



MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION AND CULTURE

# Programme for equity and non-discrimination in education and training

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The Ministry of Education and Culture has pledged to promote equity and non-discrimination and to prevent racism.

To reinforce the knowledge base and practices related to equity and non-discrimination in education and training, a programme encompassing the entire education system has been formulated. The measures focus particularly on advancing knowledge and competence, developing guidance by information and promoting the inclusion of children and young people.

## **Advocating support, information and tools**

Providers of early childhood education and care and providers of education and training have a duty to create a safe and secure learning environment where everyone is made to feel safe and accepted regardless of their background or characteristics. It is therefore of paramount importance that teachers and educators, in addition to other professional knowledge and competence, are sufficiently competent and committed to implement measures related to equity and non-discrimination.

All curricula and the national qualification requirements are based on the promotion of equity, non-discrimination and human rights. This means that every single child

and student is valuable just the way they are and that bullying, harassment, discrimination, racism and violence must be tackled immediately.

It is also important for staff working in education and training to learn to identify and eliminate norms, structures, values, concepts, practices and procedures that create inequalities. It is important to ensure that staff members receive sufficient support, information and tools for handling and identifying issues.

This programme, which promotes equity and non-discrimination across the whole education system, strengthens competence in advocating equity and non-discrimination and helps combat racism, responding to the challenges and development areas identified in the field.

The programme provides information and tools for everyday work for promoting equity and non-discrimination in education and training, for fostering safety and security in the learning environment and for engaging children and young people. The programme also strengthens guidance and direction as well as cooperation in gender equality and non-discrimination issues.



## Measures

The measures will be carried out in the course of 2025 and 2026. The final report (due in 2027) will assess how this programme has been implemented and the effects it has had in education and training.



# 1

### **Reinforcing staff competence in equity and non-discrimination by means of continuing professional development.**

To foster competence, continuing professional education will be provided for teachers and educators to reinforce equity and non-discrimination and to combat racism. Continuing professional education provides teachers and educators with information and tools for identifying and intervening in problems related to equity and non-discrimination, as well as practices for identifying their own prejudices and for dismantling subconscious stereotypes.

# 2

### **Eliminating gender segregation in general upper secondary education and vocational education and training.**

A concrete action plan to reduce gender segregation in educational systems and education paths will be drawn up and implemented. More robust guidance for studies will be provided at all levels of education, with special emphasis on transition phases in education, in further studies and in seeking employment.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey and white polka-dot sweater, is pointing her right index finger at a laptop screen. She is sitting at a desk, and her left hand is on a computer mouse. In the background, other people are blurred, and a large screen displays a presentation. The image is partially covered by a white circular graphic on the left side.

# 3

## **Formulating quality criteria and assessment tools for early childhood education and care that help implement equity and non-discrimination among children.**

Assessment tools will be devised for ECEC personnel, organisers and private service providers so that they can critically review their ECEC services and with a view to formulating pedagogical practices and procedures that promote equity and non-discrimination.

# 4

## **Producing procedural practices to help discuss themes related to equity, non-discrimination and antiracism with children and young people.**

Procedural practices will be formulated that can be used to address issues such as diversity, racism, community spirit and inclusion with children and young people in age-appropriate ways. The themes can be handled by means of arts, culture and youth work, particularly with the help of functional methods and discussions.





# 5

## **Launching communications measures in line with the objectives of the programme to improve knowledge and wellbeing among young people.**

The message of how important equity and non-discrimination are in society will be conveyed in communications. Everyone's right to non-discrimination and a safe learning environment will be highlighted.

One of the things that the video highlights, as enshrined in the statutes on education and in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, is that children and young people have the right to information on sexual orientation and gender diversity.

# 6

## **Examining practices and creating new procedural practices for dismantling gender stereotypes and intervening in harassment.**

Best practices for dismantling gender stereotypes and intervening in harassment will be explored. The programme helps adults working in schools and educational institutions find ways to identify and recognise experiences of harassment and discrimination in their organisations. A diversity of representations in learning materials also makes it possible to examine how equity and non-discrimination can be achieved.

# 7

## **Exploring children's and young people's experiences of equity and non-discrimination.**

Children's and young people's views on how they experience equity and non-discrimination will be explored, and especially those at risk of discrimination will be heard. Opportunities will be examined for how the parents of children and young people who speak a language other than Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue could be heard, especially in the case of children in the age bracket of childhood education and care.

# 8

## **Encouraging liberal education students to engage in equity and non-discrimination efforts at educational institutions.**

Student panels and other procedures will be set up to encourage liberal education students who are on courses of various duration to give regular feedback and make observations, and they will be made aware of equity and non-discrimination matters in their educational institutions.

# 9

## **Bolstering measures against bullying in primary and lower secondary education to reduce negative phenomena and consequences.**


Ways to achieve equity and non-discrimination in all anti-bullying measures in schools will be taken into account, since children and young people with a migrant background as well as gender and sexual minorities, for example, experience bullying and discrimination more often than others.

# 10

## **Providing more opportunities for parents with a migrant background to support their children's schooling.**

Best practices in the Nordic countries will be examined, recommendations will be issued and measures will be presented to encourage parents and other custodians with a migrant background to participate and have a say in their children's schooling. The aim is to collect useful case examples that could be introduced into the Finnish school system for reaching parents with a migrant background, strengthening inclusion and ensuring smooth cooperation between home and school.





The programme for equity and non-discrimination in education and training was prepared as part of the Government statement to Parliament on promoting equality, gender equality and non-discrimination in Finnish society. The programme takes into account the objectives of promoting equality, gender equality and non-discrimination presented in the statement and in the Programme of Petteri Orpo's Government.

The programme for equity and non-discrimination in education and training was published in the publication series of the Ministry of Education and Culture.



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