



How to get in touch

Do you need information on the Equality Act? Do you want to ask about your rights or file a discrimination complaint? Does your company or your educational institution need advice on how to draw up an equality plan? Get in touch with the Office of the Ombudsman for Equality.

Counselling line: +358 9 1607 3248 (Mon to Thu 9–11 a.m. and 1–3 p.m.; Fri 9 a.m.–12 noon)

Postal address: Office of the Ombudsman for Equality, PO Box 33, FI-00023 Government, Finland

E-mail: tasa-arvo@stm.fi

Phoning the counselling line is often the quickest and easiest way to start. It will help you ensure that your case in fact falls within the domain of the Ombudsman for Equality.

You may also contact the Ombudsman for Equality by letter, by e-mail or by filling in the contact form (in Finnish) on the website. Please explain in your message why you suspect gender-based discrimination in your case.



Contact information:

Office of the Ombudsman for Equality
PO Box 33, FI-00023 Government, Finland

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Equality brochures 2010:2eng

ISBN 978-952-00-3095-7 (pb)

ISBN 978-952-00-3096-4 (PDF)

ISSN-L 1236-9993

ISSN 1236-9993 (print)

ISSN 1797-9870 (online)

URN:ISBN:978-952-00-3096-4

Office of the Ombudsman for Equality, Helsinki
University Press 12/2010



The Ombudsman for Equality

monitors and promotes
gender equality



The Ombudsman for Equality champions gender equality

The Ombudsman for Equality is an independent authority whose domain is gender equality and whose principal duty is to enforce compliance with the Equality Act. The Ombudsman also distributes information on the Equality Act and its application, promotes gender equality and monitors the attainment of equality in society at large. Moreover, the Ombudsman monitors the protection of gender minorities (transgender people and intergender people) against discrimination.

The current Ombudsman for Equality is Ms Pirkko Mäkinen.

”...the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights [shall be ensured]...”

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women



Gender discrimination is prohibited

It is prohibited to discriminate against anyone on the basis of their gender.

The Equality Act specifically prohibits:

- treating women and men differently on the basis of gender,
- treating someone differently for reasons of pregnancy or childbirth,
- treating someone differently because of belonging to a gender minority,
- sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of gender.

The Equality Act applies everywhere in society

The Equality Act protects against gender-based discrimination everywhere in society: in working life, at educational institutions, and in the provision of products and services.

In working life, the Equality Act applies for instance in recruitment and selection for training, in the extending of employment relationships, in pay and other terms and conditions of employment, in working conditions, in terminating an employment relationship, and in layoffs.

At educational institutions, the Equality Act applies for instance in student selection, in the organising of teaching and in the assessment of study performance.

In the provision of products and services, the Equality Act applies for instance in the pricing of products and services and in the provision of services exclusively for women or men.

The Equality Act does not apply to relationships in private life or to the practices of religious communities.

Have you experienced gender-based discrimination?

If you suspect that you have been discriminated against because of your gender, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman for Equality. This will cost you nothing.

The Office will provide you with advice and information regarding your rights. If necessary, the Ombudsman for Equality may investigate a suspected case of discrimination by written procedure. What this means in practice is that the Ombudsman will request a written report from the party suspected of discrimination.

If the Ombudsman finds that a violation of the Equality Act has been committed, the Ombudsman will issue instructions and guidance towards discontinuing the unlawful practice. In extreme cases, the Ombudsman may refer the case to the Gender Equality Board, which has the power to impose a conditional fine to prevent discrimination.

Persons suspecting that they have been discriminated against may in most cases take the matter to the district court for settlement and seek compensation for the discrimination.

