. The University has a number of employees and students who come from abroad or have an international background. Finland also has indigenous ethnic minorities, such as the Roma and Sami peoples. Ethnic minorities and people of non-Finnish descent are underrepresented among higher education students and staff. Their opportunities for seeking higher education and employment in academia must be improved. Full membership of the academic community must not be impeded by differences related to ethnicity, nationality, cultural background and/or language. The University aims for more open and diverse recruitment. The University aims to develop statistical information on individuals with minority backgrounds in order to learn how well the goal of recruiting students and experts with diverse backgrounds has been achieved. The University promotes a community spirit and encourages its members to learn together while supporting increased cultural awareness in society through its teaching and research. In order to nurture such a community, the University must be a genuinely multilingual environment. The University supports students and staff in their efforts to improve their language skills and, consequently, their cultural knowledge. Courses offered in languages other than Finnish and Swedish are available in all faculties of the University of Helsinki. The intention is to develop both the quantity and quality of such teaching. In addition,



international students and staff members are offered services aiding them in integrating into the academic community and Finnish society in general. Attention is also paid to the wellbeing of the University's students and staff with a minority background in wellbeing surveys. The measure to be taken in relation to the above is to promote communications and teaching related to diversity as well as making, among other things, good language practices visible. In addition, the University aims to tackle inappropriate and discriminatory attitudes and operating methods through clearly set out intervention procedures. The University aims to increase the awareness of all its staff of inclusion and obstacles to it through training. Diversity in University administration will be increased, for example, through student representation.

The University of Helsinki is a member of the European League of Research Universities (LERU). The equality advisor is a member of LERU's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) group, which convenes twice a year. LERU's white paper, *Equality, diversity and inclusion at universities: the power of a systemic approach*, highlights good practices related to diversity and inclusion at other European universities. The aim is to take into account these good practices, such as the intersectional approach to structural deficiencies, in research and teaching. It is also important to highlight implicit bias and train people to recognise it. One of the measures to be taken during the coming period is to continue to actively participate in the EDI group's activities and organise training on implicit bias.

### Equality of religion and belief

According to section 6 of the Constitution of Finland "No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the ground of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person". Everyone has the freedom of religion and conscience. Section 11 of the Constitution of 1999 says the following: "The freedom of religion and conscience entails the right to profess and practice a religion, the right to express one's convictions and the right to be a member of or decline to be a member of a religious community. No one is under the obligation, against his or her conscience, to participate in the practice of a religion."

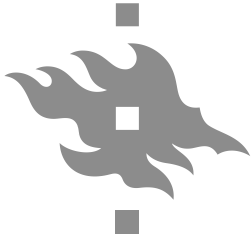
In accordance with the Constitution, all members of the University community have the right to profess their religion and express their conviction, or refrain from religious practice. This conviction may manifest itself in lifestyle, rituals, beliefs, diet or dress. At the same time, all members of the University community are expected to respect diversity of belief and other people's religious traditions and beliefs.

Disagreement over religion or belief, or sharing a mutual religion or belief, must not affect recruitment decisions or how a member of staff or a student is treated or how they treat other members of the community. The University community is open and inclusive with regard to diversity of belief and thought. However, the practice of a religion or belief may not unreasonably affect the performance of duties or the activities of the work community. Discrimination based on religion or belief is always prohibited.

The University of Helsinki and its units have traditionally held religious services or similar religious events in conjunction with formal celebrations. When organising them, it must always be kept in mind that participation is voluntary. The events in question must be organised without social pressure in such a way that the circumstances surrounding participation do not create an indirect obligation to participate in ceremonies related to religion or beliefs foreign to the individual in question.

Members of work communities are not obliged to organise religious or devotional services, but these can be held as part of the community's traditional celebrations and rituals. An alternative gathering must be arranged for those who cannot or do not want to participate in a shared religious event. Notwithstanding religious practice, this gathering should be as similar as possible in quality and nature to the event it replaces.





Religious or devotional services held for several religions or denominations must be planned and held in accordance with the principles of mutual respect and hospitality by listening to the hopes and expectations of those members of the work community who represent the different traditions. The representatives of different religions and beliefs must be treated equally so that the perspectives of minorities are also taken into account in a positive manner.

As such, wearing religious headgear, jewellery, clothing or other items is allowed. The grounds and reasonability of clothing requirements should be assessed on a case-by-case basis while taking into account safety, hygiene and similar considerations. When the use of religious insignia affects the visibility of the face at work, the employer or a corresponding party in cooperation with the employee/trainee/student will organise or agree on a work outfit based on the latter's wishes that meets both the requirements of the employee's religious tradition and the requirements of the work duties. If a person's work duties (including a traineeship or similar activities) justifiably require that the person's facial expressions are seen, the employer (or equivalent, such as an educational institution) is permitted to require that the employee's face is visible.

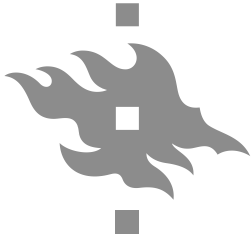
The University's campuses have shared prayer and meditation facilities for students and staff members of diverse religions and beliefs. Facility rearrangements have recently led to the University rethinking its facility use. The need to offer facilities for the use of students and staff representing different faiths has grown as a result of the University's increasing internationalisation. Consequently, Teaching and Learning Services as well as Facilities and Properties together with other parties are continuing the project for the establishment of on-campus multi-faith prayer rooms and/or quiet rooms. The facilities will be designed with the needs of various religions as well as non-religious individuals in mind.

### Accessibility

In an accessible environment, everyone is able to function equally regardless of their personal challenges related to sight, hearing, movement, age, learning difficulties or other such factors. An accessible environment is accessible to students, staff, applicants and visitors alike. Teaching is accessible when the student is able to fully participate in instruction, has easy access to the classroom and can easily use course material as well as the IT services employed in instruction and in communication about it. Accessibility of teaching particularly encompasses the idea of multiform instruction. Sometimes accessible teaching requires special arrangements or equipment. Work is accessible when the employee is able, with appropriate adjustments, to perform their duties and interact in the work community equally with others.

Section 15 of the Non-Discrimination Act stipulates that an "authority, education provider, employer or provider of goods and services has to make due and appropriate adjustments necessary in each situation for a person with disabilities to be able, equally with others, to deal with the authorities and gain access to education, work and generally available goods and services, as well as to manage their work tasks and to advance their career."

Accessibility of the built environment is relevant for everyone moving around the University, which makes accessibility planning crucial in renovation and new construction projects. Appropriately designed facilities are important not only for people with physical disabilities, but also for those with a visual or hearing impairment as well as those with special needs. Accessibility of the built environment entails observing the need for fixed aids such as induction loops and ramps, installing and maintaining them as well as ensuring that information about them is efficiently disseminated. Accessibility of the digital environment entails the suitability for diverse users of systems and materials used in studies and research, also by parties external to the University, and taking suitability into consideration when procuring such materials and systems. The Act on the Provision of Digital Services defines how the Web Accessibility Directive of the EU is implemented in Finland. The aim of the law is to offer everyone equal access to information. Accessibility requirements in the Act apply extensively to the content and features of websites



and mobile applications. At universities, a key exception to accessibility requirements is that contents not complying with accessibility requirements may be used in teaching temporarily and in a limited group. User surveys should also be carried out on the functioning of systems already in use, with a focus on accessibility. The accessibility perspective should be increasingly highlighted on the intranet.

The line between disability and ability is cultural and fluctuating. This is also true of the line between health and disease. An ill person may be fully able and healthy, but disabled in some situations. The state of one's health or one's medical history do not justify discrimination. Some illnesses, such as HIV and mental illnesses, may arouse fear and prejudice that lead to discrimination. Everyone has the right to tell or not to tell their colleagues or fellow students about their sickness or disability.

### Special arrangements and equal assessment

Because of their different backgrounds, students may have varying study abilities right at the start of their studies and these abilities may also change later on due to different life situations. The University will invest efforts in ensuring that students with a disability, illness or injury will receive sufficient support both as part of teaching and pedagogical solutions as well as through supervision and guidance services.

Attention will be paid to enhancing the study skills of all students as part of teaching, particularly at the early stage of studies but also later on. High-quality teaching, diverse pedagogical solutions and alternative completion methods benefit all students and in particular those with special challenges pertaining to studies. High-quality pedagogy also means equal assessment of learning.

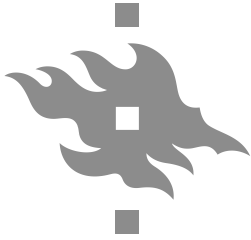
Counselling psychologists provide students with special supervision individually and in small groups, where concrete solutions to learning issues are sought and the development of study skills is supported. Counselling psychologists also aim to prevent challenges related to learning by participating in the planning of special arrangements and consulting teachers.

Special arrangements for studies are possible when a student has verified grounds for them. Special arrangements refer to practical solutions enabling students to achieve the goals set for courses. As a rule, special arrangements should be agreed locally with the teacher. An expert panel on special arrangements supports teachers in their work and, when needed, provides special arrangement recommendations for individual students. On-site student services have dedicated accessibility liaisons and Examination Services have a register of students entitled to special arrangements in examinations.

An effort will be made to support students in studies so that they will have equal opportunities to complete courses and achieve the goals set for them. However, assessment of learning uses the same criteria for all students and the special arrangements provided will not affect assessment. Anonymous examinations is one way to promote equality because individual students cannot be identified and this prevents assessors' preconceptions from affecting the assessment. Anonymous procedures are easier when using electronic rather than traditional examinations because the assessor of an electronic examination does not see the student's name.

### Equality of sexual and gender minorities

People of diverse sexual orientations work and study at the University. Experiences of gender and expressions of sexuality, as well as the gendered features of bodies, may be diverse. Stereotypical conceptions of the supposed appearance or behaviour of a particular gender restrict all our lives and are offensive. Placing individuals in an unequal position due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression of gender is prohibited at the University. This applies to student admissions, recruitment, work and studies. Sometimes discriminating behaviour may even be hostile or derogatory or take the guise of name-calling or malicious joking. According to the Non-



Discrimination Act (section 14), this kind of behaviour is harassment, which is forbidden. The Act on Equality between Women and Men (section 6c) stipulates that authorities, education providers and other bodies providing education and training as well as employers are obliged to take pre-emptive action in a purposeful and systematic manner against all discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. The above Act (section 3) also defines gender identity as an individual's own experience of their gender, and gender expression as expressing one's gender through clothing, behaviour or other means. The Act on Equality between Women and Men also prohibits discrimination against intersex individuals.

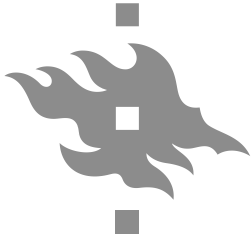
The University advocates a culture of openness. Everyone has the right to talk or not talk about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Openness can be safely achieved only when it does not lead to discrimination, bullying or exclusion. Openness cannot be forced upon people, but it can be encouraged and supported. Enabling openness increases wellbeing in the work community, as it offers everyone the opportunity to function as a full member of the work community. In teaching and in work communities, the heterosexual assumption, in other words, the assumption that everyone is heterosexual unless otherwise stated, will be challenged. Likewise it is important to respect an individual's right to self-determination with regard to gender and not automatically make assumptions on an individual's gender especially through dualist gender assumptions as either male or female. Any discrimination, harassment, bullying or unequal treatment based on sexual orientation and/or gender expression must be addressed immediately. This contributes positively to equality and non-discrimination of everyone regardless of their majority or minority status.

As a measure to be taken during the 2021–2024 period as well, the University will introduce the diversity of gender, sexuality and families into discussions in various contexts and aim to influence attitudes to promote equality and diversity. The curricula of degree programmes must take into account gender diversity and challenge normative expectations of heterosexuality as well as dismantle dualistic gender thinking. Part of this is taking into account the diversity of families. This applies to all faculties and is of particular importance in fields educating specialists that encounter diverse customer groups. The Equality and Diversity Committee, together with faculties and degree programmes, will aim to raise active discussion about how teaching and other activities could better take diversity into account while spreading current good practices. Also taking these themes into consideration in staff training is crucial since discussion about the issue and continuously highlighting it increase equality and safety as well as, from a wider perspective, recognition and identification of the diversity of humankind.

The University's operating policies aim to systematically take into account the diversity of gender and bodies better than before. At the moment, the University has some gender-neutral toilet facilities, but the need to increase them remains. The Equality and Diversity Committee aims to promote the construction of gender-neutral toilets whenever possible in cooperation with the Facilities and Properties sector. The Committee will also, for example, promote the use of a response alternative 'other', in addition to 'male' and 'female', on all forms so that everyone can answer something. We will also keep monitoring the development of statistics involving the third gender option.

## 2.2 Promotion of equal leadership work

The strategic focus area of the University *Openness enhances scientific research and collaboration* serves as the starting point for the discussion in this section. This section will discuss the topic from the perspective of recruitment, salaries and career development, fixed-term employment contracts and the status of grant-funded researchers, support for studies and teaching in units, reconciliation of studies and personal life, as well as age equality. Concrete development measures include lobbying the Academic Affairs Council and the Research Council.



### Recruitment, salaries and career development

The University appreciates the diversity of its community and aims to consolidate the diversity of work communities through recruitment. The University will not condone discrimination and continuously develops practices to promote equality and non-discrimination. The University will invest in increasing awareness related to implicit bias in recruitment, for example, by training staff participating in recruitment and highlighting the matter in conjunction with each recruitment decision. The aim of each recruitment process is to find the person most suitable for the vacancy.

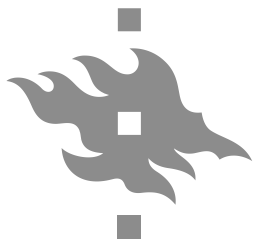
The University will monitor the equal recruitment of women and men to various positions and will strive to ensure equal opportunities for career advancement at all levels. The University's research and teaching staff represent women and men fairly evenly. However, after the completion of doctoral studies, women's numbers in positions decrease. The tenure track system will also ensure that there will be more women among professors. At the moment, almost half of assistant/associate professors (43%, September 2020) and over one-third of professors (34%, September 2020) are women. This kind of development will also be promoted in the future by increasing awareness of statistical developments at University level. By identifying fields where the number of women remains low, specific positions can be marketed so that women in particular are encouraged to apply for them. An equal number of men and women will be appointed to committees and as assessors when filling vacancies whenever possible.

The career development opportunities of university lecturers have been supported by creating equal opportunities for research-intensive periods for those permanently employed in teaching and research. The aim of the university lecturer career model to be launched during 2021 is to increase career development opportunities in positions in which merits are traditionally linked with teaching. University lecturers and clinical instructors will have the opportunity to advance to positions of senior university lecturer or clinical instructor based on an assessment performed at their faculty. The implementation and impact of the career model will also be monitored from the perspective of equality.

Career development opportunities of specialist and support staff will be studied and described more clearly. Internal mobility and career advancement opportunities will be monitored in all staff groups within specialist and support staff.

The recruitment process will be standardised and the parties and stages in it will be transparently described. Recruitment decisions are based on predetermined qualification requirements and assessment criteria. The process will always treat applicants equally. The University will monitor the diversity of its staff, for example, with gender, nationality and age indicators. We will attempt to rectify any identified distortions in various staff groups through, for example, recruitment.

The salary system complying with collective agreements used at the University will support equality and non-discrimination. Salaries are based on job requirements and personal work performance. The requirement level of a position will be assessed by a group comprising employer and staff representatives. The evaluation of personal performance is also based on commonly agreed evaluation factors. The implementation of the new salary system at the beginning of 2019 has made the salary system more equal as it takes members of staff who have been employed only for short period of time better into account. Salary statistics will be reviewed regularly and a staff representative will be annually informed of how staff is positioned at various requirement levels as well as statistical information on the salary component based on personal performance. This information will be provided by staff group and gender. The regular review of salaries aims to remove unjustified differences in salaries and rectify



possible deficiencies in the system. The salary survey required by the Act on Equality between Women and Men will be conducted annually.

#### Fixed-term employment contracts and grant-funded researchers

In their meeting of June 2020, the Board of the University of Helsinki approved the University's human resources plan, one of the focus areas of which is long-term human resources planning and transparent employment principles. During the period 2021–2022, the University also aims to monitor the number and duration of fixed-term employment contracts. Unjustified fixed-term contracts will not be used. However, the University's funding is largely based on various projects, which also affects employment contracts.

The status of grant-funded researchers sometimes raises discussion within the University. Grant-funded researchers are an integral part of the University community even though their status cannot be exactly the same as that of staff. The University aims to enhance cooperation with bodies awarding grants. When possible, it is hoped that they will allocate funding intended for grants through the University, which would allow the employment of research staff. This is the only way to secure equal status for all people conducting research at the University. As this is not a realistic prospect in the near future, the University has clarified the position of grant-funded researchers through instructions.

This work must be continued with due consideration for non-discrimination and equality.

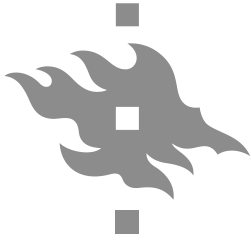
However, it is good to note that grant-funded researchers are free to concentrate on their research with no other obligations related to the University's operations. A grant may also be a good solution for part-time research or research conducted abroad.

#### Support for studying and teaching at units

The efforts made by faculties and independent institutes to promote equality provide the basis for the activities outlined in this document. Thus it is vital to promote equality precisely at the unit level.

The University of Helsinki will further develop teaching and studying so that equality becomes an all-embracing principle in teaching. The University's values have been recorded in the University's Strategic Plan for 2021–2030: truth, *Bildung*, freedom and inclusivity. These values support equality efforts. The aim is to ensure that all students are aware of the values of the University and will have an opportunity to discuss them. Communications and Community Relations, together with the Centre for University Teaching and Learning (HYPE), will prepare material for individual teachers, degree programmes and faculties to support value discussions as part of teaching. The support material will additionally help to strengthen student communications on questions related to values. The aim is to continue to highlight equality and diversity matters in the Academic Affairs Council and the Research Council.

Students will be treated equally in admissions, teaching, supervision and assessment. University policies and operating models related to teacher orientation and support in everyday work are available on the Instructions for Teaching website updated by Teaching and Learning Services and the Centre for University Teaching and Learning. Teachers are provided with training on challenging supervision and teaching situations annually. These events address issues where the skills of supervisors and teachers need to be enhanced, such as harassment, legal considerations, psychology, and safety and security.



### Reconciliation of work, studies and personal life

Concerns related to the reconciliation of work, studies and family affect all individuals with families and they are as diverse as types of families: There are families with two parents of different genders, single-parent families, families with two parents of the same gender, multi-parent families and stepfamilies.

Reconciling these things is often demanding and causes concern for many working-age people with families. In addition, situations and needs may change quickly. Solutions to this issue have a significant effect on the everyday life of families and employees' use of time and, as a consequence, on their coping at work. Many solutions attempt to reconcile the various wishes and needs of working life and family members to find alternatives which are also hoped to sufficiently correspond to the values of the employee.

The reconciliation of work and family will be supported regardless of gender or type of family. Needs for flexible working hours due to family reasons will be responded to positively. This must not result in employees with care duties being placed in an unequal position with regard to the distribution of duties, rewards or career advancement. Care responsibilities may include not only childcare but also, for example, care given to elderly parents.

Although more fathers have begun to take parental leave in recent years, women still take most of the available parental leave. This may indirectly weaken their status at work. Men will be encouraged to use their right to parental leave.

The University will also offer childcare benefits to students: they help students to reconcile studies and family life and thus ensure fewer delays in graduation. The Student Union operates a drop-in childcare service in University facilities, intended for students with children.

The University has arranged competitive tendering of relocation services in order to better take into consideration applicants with families. The aim is that relocation services will make the immigration process of international staff and the start of their work duties easier and to ensure that, for example, getting a residence permit, finding accommodation and settling in with the family will be as smooth as possible. The aim is to facilitate the employment of the spouses or partners of University staff in cooperation with other active parties in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

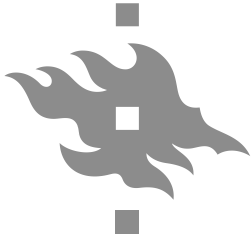
### Age equality

Individuals of varying ages work and study at the University of Helsinki. The broad spectrum of ages is a source of richness for the community and it enables the transfer of knowledge and skills between generations. Individuals of all ages encounter challenges in life, which can only be tackled through systematic age management.

The work cultures of different generations are formed differently at different times. As the baby boom generation retires, the University is faced with the great challenge of systematically passing on knowhow to the younger generations as well as directing resources to support coping at work. In addition to ageing employees, more mature students may be subjected to discrimination due to their age. Their learning ability may be doubted and they may experience social exclusion. Age discrimination may also be directed at young or youngish employees: their efforts may be belittled and their working conditions may be worse than those of their older colleagues. Both men and women may be subjected to age discrimination, but typically women are more often affected. Hence we talk about gender-related age discrimination, which means that ageing men and women are treated differently.

The University has collected its employees' opinions on age equality and age discrimination as well as best practices for promoting age equality. The report of the Helsinki University Library's age equality project implemented in 2010 entitled *Toisilta oppimista ja arjen haasteita: Henkilöstön kokemuksia ikätasa-arvon toteutumisesta Helsingin*





*yliopiston kirjastossa* ('Learning from others and everyday challenges: Staff experiences on the realisation of age equality at Helsinki University Library) expressed a wish to not highlight age factors too much, since changes in life situations were considered a more significant factor. After the survey, in 2013–2014, the Library focused on the process of retiring, the sharing of tacit knowledge and the ways in which retirement is discussed. The Library also drafted an age equality checklist, which has been published on the Flamma intranet, available to all members of the University community.

The University of Helsinki aims to promote coping at work through occupational wellbeing and age management efforts. Age-sensitive management means good management which considers the particular needs and life situations associated with employees of different ages. Supervisors will be provided with information and tools relevant for employees of various ages. The coping of aging employees is supported by appreciating their strengths and experience, and enhancing their expertise and job satisfaction. Mature employees often have invaluable experience that should be passed on to the next generation of employees. Support for passing on this experience is a central component of age management. Employees with extensive careers should be seen as a resource and their job descriptions should be adjusted so as to leave time for sharing their experience with their younger colleagues. On the other hand, support should also be provided for sharing the special expertise of younger employees with their older colleagues. Such considerations will be taken into account in the development of the University's human resources policy. Students of all ages must be treated equally. The continuous learning model of the University of Helsinki is aimed at individuals of all ages and requires taking the age perspective into account in a skilled manner.

### 2.3 Promotion of social equality efforts

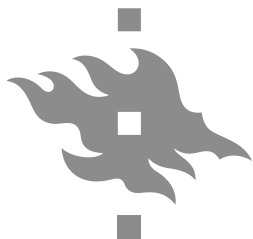
This section takes its cue from two strategic focus areas: *Our University is a leader in responsibility and sustainability* and *Knowledge and learning are for everyone*. This section discusses sustainability and responsibility in teaching and research, gender studies as a tool for developing equality, and continuous learning from the perspective of its promotion. Tangible development measures include active participation in the international LERU and UNA Europa networks as well as in the University's Sustainability and Responsibility Committee (see section 2.4).

#### Sustainability and responsibility in teaching and research

The key aspects of the concept of sustainability include not only the ecological preconditions of our existence but also social justice and human rights. Climate change, narrowing biodiversity and issues related to inequality are closely linked phenomena. The University of Helsinki conducts impactful and solution-oriented sustainability research on these themes. The Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science HELSUS promotes interdisciplinary sustainability science.

The University of Helsinki is developing a new multidisciplinary sustainability course aimed at all University students. The course was prepared in multidisciplinary working groups in autumn term 2020 and the aim is to test it for the first time in spring term 2021. The overarching message of the course is that sustainability issues belong to everyone and everyone is needed in solving problems related to sustainability. Both the development process and the content of the course take equality and diversity themes into account.

The pedagogical guidelines for the course include the principles for safer spaces used in the design work as well as instructions and recommendations related to, for example, course material images, texts and other material. It is expected that the authors of the course material always take into account the diversity of age, gender, ethnic background, language and nationalities. Equality and diversity issues are present in all of the course content. The diversity perspective has been highlighted in dedicated chapters discussing, among other things, inclusion of individuals with disabilities and the concept of pluriversality. The course design takes into account the accessibility of teaching material and opportunities for continuous learning.



## Gender studies as a means of developing equality

As a discipline, gender studies is based in the Department of Cultures at the Faculty of Arts. Other faculties also provide teaching and conduct research in gender studies. Demand for expertise on issues of equality is growing both in Finland and abroad. Gender studies plays a key role in developing such expertise and in training new experts. Gender studies is a multidisciplinary research field which casts a critical eye on the concept of gender and its history, gender norms as a form of social power, and the status of women and men as well as gender and sexual minorities. Its key approaches include intersectionality, which is used to study how intersecting differences, such as class, racialising practices, age, disability, health and sexuality affect the social standing of various groups and individuals. Gender studies covers, for example, feminist theory, queer and transgender studies, critical men's studies, disability studies, postcolonial feminist studies, critical race studies, critical animal studies and equality studies. The University utilises information provided by gender studies on the effect of gender and other differences on discrimination. Research information in the field will be integrated into all relevant teaching and research. The effects of changes and reforms undertaken at the University must always be reviewed from the perspective of equality and diversity. Degree programmes must include the perspective of gender diversity in their curricula and practices, for example, in student assignments and the required reading.

## Continuous learning

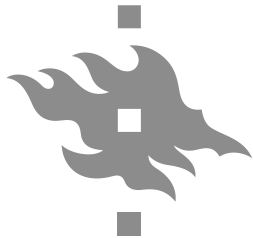
The University of Helsinki's continuous learning vision states that we want to bring *Bildung*, knowledge and learning within everyone's reach. The University offers high-quality opportunities in research-based continuous learning and science education to all those interested regardless of their age, previous education or background.

Science communication and science education are important elements of continuous learning. The University also makes research knowledge from various fields public, interesting and accessible to an audience wider than the academic community. The University promotes an equal society through academic outreach programmes by encouraging those children and young people who otherwise would not necessarily be inspired in such a way to take up studies and engage in scholarship.

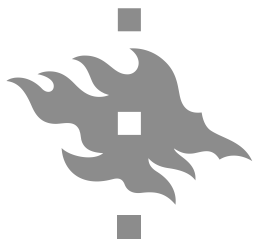
## 2.4 Summary of measures

The table below includes all measures and related actions for the period 2021–2024.

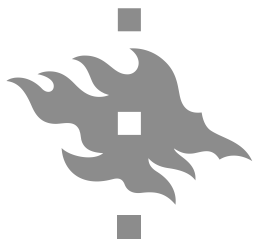
Development target	Measure	Target group	Responsible and cooperation party/parties	Scheduling	Monitoring	Indicator
PROMOTION OF INCLUSION						
Inclusion training	Organised twice a year in collaboration with student associations	University community, teachers and researchers in particular	Equality advisor HR Services	2021	Equality and Diversity Committee	Number of training events/participants
Equality and Diversity Committee and diversity indicators	Equality and Diversity Committee, in particular the development of indicators related to diversity	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Diversity Council (UNA Europa alliance) Knowledge production unit	2021, 2022	Equality and Diversity Committee	Number of indicators



Development target	Measure	Target group	Responsible and cooperation party/parties	Scheduling	Monitoring	Indicator
Language principles	Updating the University's language policy document in accordance with the multilingual communications plan	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Language Centre Academic Affairs Council	2021	Equality and Diversity Committee Language Centre Academic Affairs Council	Language policy document
Communications	Inclusion and promotion of intersectional (multiple interrelated issues affecting the social status of individuals) communication awareness	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Communications and Community Relations	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee Communications and Community Relations	Feedback
Multilingualism and linguistic diversity	Multilingual part to be included in target and development discussions/work plans, promotion of linguistic equality by, for example, organising campaigns	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing	Section
Equality and accessibility liaison network	Clarification of the network's activities	Network members	Equality and Diversity Committee On-Site HR Services Expert panel for special arrangements	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee	Feedback
Feedback channel for Facilities and Properties sector	Feedback opportunity related to facilities accessibility	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Facilities and Properties sector	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee	The creation of a feedback channel



Development target	Measure	Target group	Responsible and cooperation party/parties	Scheduling	Monitoring	Indicator
Gender-sensitive facilities	Ensuring that gender-sensitive signage is up to date	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Facilities and Properties sector	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee Facilities and Properties sector	Signage
EQUAL LEADERSHIP						
Recruitment processes	The development of increasingly open and equal recruitment processes	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee HR Services	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee HR Services	Feedback
Academic Affairs Council	Lobbying the Academic Affairs Council from the inclusion and special education as well as mental health training perspectives when related to academic specialist skills	Teachers	Chair Equality advisor	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee Academic Affairs Council	Feedback
University of Helsinki Research Council	Lobbying Research Council meetings from the equality and diversity perspective to raise awareness, in particular: professorship in disability studies and perspective of gender studies as well as accessibility of published material	Researchers	Chair Equality advisor	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee Research Council	Feedback
Family leave	Surveying the use of family leave as a gender issue together with HR Services	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee Payroll Services	2022	Equality and Diversity Committee Payroll Services	Number
Instructions for the prevention of inappropriate treatment and harassment	Updating guidelines on the prevention of inappropriate treatment and harassment, taking	University community	Equality and Diversity Committee	2022	Equality and Diversity Committee	Updated document



Development target	Measure	Target group	Responsible and cooperation party/parties	Scheduling	Monitoring	Indicator
	into account the new social media guidelines and the perspective on reacting to hate speech		HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing		HR Development and Occupational Well-being	
SOCIAL EQUALITY EFFORTS						
LERU and UNA Europa networks	Active participation and promotion of responsibility in international networks, such as the LERU and UNA Europa networks		Chair Equality advisor	2021–2024		Feedback Documents Meetings
Cooperation parties	In partnerships, also taking into account civic society, e.g., NGOs and ensuring that activities comply with the values and criteria of the University	Equality and diversity organisations	Equality and Diversity Committee	2021–2024		Number
Equality and diversity Suffeli programme	Drawing up an equality and diversity programme in Suffeli	University community	Equality advisor HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing	2021	Equality and Diversity Committee HR Development and Occupational Well-being	Completed courses
Sustainability and Responsibility Committee	Lobbying the Sustainability and Responsibility Committee on issues related to diversity matters	Members of the Sustainability and Responsibility Committee	Chair Equality advisor	2021–2024	Equality and Diversity Committee Sustainability and Responsibility Committee	Feedback

Table 1: Summary of measures 2021–2024



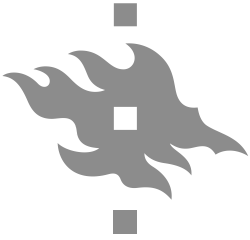


Figure 3: Pride 2019, photographer Mika Federley

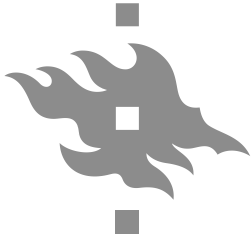
### 3. GUIDELINES FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND THE ORGANISATION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

#### Objectives for the prevention of discrimination and harassment

The University must be a professional and academic community which treats all of its members with respect. The University does not condone inappropriate treatment, discrimination or harassment of its staff or students. Supervisors are aware of their right and duty to intervene in situations of harassment and discrimination. They will address cases actively and promptly by intervening at an early stage. The employer can issue a reprimand or a written warning to an employee found guilty of discrimination, or terminate their employment. Two HR specialists have worked as staff – and in certain cases also students’ – harassment liaisons in the University’s HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing unit, one of whom is the University’s equality advisor. The Student Union (HYY) has two harassment liaisons whom students suspecting harassment can contact. The harassment liaisons are bound by the strictest confidentiality.

The privacy of students and staff must be secured in order to prevent discrimination and harassment. A central component of privacy is that no individual is required to disclose their personal details without a statutory reason. Privacy should also be considered in research and in the processing of research data. The Personal Data Act and the Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life regulate the processing of personal information. Legislation and





University guidelines specify the types of sensitive data which should not typically be processed. Such data include information on an individual's race or ethnic origin, social, political or religious conviction, trade union membership, criminal history, punishments or other criminal sanctions, health, sickness or disability, medical treatment or other comparable measures directed at the individual, sexual orientation or behaviour, and social welfare needs. Express consent must be requested before an individual's personal data can be published on the Internet or through another medium.

### Organisation and resources for equality work

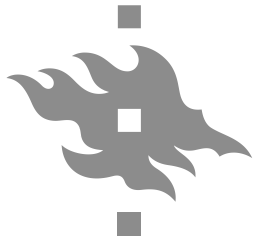
The responsibility to promote equality applies to all University activities and all members of the University community, both staff and students. The promotion of equality is, in particular, the duty of the University leadership as well as the heads of units. The University leadership monitors the equality situation in faculties and other units. The equality development of faculties and units is reported on and discussed as part of the operations management process.

The University's Equality and Diversity Committee is a body under the vice-rector, representing the whole spectrum of the University community. The Committee's members are selected so that the diversity and expertise found at the University have been taken into account as comprehensively as possible. At the end of the term, current members will be asked to continue as members. Members will be asked to propose new members. During the term, participants will also be asked about the willingness of other parties to participate. The duties of the Equality and Diversity Committee are to

- Promote the achievement of the objectives outlined in the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act, monitor the development of equality at the University and report on it
- Influence the University community so as to strengthen pro-equality attitudes, opinions and structures at the University in accordance with the University's strategic plan
- Prepare an equality and non-discrimination plan as specified in the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act.

Under the Act on Equality between Women and Men, the gender equality plan must be prepared in cooperation with a union representative, an elected representative, an occupational health and safety representative or other representatives appointed by the employees. Personnel representatives must have sufficient opportunity to participate in and influence the preparation of the plan (section 6a). The Equality and Diversity Plan will be approved by the rector at the proposal of the Equality and Diversity Committee, whose composition complies with the requirements of the Act on Equality between Women and Men. Usually, the University community is also involved in drawing up the plan, for example, in the form of a survey. At the University of Helsinki, the surveys are directed at the entire University community, including staff and students. In addition, a separate survey will be sent to other parties, such as head union representatives.

The University has an equality advisor who is in charge of communications and training in equality-related matters and who develops the University's equality activities together with the Equality and Diversity Committee. This work is conducted in collaboration with staff and student organisations as well as faculties and units. Any person suspecting harassment at the University may contact the equality advisor confidentially. The equality advisor also serves as a liaison between the designated contact persons for equality and accessibility. Equality and accessibility liaisons have been assigned for HR Services, Teaching and Learning Services and Research Services as well as some independent institutes, such as Helsinki University Library. Their duties include spreading good equality practices in the University community, communicating about equality matters in their areas of responsibility and referring people who need assistance to the equality advisor, an occupational health and safety representative, a union



representative or the harassment liaison of the University of Helsinki Student Union. Some subject-specific student organisations have their own equality representatives whose duty is to promote equality in the student community. The Student Union has drawn up its own diversity plan.

#### Promotion of equality and diversity at faculties and independent institutes

The University of Helsinki has not obliged its faculties and independent institutes to draw up their own, separate equality and diversity plans because it has already produced a University-level plan. However, some of the units have drawn up their own plans focusing on the unit's concrete equality promotion measures. Unit directors are systematically asked about matters of equality and diversity.

#### Annual cycle of equality and diversity work

The below table lists annual training and other events.

Name	Objective	Target group	Responsible unit or person	Date
Challenging supervision and guidance situations training	Acting in the best possible manner in challenging guidance and counselling situations	Teachers and staff of Teaching and Learning Services	The Equality and Diversity Committee in collaboration with the HR Development and Occupational Wellbeing unit	January–February
Cooperation meeting of equality liaisons	Strengthening of cooperation and crystallising duties	The relevant liaisons	Equality advisor	January–February
Minna Canth equality day event	Promotion of issues related to equality	The University community in its entirety	The Equality and Diversity Committee	March
Cooperation meeting of accessibility liaisons	Strengthening of cooperation and crystallising duties	The relevant liaisons	In collaboration with the expert panel in special arrangements	April
The 'Hyvän työn iltapäivä' seminar on job satisfaction	Promotion of issues related to equality and occupational health and safety	The University community in its entirety	The Equality and Diversity Committee in collaboration with the University's Occupational Safety Committee	May (main responsibility in 2021 and 2023)
Helsinki Pride	The promotion of sexual minority issues	The University community in its entirety	The Equality and Diversity Committee in collaboration with Helsinki University Library	June
Cooperation meeting of equality liaisons	Strengthening of cooperation and crystallising duties	The relevant liaisons	Equality advisor	August



Name	Objective	Target group	Responsible unit or person	Date
Special arrangements training	Training on issues related to special study arrangements	Teachers	In collaboration with the expert panel in special arrangements	September
Annual themed event	The promotion of the annually selected theme	The University community in its entirety	The Equality and Diversity Committee	October
Cooperation meeting of accessibility liaisons	Strengthening of cooperation and crystallising duties	The relevant liaisons	In collaboration with the expert panel in special arrangements	November

Table 2: Annual cycle of equality and diversity work

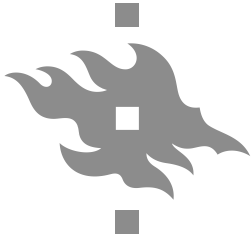
### The communications plan

In order to succeed in communications, it is important that communication on equality and diversity efforts is timely, targeted at the right group and uses the right channel. In addition to the timetable, a communications plan must include the key messages to be communicated to the whole University community. The main channels of communication are the University's Flamma intranet, Yammer and various email lists, such as supervisor messages, and noticeboards. Yammer and Flamma bulletins also enable interactive, two-way communication. The My Studies website and the Student Union of the University of Helsinki have also been used for communicating with students. The University website also has special webpages for equality activities.

The aim of the Equality and Diversity Committee's communications plan is to promote awareness in the University community of the impact of equality and diversity efforts, and to provide information on sharing good practices. Matters to be communicated vary from events organised by the Committee to collaborative national events. The most common items to be communicated about include the Equality and Diversity Plan as a whole as well as fit-for-purpose communication on the progress of concrete measures, communication about how to apply for the annual Maikki Friberg award and on the awarded individuals as well as invitations to training events and afternoon seminars on multiculturalism and job satisfaction. Responsibility for communications is part of the duties of the equality advisor. However, members of the Equality and Diversity Committee as well as the equality and accessibility liaisons also contribute to communications.

For example, equality issues have also been communicated in conjunction with various events, such as staff training and network meetings. The Equality and Diversity Committee also has an internal Flamma workgroup area, which contains the committee meeting agendas and minutes with their appendices. The documents of the inclusion and accessibility groups are also saved in this workgroup area. Committee minutes are also saved in the RIIHI document management system.

Communications outside the University are conducted by email, for example, regarding the annual networking meetings of equality representatives of various higher education institutions as well as cooperation in the LERU and UNA Europa networks. For example, the aim is to communicate any upcoming equality and diversity events as early as possible by drawing up a Flamma news item, also to be included on the public website and the equality webpages. On occasion, there will also be communications after the event in cooperation with University Communications and Community Relations in Flamma news. All official matters will be published on Flamma and the public website in



Finnish, Swedish and English. In other communication matters, the idea is to communicate *simply trilingually*, in an uncomplicated manner. We aim at multilingual communications.

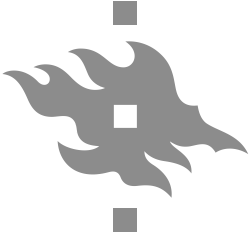


Figure 4: Conferment ceremony of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry in 2014, photographer Ari Aalto.

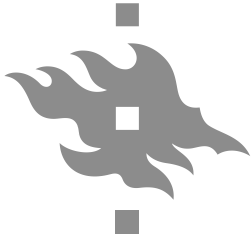
#### 4. CONCEPTS RELATED TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

##### *The obligations of the Act on Equality between Women and Men and the Non-Discrimination Act*

The purpose of the Act on Equality between Women and Men (1329/2014) is to prevent gender discrimination, promote equality between women and men and, to this end, improve the status of women, particularly in working life. Another objective is to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression (section 1). According to the Act, authorities and education providers, as well as other entities that organise education and teaching, should ensure that girls and boys, and women and men have equal access to education and professional development, and that teaching, research and learning materials support this purpose of the legislation (section 5).

If an employer regularly has a staff of at least 30 employees working in employment relationships, the employer must prepare a gender equality plan dealing particularly with pay and other terms of employment, according to which the gender equality measures are implemented. The University of Helsinki has drawn up a separate Equality





and Diversity Plan. In addition, instructions for the prevention of inappropriate treatment and harassment have been issued.

The aim of the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014) is to promote equality and prevent discrimination as well as to enhance the protection provided by law to those who have been discriminated against. Under the Non-Discrimination Act, the University of Helsinki must evaluate the realisation of equality in its activities and take necessary measures to promote the realisation of equality. In addition, the University, as an employer, must assess the realisation of equality in the workplace and, taking into account the needs of the workplace, develop the working conditions as well as the methods to be followed in the selection of personnel and in the decisions made concerning personnel.

#### [The concepts of equality, non-discrimination and accessibility](#)

Equality ('tasa-arvo') is typically understood to mean gender equality, but can also take a wider meaning. Non-discrimination ('yhdenvertaisuus') in a legal context means non-gender-based discrimination. Fundamentally, equality and non-discrimination mean the same thing. Both terms signify the equal value of all people regardless of their different characteristics.

Accessibility means the organisation of the physical, psychological and social environment in such a way that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the community, regardless of personal characteristics. This means ensuring the accessibility of services, usability of equipment, intelligibility of information and the opportunity to participate in decision-making.

The Act on the Provision of Digital Services came into force on 1 April 2019. The Act provides for requirements related to the accessibility of online services, and with it the EU's Web Accessibility Directive came into force. Accessibility means that webpages and mobile applications as well as their content are such that they can be used and understood by everyone. Taking accessibility into account promotes equality and improves the opportunities of, for example, disabled people to use digital services.

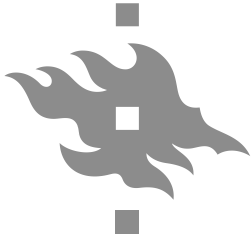
During the period 2021–2024, the University of Helsinki aims at inclusivity, that is to say the equal participation of everyone in all its activities.

#### [Concept and prevention of discrimination](#)

The Act on Equality between Women and Men also aims to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression (section 1). The Non-Discrimination Act states that no person may be discriminated against on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics. Discrimination is prohibited, regardless of whether it is based on a fact or assumption concerning the person him/herself or another (section 8). The Non-Discrimination Act stipulates that different treatment does not constitute discrimination if the treatment is based on legislation and it otherwise has an acceptable objective and the measures to attain the objective are proportionate. Different treatment is, however, justified even in the case that justifications for the treatment have not been provided for, if the treatment has an acceptable aim in terms of basic and human rights, and the measures to attain the aim are proportionate (section 11).

The list of causes for discrimination stated in the Constitution of Finland is incomplete, as discrimination for any reason related to the person's qualities is forbidden. For example, a person's social standing, wealth or participation in an organisation does not justify discriminatory treatment.





Encountering diversity and a broad range of opinions is a part of human interaction. Poor treatment of a person due to a personal quality, whether related to appearance, worldview or other characteristic, also constitutes discrimination.

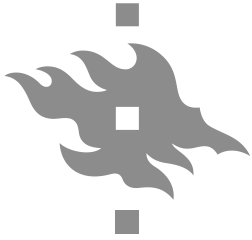
Discrimination is often the product of cultural or operational structures which may be difficult to recognise. Discrimination is defined in law, and failure to comply with the prohibition of discrimination may result in sanctions, but all forms of injustice do not constitute discrimination. An employer is obliged to intervene in any discrimination or harassment at the workplace. The University of Helsinki has drawn up separate instructions for the prevention of inappropriate treatment and harassment.

Direct and indirect discrimination based on gender is prohibited (section 7 of the Act on Equality between Women and Men).

Direct discrimination based on gender means 1) treating women and men differently on the basis of gender, 2) treating someone differently for reasons of pregnancy or childbirth, and 3) treating someone differently on the basis of gender identity or gender expression (section 7). Direct discrimination occurs when an individual or group of people is treated differently from others in the same position for no acceptable reason. Cases of direct discrimination show that an individual or group of people has been placed in a poorer position specifically due to a personal quality which should have no impact on his or her treatment. Under the Act on Equality between Women and Men, direct discrimination also occurs when a “person finds themselves in a less favourable position on the basis of pregnancy or childbirth or for some other gender-related reason” (section 8). At its most obvious, discrimination is open hostility and unequal treatment. For example, a teacher refusing to instruct students of a certain religion or nationality is guilty of discrimination.

According to the Non-Discrimination Act, discrimination is direct if a person, on the grounds of personal characteristics, is treated less favourably than another person was treated, is treated or would be treated in a comparable situation (section 10).

Under the Act on Equality between Women and Men, indirect discrimination based on gender means 1) treating someone differently by virtue of a provision, criterion or practice that appears to be gender-neutral in terms of gender, gender identity or gender expression, but where the effect of the action is such that the persons may actually find themselves in a less favourable position on the basis of gender; and 2) treating someone differently on the basis of parenthood or family responsibilities. The action referred to in subsection 3 above shall not, however, be deemed to constitute discrimination if it is aimed at achieving an acceptable objective and if the chosen means must be deemed appropriate and necessary in view of this objective. Discrimination is prohibited regardless of whether it is based on factual or assumed information relating to the individual themselves or to another individual (section 7). Indirect discrimination occurs when an ostensibly neutral rule or practice places certain people at a disadvantage compared to others. In the case of indirect discrimination, the guilty party does not necessarily recognise they are engaging in discrimination. Nevertheless, these practices are discriminatory. It is also possible to engage in indirect discrimination consciously. For example, an individual or group may know they are discriminatory, and even intend to be so, but conceal the real motivation for the discrimination behind a neutral measure. One example of such a case is a workplace which avoids hiring a non-Finnish employee and instead sets a groundless prerequisite for the task which a non-Finnish applicant cannot fulfil. According to the Act on Equality between Men and Women, treating people differently due to parenting or familial responsibilities constitutes indirect discrimination. Indirect discrimination typically manifests in structural inequality deriving from cultural reasons, established practices or deficiencies in the physical environment. In such cases, a particular individual or authority cannot be established as the direct culprit of discriminatory behaviour.



Section 13 of the Non-Discrimination Act states that discrimination is indirect if an apparently neutral rule, criterion or practice puts a person at a disadvantage compared with others on the grounds of personal characteristics, unless the rule, criterion or practice has a legitimate aim and the means for achieving the aim are appropriate and necessary.

Sexual harassment, gender-based harassment and any order or instruction to engage in discrimination based on gender is deemed to constitute discrimination under the Act on Equality between Women and Men. In the above Act, *sexual harassment* means verbal, non-verbal or physical unwanted conduct of a sexual nature by which a person's psychological or physical integrity is violated intentionally or factually, in particular by creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere (section 7). *Gender-based harassment* means unwanted conduct that is not of a sexual nature but which is related to the gender of a person, their gender identity or gender expression, and by which the person's psychological or physical integrity is intentionally or factually violated and an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere is created (Act on Equality between Women and Men, section 7).

Multiple discrimination means discrimination based on more than one reason. In such cases, the negative effects of discrimination can accumulate or combine in a way which results in a different level of discrimination than discrimination based on one reason alone. A woman may be a member of an ethnic minority, a member of an ethnic minority may have a disability, a disabled person may be a member of a sexual minority, a member of a sexual minority may be a senior citizen, to name but a few examples. One person may have all of the above qualities and face discrimination based on all of them. For example, the lack of a sign language interpreter may pose a serious obstacle to the studies of a non-Finnish person with a disability. Different forms of discrimination are often present simultaneously. The impact of the gender system, and gender equality are often also relevant when examining other types of discrimination.

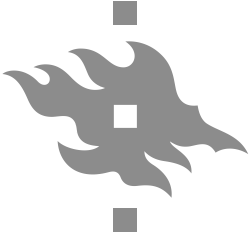
Every person has the right to invoke anti-discriminatory principles without suffering negative consequences. Any retaliation – such as a decline in work conditions because the employee has invoked anti-discriminatory principles – will be considered discrimination.

### [The concept and prevention of harassment](#)

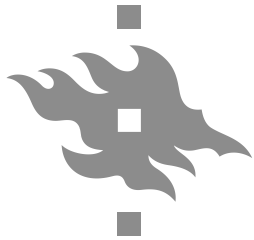
Harassment is also a form of discrimination. Harassment means infringing on an individual's or group's integrity or human value in a way that creates a threatening, derogatory or hostile atmosphere. Both purposeful harassment and behaviour which can result in offence are forbidden. Examples of harassment include racist jokes or calling a colleague derogatory names related to his or her sexual minority status.

The Non-Discrimination Act states the following on harassment: The deliberate or de facto infringement of the dignity of a person is harassment, if the infringing behaviour relates to a reason referred to in section 8(1), and as a result of the reason, a degrading or humiliating, intimidating, hostile or offensive environment towards the person is created by the behaviour. An employer's actions are to be considered discrimination if the employer, after having been informed that an employee in their employment was subjected to harassment as referred to in subsection 1, neglects to take action to remove the harassment (section 14). No person can instruct or oblige another to violate anti-discriminatory legislation. Such an instruction or order is considered discrimination when the person issuing the order has the authority to oblige others.

The University of Helsinki has issued instructions for the prevention of inappropriate behaviour and harassment. These instructions are meant to serve as a guideline for those who have been subjected to inappropriate treatment



or harassment in their work or studies, for supervisors, and for all members of the work and study communities. The instructions are available on the University's intranet.



## 5. STATISTICAL APPENDIX (separate)