

**LAB University of Applied Sciences**

# **EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLAN**

**Valid from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2024**

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Approved 16 December 2022 by Rector Juha-Matti Saksa**

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LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences compose the high-level, curious and dynamic university group LUT Universities. LUT is an international science university that conducts strong academic research and provides higher education based on that research. LAB provides education driven by the needs of the working world and carries out applied research, development and innovation activities and artistic activities.

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## 1. Introduction and terminology

This plan combines the LUT Universities' human resources policy equality plan and non-discrimination plan. It is appropriate to combine the equality plan and non-discrimination plan, because both apply to the prevention of discrimination and the development of an equal work community.

The LUT Universities personnel consists of the employees of LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

Promoting equality is in everyone's interest. Equal treatment improves the work atmosphere, trust and motivation. Performance and commitment to work will improve.

Equality means non-discrimination on the basis of gender, gender experience, gender expression, or being non-binary. Equality refers to equality between women, men and other genders or people who do not define themselves based on gender.

Whereas the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986, hereinafter equality act) refers to the concept of equality particularly from the perspective of gender/non-binary equality, the Non-discrimination Act expands the concept of equality.

Non-discrimination refers to a person not encountering discrimination based on personal characteristics or belonging to a certain group. Under the Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014, section 8), no person may be discriminated against on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activities, trade union activities, family relationships, health, disability, sexual orientation or other reasons related to the person.

The realisation of effective equality may require taking into account the special needs of a disadvantaged population group. This may involve affirmative action and reasonable accommodation for disabilities. Affirmative action means that representatives of the minority gender may, in some cases, be given priority.

LUT's strategic policy is to treat all members of our higher education community equally. The UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as the guiding principle for operation on the university group's campuses.

## 2. Objective of the plan

The Equality and Non-Discrimination Plan supports the development of LUT Universities into a work community where all are treated with respect. The LUT Universities' community does not accept inappropriate treatment, discrimination or harassment. Equal treatment is actualised in interactive situations and in personnel management, recruitment, working conditions, salaries, and career development. The plan aims in a goal-oriented manner to attain the commitment of all LUT Universities personnel to promoting equality and non-discrimination.

This plan is an updated version of the first joint plan of LUT Universities published in 2020. The plan was originally drawn up in cooperation with LUT's and LAB's shop stewards and the HR unit.

## 2.1. Communications

In terms of achieving objectives, it is important that the personnel are aware of the Equality Plan. The plan will be discussed in dialogue meetings, management groups, units, joint forums, and training programmes of LUT and LAB. The plan can be read on the universities' intranets and webpages.

## 2.2. Monitoring of the plan

The principles of equality and non-discrimination are implemented in everyday work and are part of supervisory work, community interaction and activities in accordance with values. The implementation of these principles will be assessed by means of personnel reporting, with the help of existing feedback systems (mood tracker, workplace well-being surveys), with separate surveys and interviews as well as during regular development and target discussions.

## 3. An equal LUT Universities

### 3.1. Attitudes

LUT Universities are an equal working community that respects and values people. Equality is based on our values and attitudes. Attitudes may sometimes be subconscious. Therefore, the foundation for the development of equality is awareness of attitudes, as this can reduce discriminatory behaviour. Directors and supervisors play an important role in the implementation and development of equality. In addition to this, everyone can examine their attitudes and adjust them to make LUT Universities a more equal workplace with stronger sense of community.

#### Proactive influence

- The Equality and Non-Discrimination Plan will be discussed in the management group, and units will also be obligated to process it.
- Equality and non-discrimination will be part of supervisor training.
- Personnel takes part in online training on equality and non-discrimination as part of their orientation into the work community.
- LUT and LAB will address issues that require development based on responses to the gender equality and non-discrimination questions in the job satisfaction survey.
- Guidelines will be provided to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression.
- Gendered expressions and illustrations will be avoided in universities' communications.
- A gender perspective will be incorporated into the contents of teaching and research to the extent possible in the education and research areas of LUT Universities. The gender dimension will be taken into account in other measures, such as cooperation with schools, measures and events aimed to increase the number of female students in the field of technology, and support for female students in the pursuit of equal employment opportunities and career advancement.

### 3.2. Recruitment

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must act in a way that motivates both women, men and, in the spirit of current legislation, non-binary persons to apply for open positions. If possible, the requirements for positions must be as suitable for both men and women. The Non-discrimination Act will be applied in recruitment and in the terms and conditions of employment.

LUT has undertaken to implement the European Commission's HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) to develop the role and career of researchers. One aspect of the process is commitment to an equal and non-discriminatory recruitment policy (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Policy, OTM-R). LUT received the HR Excellence in Research quality label in 2013, and it was renewed in 2019.

#### Proactive influence

- The most qualified person, regardless of gender, will be selected for a position, and the grounds for the selection will be stated.
- The selection criteria in recruitment advertisements will be presented as equal, and gendered terms will not be used.
- Steps will be taken to ensure that pregnancy, childbirth, or other gender-related factors will not lead to discrimination in recruitment or fixed-term employment relationships.
- The selection of employees will be carried out in an age-neutral manner, age will have no impact on the selection, or its impact will be positive due to accumulated experience.
- LUT University will ensure that both sexes are represented equally as far as possible in the selection committee for tenure track recruitments.
- LUT Universities are prepared to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people with disabilities have the same possibilities to work as other personnel.

### 3.3. Placement in various tasks and career plans

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must promote the equitable recruitment of women and men in various jobs and create for them equal opportunities in education and career advancement at all levels of the organisation.

According to the Working Life Barometer (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2018), women and men in Finland have reasonably equal opportunities to participate in joint development in the workplace. Women reported that they had developed operating practices and processes slightly more often than men (66% of men and 72% of women), whereas men had developed products or services more often than women (39% of men and 32% of women). The opportunities for employees to participate in the development of workplace activities have improved notably and fairly consistently over the past decade. There are very few differences in participation opportunities for men and women.

Strategic choices made by LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences and the needs for personnel development are taken into account in personnel training. Career advancement can refer to the possibility of job rotation in different positions internally or between LUT and LAB, to the development of competence in different organisations or in one's current position, and to development in supervisory tasks. The equitable recruitment of men and women to different positions at different levels is taken into account in organising work and career advancement.

In terms of management and leadership positions, attention is paid to gender equality, in which LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences have already partly succeeded. Women are well represented in the management groups of LUT and LAB. Women made up 85% of the management group of LAB and 61% of that of LUT in 2022. Correspondingly, the proportion of female members on the board of LAB was 11% and in that of LUT 44% in 2022.

#### Proactive influence

- Women and men will be ensured equal opportunities for recruitment to different positions and equal opportunities for career advancement and promotions to more demanding positions.
- Open positions at LUT Universities are always published in internal information channels.
- Steps will be taken to ensure that personnel can follow developments in their field and maintain professional competence by participating in personnel training or external training.
- The staff of LUT University can spend two hours of their weekly working time on independent studies if agreed with the supervisor.
- At LAB, the teaching, administration and support service personnel have the opportunity to use working time (teaching staff) or paid leave (administration and support service staff) in accordance with the principles set out in the staff development plan for independent study leading to a degree or for professional pedagogical studies. Hours for self-development in targeted training are agreed on with the supervisor. The training must support the development of the person's skills in accordance with the objectives of LAB and the unit.
- During development and target discussions, the staff member's wishes will be reviewed, and staff will be encouraged to advance in their career, their development needs will be reviewed, and long-term personal development plans will be drawn up.
- Supervisors ensure that the use of family leaves does not negatively affect the employee's career progress.

### 3.4. Working conditions

According to the equality act (section 6), working conditions must be developed so that they are suitable for both women and men. The Occupational Safety and Health Act obligates employers to ensure healthy and safe working conditions and working environment. The employer must pay particular attention to personnel groups whose occupational safety requires measures that are more demanding than generally. Working conditions and working environments must be adjusted to make them suitable for both women and men.

#### Proactive influence

- The occupational safety and health organisation and occupational health care will develop working conditions in a way that will ensure that both women and men have equal opportunities to be placed in all tasks and positions.
- Differences between the genders will be taken into account in security arrangements, and special attention will be paid to occupational safety and the threat of violence.
- Steps will be taken to ensure the suitability of tools, work clothes, workspaces, break rooms and dressing rooms for women, men and non-binary persons.
- Inappropriate treatment, bullying and harassment will be addressed. Observed cases will be processed according to the Guidelines for addressing harassment.

### 3.5. Reconciling work and family life

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must facilitate the reconciliation of working life and family life by paying special attention to working arrangements. Both men and women may take family leave. Different work arrangements and substitutions ensure that absences due to family leave will not overburden the personnel at work.

#### Proactive influence

- Different situations in life (parents of young children, those who help care for their own or their spouse's elderly parents) will be taken into account when working time arrangements are made.
- If necessary, special induction training and further training will be arranged for persons returning from family leave or another long-term leave of absence or holiday.
- Personnel are informed about changes in family leave policies. A supervisor's positive attitude will affect the use of leave, and affirmative action for men encourages them to take family leave.
- The reconciliation of work and family life will be facilitated with flexible working hours, flexi-leave, and the possibility of remote work, part-time work or unpaid leave.
- Employees will be ensured access to information on key issues in the workplace also during family or other leave by ensuring active user account during the leave.
- The integration of spouses of international personnel members will be promoted by enabling them to participate in Finnish language training for staff and by organising special events for them.

### 3.6. Prevention of discrimination and prohibition of discrimination

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression in a purposeful and systematic manner. Discrimination is prohibited regardless of whether it is based on a fact or presumption concerning a person.

LUT Universities does not accept discrimination, harassment or bullying. The employer is obligated to intervene in such matters, for example, under their right to direct. Responsibility is transferred to the employer when the harassed person has brought the matter to the employer's attention. The Guidelines for addressing harassment provide more detailed instructions for investigating and handling harassment.

#### Proactive influence

- LUT Universities do not accept any type of discrimination.
- Supervisors and personnel will be provided information on the early support model and how it works.
- Everyone has the right and obligation to intervene in any inappropriate treatment, bullying, harassment, and discrimination they observe. Observed cases will be processed according to the Guidelines for addressing harassment.
- Training will be organised on the prevention of discrimination.

### 3.7. Consideration of equality in decision-making

According to the equality act (section 8), discrimination is prohibited in working life, including all situations that arise in working life from recruitment to the termination of employment. The weightings and impacts of changes to the organisation and tasks, the hiring of fixed-term or part-time employees, lay-offs, redundancies and employee benefits must be considered from the perspective of different employee groups before making decisions.

Women and men must be ensured equal opportunities to participate in and influence preparation work and decision-making at all levels of the organisation. Obtaining a sufficient level of expertise will be the criterion when selecting members for different working, project and steering groups. As far as possible, both men and women are to be appointed to the groups. In addition, the groups should include sufficiently extensive representation from each personnel group and units.

#### Proactive influence

- Personnel will be encouraged to engage in cooperation and express their opinions.
- Essential changes concerning the personnel will be prepared in cooperation with the personnel in accordance with the principles of the cooperation agreement.
- The employer will adhere to the recruitment principles it has adopted.
- The employer will encourage employees of different staff groups and nationalities to participate in joint administrative bodies and working groups.

### 3.8. Pay and other terms of employment

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must promote equality between women and men in their terms of employment – especially in pay. This means that the employer must pay the same job-specific salary for the same work or work of equal value to female and male employees. Work of equal value means that the job requirements, competences, workload and working conditions are essentially equal. The requirement of equal pay applies separately to all the components that constitute a salary, meaning that, for instance, the grounds for personal bonuses must not discriminate against the other gender.

Pay systems will be developed in a manner that promotes equality: pay will be determined on the basis of the job's requirement level, personal competence, and the results achieved in the work. The employee's characteristics, such as gender, age or family relationships, must not affect the assessment of the job's requirement level.

#### Proactive influence

- Steps will be taken to ensure that the criteria for pay and the application of the criteria are equal for all personnel, regardless of gender, age or other comparable factors. The university's YPJ requirement charts and assessment criteria are openly available on LUT's intranet.
- Information sessions on pay systems will be provided to LUT supervisors before the evaluation periods.
- The personnel's pay and pay trends will be monitored by gender in the context of financial reporting and at dialogue meetings.
- Possible differences in pay received by women and men for the same work or work of equal value will be examined and corrected as needed.

## 4. Measures for the development of equality at LUT Universities

Goal	Action	Responsibility of	Schedule
Equal treatment of personnel and addressing problems.	Each unit will appoint gender equality contact persons who form the gender equality working group of LUT Universities.	HR	Will be appointed when the need/desire arises
Monitoring of the equality and non-discrimination situation	The results of well-being surveys and, if necessary, a separate gender equality survey will be used in monitoring.	Management groups HR Management Services Dialogue meetings	The halfway point of the planning period
Gender does not affect recruitment.	A trial will be run for anonymous recruitment (non-academic jobs).	HR	2023
Recruiting groups will be aware of equality and non-discrimination issues.	A checklist of equality and non-discrimination measures will be drawn up for groups that recruit employees. Affirmative action will be taken into consideration.	HR	2023
Pay equality will be improved.	The factors behind pay differences will be reviewed and unjustified pay differences will be corrected as needed. The development of pay will be monitored gender-specifically each year with the help of pay statistics.	HR	Annually

## 5. An equal LUT Universities

### 5.1. Age

People of different ages may encounter discrimination based on age, and discrimination may affect any age group. Due to their extensive work experience, aging employees possess tacit knowledge – both technical know-how and cognitive knowledge and understanding. Therefore, older employees should be seen as a significant resource, as the more extensive and creative use of work experience can produce added value for the entire organisation. On the other hand, the enthusiasm and new knowledge, skills and innovations of young people and recent graduates enrich the work community. Taking care of young children or one's own or one's spouse's elderly parents poses challenges to employees at both ends of the personnel's age spectrum. The challenge of a management approach that is based on employees' situation in life is to ensure that different types of people are able to work in the work community. The age structure must be taken into account proactively in the planning of activities, and lifelong learning must be supported at all stages of a person's career.

Age may not be a decisive criterion when selecting employees, nor may age recommendations be published in advertisements for vacancies. Age must not be an obstacle to a researcher's career. Age criteria should be avoided when selecting members of a research group, as they may particularly discriminate against women, whose career development may slow down due to maternity and childcare leaves.

#### Proactive influence

- All people, their strengths and development challenges will be appreciated and respected.
- Employees will be selected in an age-neutral manner; age will have no impact on the selection, or its impact will be positive due to accumulated experience. The resources provided by young people that will enrich the work community will also be kept in mind.
- Good manners and competence – one's own and that of others – will be appreciated.

### **5.2. World views, beliefs and opinions**

This section covers a number of different value systems, which may also conflict with one another. Work at LUT Universities is carried out in accordance with a mutually agreed set of values. Every person's world view, beliefs and opinions will be respected.

#### Proactive influence

- People will be treated with openness and respect; communications will be open and respectful.
- Varying world views, beliefs and opinions will be respected.

### **5.3. Ethnic background, nationality and language**

Internationalisation is an important focus area in the operation of LUT Universities. The students, teachers, researchers, RDI personnel, and other personnel on our campuses are increasingly diverse in their ethnic background, nationality, and language. Ethnic issues emerge when different people and groups encounter each other. Multiculturalism and multilingualism are a part of day-to-day life at LUT Universities. Efforts are made to take the characteristics of each international employee's culture into account. For example, a prayer space has been designated for Muslims on the Lappeenranta campus.

Campus restaurants special diets related to religious or other beliefs.

In addition to Finnish, LUT Universities also offers teaching in English. Materials and information related to studies and work are also increasingly offered in English. For example, LUT organises monthly orientation events also in English for new international employees, and the new personnel handbook is available in both Finnish and English. LUT University's intranet will be more clearly bilingual in 2023. Finnish language courses are offered to international students and employees of LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

The equality of Finnish citizens (foreign-born Finnish citizens and Finland's minorities, such as Sami speakers and the Roma) must also be taken into account.

#### Proactive influence

- All people are of equal value, regardless of their ethnic background, nationality, language or religion.
- No racism or ethnic discrimination is permitted.
- The personnel's intercultural interaction skills will be developed by organising training on cultural diversity.
- Different ways of thinking and operating are allowed and accepted.
- Information and guidance must be provided in plain language.

- Work communities where non-native speakers of Finnish are represented should take non-Finnish speakers into account by using English as the working language, in both written and spoken communication. On the other hand, international employees studying Finnish should also be encouraged to use Finnish in different situations

#### **5.4. Diversity of gender**

The perception that there are only two opposite genders excludes those whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female. Everyone has the right to their own gender identity and to express their gender in the manner they wish – they can be very feminine, very masculine, non-binary or express characteristics of different genders.

Proactive influence

- Everyone will be treated equally and respectfully.
- No discrimination, derogation or sexual harassment based on gender, gender identity or gender expression will be accepted.
- The number of gender-neutral toilets on both campuses will be increased.

#### **5.5. Sexual orientation**

Everyone has the right to decide whether they want to tell others about their relationships and sexual orientation. No one will be defined on the basis of their sexual orientation. No one is obliged to share personal matters if they do not directly affect their work.

Proactive influence

- Every person's sexual orientation will be respected.
- No discrimination based on sexual orientation will be allowed.

#### **5.6. Disability and state of health**

Disability refers to characteristics that are congenital or have been caused later by an illness or accident. A person with a disability is not necessarily ill. For example, a person may have learning difficulties that manifest as reading and writing difficulties. These difficulties are not necessarily due to an illness or injury but may simply be personal characteristics. A person with a disability may have reduced mobility which requires aids that enable full participation and equal interaction with others. People with disabilities have the right to decide whether they want assistance or special arrangements.

The EU Web Accessibility Directive and the subsequent national legislation require that digital services be made accessible. Websites and mobile applications should be implemented in a way that makes it possible for anyone to access them and understand what they say. All video and audio content stored in an online service (for example, a podcast) must be accessible as of 23 September 2020 (subtitles/audio description/expression that is clear as possible

People may experience visual and hearing difficulties or difficulties perceiving the environment. This will require attention to the design of lighting, colour schemes, contrasts and acoustics as well as material choices.

Proactive influence

- No one is discriminated against based on disabilities or health.
- Everyone has the right to decide what to share about their health or disabilities.
- Campuses must be functional, safe and comfortable for all users.
- Accessible routes will be marked with clear signs.
- The quality and user experience of digital services will also be developed by means of service design.

## 5.7. Equality between different personnel groups

Higher education institutions are multifaceted work communities in which the terms of employment specified in the collective agreements of different personnel groups are different and opportunities to influence and participate in the work community vary. For example, a researcher or a teacher is in a different position than a specialist and support staff member of University Services, and a grant-funded researcher's situation differs from that of an employee in a regular employment relationship. However, every person's work contribution is important on the whole. To achieve equality, it is important, for instance, to identify all persons involved in a research process and to value their contribution equally.

LUT has two distinct personnel groups: teaching and research personnel and specialist and support personnel. The teaching and research personnel mainly consists of employees at different levels of the tenure track system. Other specialists and support service providers work in the laboratories of LUT schools and in University Services, which provides services not only to LUT University but also to the LAB University of Applied Sciences. Different provisions of the collective agreement apply to these two personnel groups in areas such as the pay system, working hours and annual leave.

LAB has different types of positions, such as teaching, RDI, laboratory, workshop, supervisory and management jobs. The work community also includes LUT University's University Services. There are also differences in employment terms that stem from the collective agreement, such as annual and total working hours, which set their own conditions. Different collective agreements must not be an obstacle to the implementation of equality. There are also different hierarchies between and within personnel groups and professional tasks that can affect how a person experiences the organisation.

Proactive influence

- Different hierarchies are identified and acknowledged.
- The competence and contribution of all members of the work community are valued both in speech and actions.
- Shared successes are celebrated together. Employees are referred to in general, inclusive terms such as staff or personnel. References to distinct personnel groups, such as teaching and RDI staff, are made only when relevant to the matter.
- Everyone will have the possibility to present ideas and development proposals and make concrete improvements in the organisation.
- Attention will be paid to listening: people of all personality types and communication styles deserve to be heard (e.g., extrovert/introvert).

## 6. Measures for the development of equality at LUT Universities

Goal	Action	Responsibility of	Schedule
Aiming for more successes together.	Strategic policy: The participation and contribution of each member of our higher education community is important.	Top management and immediate supervisors. Staff members are responsible for their own participation.	Immediately, ongoing
Strengthening team spirit.	Strategic policy: The significance of every job and competence of every employee as part of the whole will be clarified.	Top management and immediate supervisors. Staff members are responsible for their own participation.	Immediately, ongoing
Promoting multiculturalism on campuses.	Strategic policy: The amount of recreational activities offered on both campuses will be increased with a special focus on engaging international members of the community.	HR, LTKY, KOE, LUT Doctoral School, supervisors. Staff members are responsible for their own participation.	Immediately, ongoing
Taking gender diversity into account.	The question concerning gender identity in staff surveys will be edited to better reflect gender diversity (male/female/other/prefer not to answer) if gender identity is relevant to the interpretation of the results.	Management Services, HR	Immediately, ongoing

## 7. Evaluation and monitoring of implementation

This plan is the updated version of the first Equality and non-discrimination plan of LUT Universities. LUT Universities include LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences, which was formed in the merger of the Lahti University of Applied Sciences and Saimaa University of Applied Sciences on 1 January 2020. The first joint plan included an assessment of implementation of the preceding individual plans of each institution. The assessment is not repeated in this updated version.

Some of the measures set out in the previous equality and non-discrimination plan have been implemented or are ongoing, while others are still to be implemented:

- Equality and harassment contact persons have not been appointed and an equality working group has not been established because there has been no evident need for them.
- The equality and non-discrimination situation is monitored through the equality and non-discrimination indices/statements in staff surveys. Related tables are presented below separately for LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences.
- Anonymous recruitment to non-academic positions is not yet being piloted at LUT Universities. The recruitment system has not previously enabled this, but additional features have been added to allow anonymous recruitment in the future.
- The equality and equal opportunities action checklist is not yet available for recruitment teams to use. The creation of the checklist has been postponed to a later date.
- Gender pay trends are monitored annually through pay statistics in dialogue meetings.
- To support zero tolerance for harassment, a harassment reporting form has been introduced to enable employees who experience harassment, inappropriate treatment or bullying to

report it in accordance with [LUT Universities guidelines](#) (link to Intranet). As LUT is a university of technology, gender segregation continues to contribute to the smaller share of women in engineering professorships.

### **LUT: Monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination**

The indicators for monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination will in the future be based on the results of a biennial workplace well-being survey. The first survey at LUT was carried out in 2021, and the next one will take place in 2023. The benchmarks are the average scores from all respondents from all Finnish universities – the so-called university norm. The rating scale is 1–5; 5=best.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2021</b>
I feel that I am part of the work community	4.05 (university norm 4.03)
Equality and diversity are achieved in our unit	4.03 (university norm 3.96)
No negative competition between individuals exists in our unit	3.92 (university norm 3.89)
We discuss difficult matters, and we also work them out	3.48 (university norm 3.49)
My supervisor is impartial and fair	4.21 (university norm 4.24)
My supervisor takes into consideration that people are different	4.15 (university norm 4.19)

### **LAB: Monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination**

The PeoplePower staff survey, which will be conducted at LAB for the first time in spring 2023 and every two years thereafter, will include questions measuring equality and non-discrimination. The results will be used as indicators to monitor the implementation of equality and non-discrimination at LAB.

## **8. Background material of the plan**

Acts guiding the Equality and Non-discrimination Plan:

[Act on Equality between Women and Men \(609/1986\)](#)

[Non-discrimination Act \(1325/2014\)](#)

Other sources:

[Tasa-arvo.fi](#)

[Yhdenvertaisuus.fi](#)