

TOWARDS ETHNIC EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

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SUMMARY

The purpose of the government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and racism is to support and develop measures promoting good ethnic relations and preventing ethnic discrimination and racism in Finnish society. Attitude research and evidence of the manifestation of ethnic discrimination and racism in society call for measures to prevent these negative phenomena. Recent developments and events in Europe show that there is also support for political extremist groups that are openly racist and hostile to foreigners in countries with a long history of immigration, and that work towards more enlightened attitudes must be done continuously.

Finland is committed to implementing and adhering to the principles of non-discrimination and equality, which have been included in the new Constitution Act of Finland. The Act mentions especially the right of the Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, to maintain and develop their own language and culture. The programme of the 2nd Government of Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen emphasises the importance of good ethnic relations in society and of paying greater attention to measures seeking to combat discrimination through both legislation and work of public authorities.

Although the government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and racism has been prepared to meet the needs of the present situation, it also anticipates a new phase of development in which the currently small ethnic minorities will grow and the dependency ratio between various age groups will rapidly become distorted as the average age of the population rises. The importance of religious and philosophical issues will grow as a part of the issue of multiculturalism and immigration.

The government stresses the importance of honouring and adhering to international guidelines and conventions on human rights and EU practices when preparing statutes at national level and taking measures at local level. The government approaches ethnic discrimination and racism with the seriousness warranted by these issues, which concern a continuous national process of development and adaptation respecting the rights and human dignity of each individual. The government is of the opinion that special attention must be paid to the position of immigrant children, youths and women. The government points out that members of ethnic minorities and new immigrants have both rights and obligations and it is the balance between the two that the government programme will support. Developing and utilising positive interaction and plurality requires efforts and activity also from members of ethnic minorities. The government is prepared to contribute to supporting and promoting both national and international measures to combat all forms of discrimination and racism.

This action programme focuses on the years from 2001 to 2003, covering the remaining term of office of the government of Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. The programme has been prepared in a manner enabling the government to implement or launch a considerable proportion of the measures proposed. The measures defined in the programme will apply to new immigrants, to immigrants who have resided in Finland for many years, to second generation immigrants and to established ethnic minorities including the Lapps - who are the aboriginal inhabitants of Finland, the Romanies, the Jews, the Tartars and the long-established Russian population. They will also apply to expatriate Finns and their families who have come to Finland as returnees.

The measures are divided into national, regional and local measures. The principal measures at government and ministerial level are 1) a government report to Parliament in 2002 on measures to

promote ethnic equality and diversity, 2) establishing the post of Discrimination Ombudsman as of 1 September 2001, 3) a duty placed upon every branch of the administration to promote the recruitment of persons belonging to ethnic minorities to the staff of the ministries and their subordinate administration, and to include knowledge of particular cultural characteristics of ethnic groups in staff training and selection criteria while emphasising the importance of tolerant attitudes, 4) measures by all branches of the administration to provide services for ethnic minorities and to develop consultation in accordance with the principle of good governance, 5) developing co-operation with the social partners to combat ethnic discrimination and in measures promoting the employment of ethnic minorities and immigrants, 6) the government will order a study which will examine the rules, regulations and practices of ministries, their subordinate administration and the Social Insurance Institution and to determine whether these include practices that infringe the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities, discriminate against them or impede equal treatment, 7) ensuring resources and development for research in this area to serve national and international needs, and 8) amending the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers so that the prevention of racism and promotion of good ethnic relations are allowed for in measures at local level. The legislation needed to improve supervision of the prohibition of discrimination will also be investigated.

At regional level measures and resources must be combined, having regard to the differences between and the needs of the regional and provincial levels. The principal measures at regional level are: 1) developing employment and economic development centres into service centres of expertise, counselling and consultation in matters of ethnic equality, 2) sustaining and initiating means of promoting the employment of immigrants and ethnic minorities, 3) developing forms of local authority co-operation in preventing ethnic discrimination and racism, and 4) utilising the added value provided by immigrants and ethnic minorities in regional development measures.

It is the view of the government that the importance of the local level is fundamental when developing good ethnic relations and combating ethnic discrimination and racism, because it is in the municipalities that people meet one another and encounter the various situations of everyday life. The differences between municipalities are substantial due to their various cultural heritages, economic structures, size and composition of population. This means that the need for measures will vary between municipalities.

In the measures of both the State administration and the municipalities to combat ethnic discrimination and racism, promote good ethnic relations and implement the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers the local level is of crucial importance. Of the State authorities, the employment offices and the labour protection authority, together with the municipalities, have the prime function of supporting immigrants of working age and reinforcing the skills which the labour market requires of them. Due to the independent status of municipalities the proposed measures applicable to them mainly consist of recommendations. The obligations imposed on the municipalities by the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers form an exception to this.

Through this programme the government wishes to promote co-operation between public authorities, political parties, the social partners, non-governmental organisations, the media, religious communities and immigrant and ethnic minority organisations at all levels of the society with a view to developing good practices. Implementing the measures included in the programme will reinforce ethnic equality in society and this will promote our prospects of benefiting from ethnic diversity nationally and internationally.

Finland is active both nationally and internationally in combating ethnic discrimination and racism. Finland participates in developing good practices in the European Union, the Council of Europe, Nordic co-operation and co-operation with neighbouring regions. Finland has an active role in the preparations of the United Nations` third World Conference Against Racism, Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and in the Conference itself, held from 31 August to 7 September 2001.

BACKGROUND

Finland, like all European countries, has in its various phases of history been a land of both immigration and emigration. Earlier, emigration was mainly targeted at North and South America and Oceania. The most industrialised Western European countries became targets of immigration due to labour market policies after World War II and more extensively in the 1950's and 1960's, when labour still exited Finland. Presently the total number of expatriate Finns is nearly 1.3 million. Nowadays Finland is a land of both immigration and emigration.

Before World War I, Finland received immigrants especially from Germany, Norway, Russia, Sweden and Scotland. These immigrants were mainly entrepreneurs and skilled labour of various professions. The effects of this immigration are still visible in the Finnish corporate world and urban structure. In the early 1920's, some 34,000 refugees immigrated to Finland from the Soviet Union. After World War II, there was hardly any immigration into Finland. It was not until the 1970's that Finland again received refugees. These refugees came from Chile and Vietnam. During the 1980's and 1990's, Finland received refugees from Asia and Africa. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Finland has during the 90's also received immigrants from the former Soviet Union, especially from Russia and Estonia. In the beginning of the year 2000, the number of foreign citizens in Finland was approximately 90,000, which amounts to 1.7 per cent of the population, 20,000 being refugees. The number of naturalised foreigners and their children born as Finnish citizens is nearly the same, some 90,000. In addition, the total number of established ethnic minorities can be estimated as 50,000, which means that ethnic minorities constitute approximately 4.5 per cent of the population.

As a result of the accumulative effect of various factors, the quantitative share of ethnic minorities in the population of Finland is growing. In Finland, as in the whole of EEA, age distribution and the dependency ratio between various age groups is rapidly becoming distorted. This will reduce labour supply and cause difficulty in the functioning of society and various industries through selective labour shortage and a growing problem of incidence. Competition over certain trained workers has already begun between and within countries and this will concern Finland more and more concretely in the near future. Finland cannot choose to isolate itself, as it is a member of the international world and the functioning surroundings it offers. With the help of the measures proposed in this programme, Finland has good prospects of developing its facilities for encountering ethnic variety and diversity and moulding them into factors that reinforce our abilities. This is one of the fundamental dimensions of becoming truly international. The more society is prepared to invest in this common future, the sooner it will be able to utilise the added value provided by immigration and diversity.

1. DISCRIMINATION IN FINLAND

Studies of Finns' attitudes towards immigration and ethnic relations completed in 1999 and the spring of 2000 in Finland show that there is in places discrimination and prejudices on a large scale based on race, ethnic origin, religion or conviction. The study of public authorities encountering foreign cultures in their work shows that a considerable number of the authorities studied expressed negative, prejudiced, defensive and ignorance-based attitudes. These attitudes are reflected in society and will manifest themselves in practical life as direct or indirect discrimination against immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Published in May 2000 and financed by the Ministry of Labour, the study of ethnic discrimination in employment shows that ethnic discrimination in the labour market and working communities occurs especially in the recruitment phase. Immigrants are also discriminated against by depriving them of the chance to obtain work that fits their training or previous working experience. As the result, individual victims of discrimination and even larger ethnic groups become displaced and excluded from society.

The media is integral in promoting good practices. Finished in May 2000 and financed by the Ministry of Education, the first research report on the media shows that newspapers mainly handle ethnic relations and immigration issues objectively without using the previously common threatening images and generalisations. The so called yellow journalism, some local radios and the new media, the Internet, broadcast and distribute programmes and material that is racist, hostile to foreigners and incite to hatred against entire ethnic groups.

The importance of employment and participation in working life is fundamental when developing and sustaining national wellbeing. In the case of some Finns, experiencing difficulties in accessing employment and the resulting problems with housing and livelihood reinforce negative attitudes and inhibit acceptance of ethnic pluralism. For a number of people, exclusion from the labour market initiates the process of social displacement and exclusion. The substantially high unemployment rate among several immigrant groups and the Romanies and the displacement it causes easily lead to making generalisations and confirms in a part of the population negative attitudes towards immigration and ethnic minorities in general.

An important gateway to employment is acquiring enough Finnish or Swedish to cope in working life. As a part of the integration programme, immigrants must be given at the initial stage of immigration the opportunity to language training and studying the functioning and values of Finnish society, gradually adopting and understanding them. Language skills will reach the active level in working communities and when interacting with Finnish society. Also long-time residents whose inadequate language skills are their main barrier to employment must be offered language training for example as labour market training.

In addition to discrimination in employment there is ethnic discrimination in society in the housing market and bank and other services. All ages may be discriminated against, which means that ethnic discrimination must be regarded as a wider phenomenon than discrimination in employment.

School attendance and further studies of youths who represent immigrant or ethnic minority communities should be especially concentrated on in order to avoid the risk of displacement. Later on, only a few will have the opportunity to attend vocational training leading to working life. The new educational legislation entered into force in 1999 will gradually diminish this problem.

The number of ethnic minorities in society increases, including areas of Finland which have not yet experienced immigration. This is a challenge for the whole of Finnish society, especially for the younger generations which will encounter a more international and plural world than the previous generations.

Government measures so far

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination processed Finland's 15th periodic report in its meetings which were held on 1 and 2 August 2000. The Committee adopted in 9 August 2000

the conclusions and recommendations concerning Finland. Finland received positive feedback on several proposed and launched measures. The UN Committee also presents Finland with concerns and several recommendations (appendix 2 Legislation, International Treaties and Recommendations; pages 4-5). Finland shall submit no later than August 2001 a supplementary report in which the Finnish government will respond to the concerns and recommendations.

The 1st government of Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen defined the objectives in the government decision-in-principle on immigration and refugee policy programme (16 October 1997) and in the decision-in-principle on measures for promoting tolerance and combating racism (6 February 1997). Some of the objectives in the decisions-in-principle have already been reached, and the government has decided to keep some of them in force.

On the basis of the proposals made by the Commission for Migration and Refugee Policy, Parliament unanimously adopted the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and the Reception of Asylum Seekers, which entered into force on 1 May 1999. Prevention of ethnic discrimination and racism is crucial to integration, because without good ethnic relations and practices, integration policies are not effective locally nor regionally. Successful integration promotes good ethnic relations and prevents racism. The Commission has also proposed measures pertaining to immigrant involvement in preparing and taking decisions. In 1998 on the basis of this proposal, the government established the extensive Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) under the Ministry of Labour, half of the members representing immigrants and established minorities.

ETNO was preceded by the Advisory Board on Migration Affairs established for the first time in 1970 and the Advisory Board on Refugee and Migration Affairs (PAKSI) which was established in 1992 attached to the Ministry of Labour through joining the Advisory Board on Migration Affairs and the Advisory Board on Refugee Affairs attached in 1981 to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs (RONK) has operated for over 40 years. Cultural autonomy regulated for the Sami people is operated by the Sami Parliament, and attached to Lapland state provincial office is operating the Advisory Board for Sami Affairs. The function of the Advisory Boards is to act as expert bodies of the government, prepare opinions in principle, statements and initiatives. Established for the third time in the spring of 2000 and attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Commission Against Racism is an autonomous body which acts in order to increase tolerance.

2. THE PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTERS

The government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and racism is of three levels where measures target at national, regional and local level. The programme is implemented by the public authorities of the three levels accordingly. In addition to public authority measures, the implementation of the programme stresses the importance of co-operation between public authorities, non-governmental organisations and the social partners and the role of the media.

2.1. Important social partners in the programme

Measures related to ethnic relations and racism are on the one hand divided into administrative measures of public authorities and on the other hand into the measures and interaction of non-governmental organisations, immigrant organisations, political parties, the social partners and religious communities. Organisations of employers and of the business community must be viewed

as independent and important social partners and channels of influence in Finnish society. Churches are also important social partners in society as they are composed of their members and have duties related to public law.

It is important that communities and organisations of immigrants and new and established ethnic minorities evolve and can in their part develop interaction between various groups. Ethnic relations depend on the ability of society to manage diversity and create the conditions for realising the ideal of ethnic equality. Developing our operational environment into a pluralist and tolerant society requires measures at the various levels of society: national, regional, and local. The importance of local measures is fundamental, because it is at local level that people encounter the various situations of everyday life and there the principle of subsidiary can be realised in targeting services and measures.

2.2. Public authorities

Preventing and combating racism and ethnic discrimination requires co-operation between various public authorities. All authorities answer in their area of responsibility for implementing equality and preventing discrimination. The measures apply to the whole administration, and in ministerial administration the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education are responsible for coordination. Legislation is the key instrument in the measures of public authorities. In addition to the ministries responsible for matters related to ethnic relations, other integral authorities are for example police administration responsible for order and protection. Courts are crucial in preventing discrimination and racism, although they are independent of state authority and their function is to exercise judicial power. Expert bodies established by the government are the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations ETNO attached to the Ministry of Labour, the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs RONK attached to the Ministry for Social Affairs and Health and attached to the Ministry of Justice is operating the Advisory Board for Sami Affairs and the Sami Parliament, which is elected by the Sami people from among Sami candidates.

The integral authorities at regional level are employment and economic development centres, state provincial offices and Occupational Safety Inspectorates. In the functions coordinated between the state and the municipalities, the function of the municipalities is to provide basic services for their residents.

2.3. Political parties

In a democratic society, political parties and their subdivisions and sister organisations are essential, which means that from the viewpoint of developing society, statements of party organisations are signals of importance.

The government recognises the importance of Finland's political parties signing in 16 October 1998 and political youth organisations after that during the same autumn the Charter of European Political Parties for a non-racist society. The parties that signed the Charter committed to defend basic human rights and democratic principles and to reject all forms of racial violence, incitement to racial hatred, harassment and any form of racial discrimination. The political parties will refuse to display, publish or to have published, to distribute or to in any way endorse views and positions which stir up or invite, or may reasonably be expected to stir up or invite prejudices, hostility or segregation on the basis of race or ethnic or national origin or religion. The parties also commit in the Charter to deal firmly with any racist sentiments within their own ranks.

Political parties and their member organisations must be encouraged to recruit members also from immigrant and ethnic minority groups, who must correspondingly be encouraged to join political parties. Political parties should also encourage and prepare representatives of ethnic minorities to stand as candidates for political offices and other posts related to society. This will reinforce interaction and development of solidarity in the whole society. Political parties should also encourage their members acting at local level to participate in action that promotes good ethnic relations. Publications of political parties could deal more extensively with issues related to ethnic relations, immigration, refugees, human rights and the increasing diversity of society.

2.4. The social partners

In Finland, both employees and employers are highly organised, and thereby Finland is one of the world's leading nations in this respect. The joint action of the social partners is crucial in preventing discrimination in employment and ethnic harassment targeted at immigrants and ethnic minorities. In the Social Dialogue Summit in Florence on 21 October 1995, Europe's employer and employee organisations adopted the Joint Declaration on the prevention of racial discrimination and xenophobia and promotion of equal treatment at the workplace. All Finland's labour market central organisations signed the Declaration. Labour market organisations are in key position in ensuring that the Declaration and its obligations will be known within their own ranks and at workplaces.

Participation in working life creates social networks, reinforces the feeling of belonging to society, improves active language skills in Finnish or Swedish and prevents the risk of exclusion and displacement. Working age members of ethnic minorities cannot completely become integrated and participate in Finnish society, if they are permanently excluded from working life. Immigrants and members of ethnic minorities starting work must be encouraged to participate in their workplaces in trade union activities, which gives an opportunity to attend to the labour legislation and contact law interests of immigrant and ethnic minority employees. Correspondingly, immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurs should be encouraged to join trade associations or employer organisations.

2.5. Non-governmental organisations

Finland has one of the world's tightest networks of non-governmental organisations. Non-governmental organisations reinforce democracy and a considerable number of them contribute to the functioning of the welfare society. Non-governmental organisations also supervise the interests of their members or the cause or group they represent.

Representatives of immigrants and minorities should be encouraged to join Finnish non-governmental organisations. For instance sport associations and organisations are good meeting places that reinforce interaction between the young and also older people.

2.6. Immigrant and ethnic minority organisations

Non-governmental organisations are fundamental in Finnish society and some of them supervise the interests of their members or the cause or group they represent. The functioning requirements of immigrant and ethnic minority organisations must be ensured in order to productively represent immigrants and minorities, promote their rights and interests and build an interaction relation between Finnish society and their communities. Encouraging ethnic minorities to join Finnish non-governmental organisations is also a precondition of reinforcing interaction and social networks.

2.7. Religious communities

Religion is often used as an instrument in political conflicts over power which may result in refugees and violations of human rights. People may be discriminated against in society and employment also on the basis of religion. Religious communities are of considerable importance in developing good ethnic relations. The number of immigrants representing various religions is continuously increasing in Finland. Because of this, developing and sustaining dialogue between various religious communities and orientations is a precondition of good ethnic relations and functional ethnic diversity.

3. FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITY DISTRIBUTION AND COORDINATION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Development of tolerant and humane attitudes and criticality in individuals and groups depends on various factors. Importance of the stimulants and life values individuals and groups receive from home, school, upbringing, the immediate surroundings, external stimuli and the social networks while growing up is essential. The media is fundamental in conveying information and viewpoints and forming a conception of the surrounding world. Promoting good ethnic relations, preventing ethnic discrimination and racism, and gaining effectiveness require a comprehensive action programme in which areas of emphasis and dependencies can be reassessed and coordinated according to the varying situations. Matters of responsibility and monitoring are of essential importance in promoting good practices and preventing discrimination and racism.

Immigration policy and the public opinion interact so that tolerant attitudes lead to a successful policy and a successful policy leads to more tolerant attitudes. Successful prevention of displacement of citizens and immigrants also promotes the development of enlightened attitudes. The government will, as stated in the programme, confirm the following measures which it aims to implement during this term of office.

3.1. Measures of the government and the ministries

1. **The government** will in 2002 provide Parliament with a report on the measures to promote ethnic equality and prevent ethnic discrimination and racism in the context of providing the report concerning the implementation of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers.
2. **Each branch of the administration** is with regard to its area of authority responsible for and will generally monitor implementation of the principle of non-discrimination.
3. **Each branch of the administration** must adhere to the government decision-in-principle made on 6 February 1997 on measures for promoting tolerance and combating racism and the government decision-in-principle made on 16 October 1997 on immigration and refugee policy programme. The government will monitor that ministries with essential responsibility will implement and launch in their branches of the administration the programme sections and measures confirmed in the decisions-in-principle and this programme. Developing ethnic relations concerns the whole of the administration and requires effective coordination and continuous consolidation. Responsibility for coordinating the measures in this action

programme will be appointed to the Ministry of Labour in co-operation with the Ministry of Education.

4. **The government** has in the above-mentioned decisions-in-principle committed to promoting the recruitment of persons belonging to ethnic minorities to the staff of ministries and their subordinate administration.

Ministries shall evaluate general recruitment and qualification procedures and the potential obstacles in them. With regard to this, ethnic minorities should be offered qualification pathways into these posts.

5. **The government** has as an expert body a permanent working group composed of the ministers responsible and the expert officials assisting them, the ministerial working group for ethnic relations and immigration affairs which processes government measures on prevention of racism and ethnic discrimination that concern several branches of the administration and monitors ministries' immigration policy practices. In the composition of the ministerial working group representation of ministries that are essential in these issues has been taken into account: in addition to the Minister of Labour and the Minister of the Interior, the working group includes the Minister of Education, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Social Affairs and Health. Chairmanship of the ministerial working group alternates between the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of the Interior. The ministerial working group is also responsible for preparation of the decisions and measures which are required in unforeseen situations or conflicts for which preparation has not been possible. The ministerial working group is assisted by and its matters are prepared by an interdepartmental working group whose chairmanship follows the chairmanship of the ministerial working group.
6. **Each ministry** must as they set profit targets for themselves and their subordinate administration make sure that they or their subordinate administration do not have rules, regulations or practices that discriminate ethnic minorities or place them at a disadvantage and that training and public information services in ministries support good practices.
7. **The government** will order a study which will examine the rules, regulations and practices of ministries, their subordinate administration and the Social Insurance Institution and determine whether these include practices that infringe the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities, discriminate against them or place them at a disadvantage. The functions also include examining the service system more extensively from the viewpoint of immigrants. The investigator will also evaluate adherence to the Administrative Procedure Act in the various branches of the administration. Here the investigator will act in co-operation with the interdepartmental working group on reform of administrative procedures legislation. The investigator shall hear representatives of immigrants and ethnic minorities
8. **The Ministry of Labour** will as of 1 September 2001 establish under it the post of Discrimination Ombudsman and will with regard to this submit the necessary government Bills in 2001.
9. **The Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Justice** will evaluate the need for development and reassessment of the legislation concerning discrimination. The Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers will be changed so that the local integration programme will take into account the measures related to combating racism and promoting

good ethnic relations. The legislation needed to reinforce supervision of the prohibition of discrimination will be investigated.

10. **The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior** will evaluate the recommendations given to Finland by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (appendix 2; p. 3-5) which concern processing racist crimes, hardening the sentences given and give directions and recommendations concerning the actions of the police and the prosecutor and the development needed in the legislation concerning discrimination.
11. **The ministries responsible (the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of the Environment)** will in section 7 'Financing the Action Programme', prepare establishing a surveillance system of ethnic discrimination and racism. This will require that the ministries will include in their framework for years between 2001 and 2004 surveillance essential for preventing ethnic discrimination and racism, research into immigrants' conditions and other research projects and statistics as the Management Group for monitoring racism and ethnic discrimination has proposed. In addition to this, resources will be required into 1) organising training, 2) developing public informing, 3) supporting victims of ethnic discrimination and racism and 4) producing statistics and studying immigrants' living conditions periodically. **The Ministry of Justice** will reserve in its framework an appropriation for studying victims of racism.
12. **The ministries** will in their branches of the administration provide ethnic minorities with services and counselling in accordance with the principle of good governance. If the use of interpreting or other language service is required to exercise the rights and equal treatment of minorities, the provider of the service will reserve the resources needed. **The Ministry of Labour** will in co-operation with other authorities responsible ensure the availability and national coverage of resources needed to provide interpretation and other language services of lesser used languages. **The Ministry of Labour** will in co-operation with other authorities responsible reinforce the coverage and availability of interpretation services. Considering the needs of immigrants along with the whole population, authorities must pay special attention to their language use and its intelligibility.
13. **The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health** will launch a project in co-operation with state provincial offices to collect data on the need for child protection within immigrant and other minority children and on functionality of services.

The Ministry will also investigate how the present service system should be developed to enable it to respond to the needs of immigrant women who have become victims of violence.
14. **Ministries'** personnel policy programmes and informing and training plans must include viewpoints related to ethnic diversity, equality and multiculturalism. In addition to this, the importance of ethnic relations when attending to official duties must be emphasised in personnel policy programmes. When recruiting staff to ministries responsible for immigration policy and ethnic relations and their subordinate administration, knowledge of particular cultural characteristics of ethnic groups and the importance of multicultural skills and tolerant attitudes must be emphasised as a selection criterion.
15. **The Ministry of the Interior** will establish and proceed with the practice it launched consisting of police surveillance and compilation of statistics on the manifestation of racist crimes in

Finland and will periodically reassess its rules and regulations concerning intervention in racist crimes. In addition to this, the Ministry of the Interior will in co-operation with the National Police School of Finland encourage administration and representatives of ethnic minorities to apply for police training.

16. **The Ministry of Labour** will develop tripartite co-operation with the social partners in order to prevent ethnic discrimination in employment and to promote ethnic diversity in working life and the employment of immigrants. Either working life development programmes will be supplemented with additional programmes or mainstreaming will be developed, and these will reinforce the labour market status of immigrants and ethnic minorities and promote diversity in the labour market while improving work organisations.

With regard to the previous, various solutions and action options that will encourage employers to hire employees with ethnic minority backgrounds will be investigated as tripartite co-operation.

17. **The Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education** will examine the standard and adequacy of the current immigration education and renew it where necessary. The ministries must reserve in their framework adequate resources for immigrant education to ensure that language and other immigrant education begins at the initial stage of immigration in order to prevent displacement. The measures must cover also immigrants who are not a part of the labour force.

18. **The Ministry of Education** will launch in co-operation with **the Ministry of Labour** a project which will encourage young immigrants to prepare and apply for education leading to a line of work with growing demand for labour. Some examples of these lines of work are education, information technology, the technical field and the service sector. **The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health** will in co-operation with the Ministry of Education ensure that immigrant and minority youths will be guided into studies in health care and social field institutions with preparatory training and other measures necessary. As the average age of the population rises, the need for labour in this field increases. The need for multicultural expertise will become emphasised in this field as a result of the growing number of ethnic minorities needing the services and the increase in the population of senior immigrants.

19. **The Ministry of Education** will ensure that ethnic, multicultural as well as religious and philosophical issues are included in education, training and learning material in all educational levels as of primary school. Teachers are in a key position in education, and thereby constant development and monitoring of teacher training is required. With regard to this, the **Ministry of Education** will supervise that all textbooks and other learning material used in education deal and describe the history and special features of the indigenous people of Finland, the Sami, established ethnic minorities and new immigrant groups and ethnic relations. It will also be ensured that their contents are up to date and in accordance with the emphasis used in promoting enlightened attitudes. In addition to this, the Ministry of Education and its subordinate administration will effectively intervene in ethnic school harassment and other discriminatory behaviour occurring in other training, ensuring that schools take the required action when necessary.

20. **The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education** will prepare a programme on supporting the immigrants and minorities who are in

the weakest position, paying special attention to preventing the often multiple discrimination women encounter.

21. **The Ministry of Education** will develop the support system for immigrant and ethnic minority organisations, culture and publication activities and the coverage of this system. The Ministry of Education will develop incentives and added resources for co-operation between various populations groups and this will guide into co-operation and practices that cross over the boundaries of communities.
22. Co-ordination between the Slot Machine Association (RAY) operating under the **Ministry of Social Affairs and Health** and other support activities will be developed in the guidance of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and in co-operation with the **Ministry of Labour** and **the Ministry of Education**. The support received from the Slot Machine Association may be directed to projects which promote integration, education and access to the labour market of immigrants and ethnic minorities.
23. **The Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education** will establish a national acknowledgement and incentive prize granted annually to a municipality, municipalities or other community that has successfully promoted good ethnic relations and acted in order to combat racism. A proposal for those to be rewarded would be prepared by the government-appointed Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations.
24. **The Ministry of Education** will further develop systems and practices that support the work and creativity of immigrant artists, which will enliven and enrich Finland's art and cultural field.
25. **The Ministry of Education** will extend the share of studying ethnic attitudes in the periodical Youth Barometer, and **the Ministry of Labour** will correspondingly increase attitude research on immigration and ethnic relations in its Working Life Barometer.
26. **The Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education** will launch negotiations with the Finnish Broadcasting Company with the objective of developing and launching programmes in national and regional channels aimed at immigrants and ethnic minorities. They would also develop news and current affairs programmes dealing with ethnic relations targeted at Finns, and generally take into account the plurality of the society in programme supply.
27. **The Ministry of Defence** will develop education given to soldiers so that it will include education and training in multiculturalism and ethnic matters.
28. **The Ministry of the Environment** will in co-operation with municipal and other public authorities develop housing policy so that resident structures in various residential areas becomes variable, thereby preventing beforehand focusing immigrants into certain areas and the potential consequences of this. Also, public authorities and investors must be encouraged to develop and further extend housing production for the common good and to favour new ways of finance, like right of occupancy, to serve also the needs of immigrants and ethnic minorities.
29. **The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry** will ensure that agricultural development programmes and their projects will include small and larger scale entrepreneurship practiced by immigrants.

3.2. The social partners at national level

At national level, there are several social partners in addition to ministerial administration and its subordinate administration. The central organisations of the social partners act and influence through their member organisations at national level both directly and indirectly. The Evangelical Lutheran Church and many other religious communities act also at national level directly and indirectly. Central organisations of non-governmental organisations and their combinations are also national level participants.

Public authority measures can only partially influence ethnic attitudes. Because of this, the forms of mutual co-operation and interaction between public authorities, the social partners, non-governmental organisations, immigrant and ethnic minority organisations, the media and other parties involved must be developed into a stable foundation.

4. REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

The share of immigrants and established ethnic minorities in the population of various regions varies considerably depending on their economic structure, geographical position and cultural background. Immigrants and ethnic minorities provide utilisable added value for the development measures of regions. Immigrants may through participating in economic, cultural, and sporting activities in their part already in the short term reinforce the possibilities of success of regions and provinces.

The essential authorities and other vital participants at regional level are 1) employment and economic development centres, 2) Occupational Safety Inspectorates, 3) state provincial offices and their subordinate regional authority organisations, like the police administration, 4) regional courts, 5) provincial federations, 6) regional and district organisations of the social partners, 7) regional organisations of political parties, 8) regional co-operative bodies of non-governmental organisations, 9) chambers of commerce and business community coalitions, together with 10) the regional media and the media of communications. In addition to these, influencing at regional level there are federations of municipalities and other permanent or temporary co-operation bodies and networks of municipalities and the various parties involved.

The function of regional administration is to plan and coordinate measures at regional and provincial level while promoting co-operation between public authorities and other vital participants. The importance of provincial level is essential, and within its framework resources can be combined and the effectiveness of measures can be reinforced. In provincial measures it is possible to take into account the at places substantial differences between municipalities and to emphasise the positive aspects of the entities they form.

4.1. Regional measures

1. Regional authorities must adhere to and develop the principle of good governance and serve the population and communities of the whole region in an equitable manner while paying special attention to the needs of the ethnic minorities living in the region.
2. Employment and economic development centres will be developed into regional service centres of expertise, counselling and consultation in matters of ethnic equality. Employment and economic development centres will be responsible for communication and co-operation between regional authorities in matters related to ethnic relations and multiculturalism and to the

availability of public services. This requires reinforcement of the staff resources of employment and economic development centres targeted at immigration matters. In cases of certain employment and economic development centres it is a possibility that an expert would be in joint use. The employment offices in the area of an employment and economic development centre could also have joint resources.

Employment and economic development centres support local employment offices in their area which are integral in integration measures, the employment of immigrants and ethnic minorities and providing employment services. Employment and economic development centres also support municipalities in immigration matters. Employment and economic development centres organise at least once a year in co-operation with state provincial offices a conference and training for public authorities and other vital participants of the region. The purpose of the conferences is to support planning and unite the measures of various participants in order to reinforce effectiveness and to prevent ethnic discrimination and racism in the regions.

3. Activities that improve the employment of immigrants and ethnic minorities are apprenticeship training, employment subsidy work, practical training and job seeking training aimed at immigrants where various aspects of job seeking will be examined from the point of view of immigrants. There is also reason to investigate the possibility of launching European Social Fund projects and the prospects of establishing measures like language and vocational training, practical training and employment subsidy work. This will reinforce supporting the employment of immigrants and will offer opportunities to apply the skills acquired in training.
4. The importance of Occupational Safety Inspectorates will become emphasised especially in monitoring discrimination in employment. Also general informing related to labour protection belongs to the duties of labour protection authorities when labour protection is promoted and made known more widely.
5. Employment and economic development centres will together with regional authorities anticipate the regional development of various sectors. In connection with assessing regional population development, the effects of immigration and the need to develop services, attention must be drawn to the needs resulting from the population's ethnic composition. Developing co-operation between the institutions of higher education and research institutes is encouraged. Employment and economic development centres coordinate measures which reinforce the status of immigrants and ethnic minorities in regions' labour markets, commuting areas, training and housing and combine services and resources when necessary. Supported by apprenticeship training and other measures, regional authorities are encouraged to recruit members of immigrant or minority groups to their staff.
6. In order to prevent discrimination in employment and promote the employment of immigrants, employment and economic development centres will develop permanent co-operation between Occupational Safety Inspectorates, municipalities, employment offices, and the social partners of the region. Effective action can be reached only through regular and frequent co-operation between the social partners and the regional organisations of the business community.
7. The measures of the employment and economic development centres will include also counselling and supporting immigrants in the process of starting up an enterprise.
8. Employment and economic development centres are together with state provincial offices responsible for monitoring the government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and

racism at regional level and will periodically prepare follow-up reports for the use of the ministries, regional authorities and municipalities. State provincial offices will monitor the development of services provided for immigrants and ethnic minorities when they in the guidance of the appropriate ministries regionally evaluate the basic services within their area of authority.

9. Police under state provincial offices will require that those city police departments that have ethnic minorities living in their region to prepare inner and outer action programmes to combat racism. Positive and functioning examples of this system already exist.
10. State provincial offices will ensure that fire and rescue services and related organisations will take into account the special information needs of ethnic minorities and invite representatives of these groups to informing sessions, for example at fire stations. In addition to this, ethnic minority youths must be encouraged to join auxiliary fire brigades and other organisations related to rescue services.
11. Regional newspapers, radio and television have at regional level, and also more extensively, an educational role effecting both the public opinion and acceptance of diversity. Due to this, regional authorities must create solid relations with the media and invite it to the events they arrange where questions related to ethnic relations are discussed either as separate issues or in connection with other issues.
12. Regional organisations of political parties and non-governmental organisations must be taken into account in regional measures aiming at promotion of good ethnic relations and in developing co-operation. Organisations and communities involved in regional co-operation will be encouraged to appoint in their regional bodies persons with immigrant or minority backgrounds.

5. LOCAL LEVEL

Municipal democracy is an essential part of Finnish democracy and legal praxis, effecting each resident of a municipality. Municipal policy is for most people the most concrete element of political processes, as municipalities produce the basic services for all inhabitants. Municipal democracy is also a gateway to national and international politics. All citizens of the European Union have a municipal right to vote and stand as candidate for election in the EU Member State they reside in with the same possibilities as the native citizens of the State. In addition to this, foreign citizens can be appointed into municipal bodies. Finland, other Nordic countries and some of the EU States have granted also citizens of third countries the right to vote with certain preconditions. The Amsterdam Treaty, which prohibits all forms of discrimination, also sets demands and duties to the Member States at all levels. This is a great challenge for municipalities and also for political parties and groups involved in municipal policy.

In developing good ethnic relations and preventing ethnic discrimination and racism, municipalities are in a position to influence their residents' everyday life. Therefore, measures of various public authorities should be more effectively combined into an action policy that reinforces effectiveness and results. Municipalities where non-governmental organisations and other communities are active and prepared to develop good ethnic relations have good prospects of developing the municipality into a tolerant unit able to utilise the benefits of multiculturalism. When aiming for this, the

resultiveness of the co-operation between municipalities and other participants can be promoted through good co-operation relations with the local press and media. Preparedness to react to unforeseen situations should be ensured also at local level.

International co-operation is gaining importance in local administration due to projects realised through EU funds and the increase in international dependencies and transparency. As Finland's municipalities are involved in twin city activity, they have the opportunity to discuss ethnic relations especially with other Nordic countries and utilise the experiences of Sweden, Denmark and Norway in dealing with immigration matters at municipal level.

The differences between municipalities are substantial due to their different cultural heritages, economic structures, size and ethnic composition of population. In addition to the capital region, the most internationalised areas are cities with universities and municipalities where economic and urban structures have contacts with international activity and immigration. Therefore the need for measures will vary between municipalities.

Effective national immigration policy and attaining and sustaining good ethnic relations is a continuous process in which the national policy consists of national, regional and local good practices and measures.

The government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and racism includes obligatory statutory duties, for example developing the integration programme into an instrument of planning when promoting good ethnic relations. The programme mainly presents and recommends good local practices and measures through which municipalities can improve their prospects of serving the needs of all inhabitants and ethnic groups while reinforcing their positive interaction. Measures will be included in the action programme of each municipality according to its situation and needs.

The government stresses the importance of supervising the implementation of the measures, policies and preventive measures. The economic benefit and added cultural value to be attained can afterwards be compared to the costs of the constructive measures to be implemented. The government points out that there are municipalities where these measures and practices have already been implemented partly or more extensively. The government also states that there are substantial differences between municipalities. Their ethnic composition and the resulting responsibilities determine their relations to and duties concerning ethnic relations and the measures related to immigration.

5.1. State administration measures at local level

1. The State administration must at local level adhere to the principle of good governance and serve in an equitable manner the local population and communities while paying special attention to the needs of ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities incorporate all ages which effects the way measures should be targeted.
2. Employment offices have the prime function of preparing and implementing the integration programmes of immigrants of working age while swiftly initiating the employment services immigrants need. Preparing employment plans for immigrants with a background of long-term unemployment is a part of employment offices' activities aimed at immigrants. It is therefore crucial to ensure sufficient expertise and resources. Through potential EU projects or measures, immigrant and ethnic minority clients could be offered services that activate their job seeking and improve their chances of employment which improve their integration to Finnish society

and their chances in working life. Employment offices must also inform the authorities responsible for preventing discrimination when they notice ethnic discrimination in employment.

3. Prevention of ethnic discrimination in employment and the pertinent co-operation between public authorities is the responsibility of the Occupational Safety Inspectorate. Occupational Safety Inspectorates can further develop co-operation with employment offices, police, municipality and local social partners as well as with the business community and non-governmental organisations.
4. The local police will develop its preparedness for controlling for example ethnic conflicts and ethnic relations. Also individual municipal safety plans and participation in them can be included in the co-operation with police administration.
5. One of the functions of public authority co-operation at local level is also to encourage co-operation in ethnic issues between non-governmental organisations, immigrant communities, local social partners, business communities, resident communities and house boards. Organisations will also be encouraged to recruit members of ethnic minorities.

5.2. Municipal measures

1. As required by the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, each municipality has a municipal integration programme which defines the framework and prerequisites for integrating immigrants in the municipality. Municipal integration programmes must clearly state also the measures to combat ethnic discrimination and racism or alternatively have a separate action plan to combat ethnic discrimination and racism adopted by the municipal council. At municipal level, combating ethnic discrimination and racism is one of the basic prerequisites of successful integration policy. In addition to new immigrants, the measures also apply to established ethnic minorities as well as naturalised foreigners and their descendants.
2. It will be recommended that each municipality have an authority whose function is to coordinate matters concerning immigration and ethnic relations and to consult and serve all parties in these matters. This authority would be in charge of the supervision and planning and be the authority responsible also in unforeseen situations and conflicts. There could also be an authority in each municipality to whom victims of racism and ethnic discrimination could turn. Small municipalities could join resources for this purpose.
3. It will be recommended that municipalities appoint a joint discussion and interaction forum in which there are representatives of the authorities of various municipal sectors, the local employment office, the police, the social partners, non-governmental organisations, ethnic minorities and religious communities.
4. Municipalities could see to it that their staff policy programmes, staff training plans and public information plans deal with issues concerning ethnic relations, multiculturalism and combating ethnic discrimination and racism. Staff training arranged or acquired by the municipality should deal with racism and ethnic relations through mainstreaming. When recruiting staff to the municipality, the selection criteria should stress knowledge of particular cultural characteristics of ethnic groups and the importance of multicultural skills and tolerant attitudes.

5. It will be recommended that municipalities arrange meeting places, assembly premises and community centres for immigrants and other residents of the municipality where these parties can meet. In addition to this, municipalities will be encouraged to develop interaction between ethnic minorities and other residents with the help of support persons and tutors and good neighbour and other networks.
6. Municipalities will be encouraged to ensure that the authorities responsible for social, health, education, youth, exercise, culture and housing matters are in frequent and permanent co-operation in order to develop good ethnic relations and practices and prevent the ethnic discrimination and racism potentially taking place in the municipality.
7. Municipalities will be encouraged to adopt a set of criteria on the basis of which they will assist and support non-governmental organisations doing multicultural work in the municipality and immigrant and ethnic minority organisations. Municipalities will be encouraged to establish a support system, if they do not already have one, and to appoint appropriations for the use of these systems.
8. It is recommended that in order to promote multiculturalism, municipalities recruit to their permanent staff persons with immigrant or minority backgrounds. Apprenticeship and practical training and training tailored in co-operation with the employment office should be used as active measures. Offering summer jobs to immigrant youths also supports the integration of them and their families in the municipality.
9. Central administrative authorities responsible for housing policy and municipalities are advised to coordinate their housing policy and housing production programmes so that they take into account the needs of immigrants and are able to create multiple resident structures and prevent focusing immigrants one-sidedly into certain areas, which gradually become stigmatised and impede interaction between various ethnic groups in the municipality. In addition to this, they should avoid focusing Finns who are in the risk of exclusion and immigrants in the same residential areas, which according to experiences from abroad increases racism and impedes the development of good ethnic relations.

Municipal housing authorities should organise in co-operation with resident communities and house boards guidance and informing with regard to living in and taking care of the residences. Also, immigrants should be encouraged to participate in the various resident activities.

10. There are good and encouraging examples of open colleges and worker's institutes organising training and events to promote knowledge of cultures and reinforce interaction between ethnic groups. Open colleges and worker's institutes may also offer ethnic minorities the opportunity to participate in adult training. There are good and encouraging examples of this also, and therefore developing and utilising co-operation will be recommended to municipalities.
11. Educational authorities are to ensure that interaction between schools and the parents of ethnic minority pupils is functional and regular. Municipalities must also pay attention in accordance with the new educational legislation to the status of immigrant and minority pupils and school drop-outs in order to prevent displacement. Schools must monitor and intervene in ethnic school harassment with active measures when necessary.
12. Municipalities will develop mental health and crisis services for immigrants and ethnic minorities of all ages.

13. In the integration process, immigrant families are encouraged to on the one hand preserve their own culture, and on the other hand also to take into account the norms of Finnish society when upbringing children. Municipal day nurseries and pre-schools can be utilised in teaching enlightened attitudes and encountering plurality. Examples show that the values of both Finnish and immigrant and ethnic minority children can in this way be developed so they accept diversity and their interaction skills develop and are preserved to adult age. Municipal educational advice centres and family guidance centres will evolve to possess tolerant attitudes and other skills needed to serve immigrant children and youths in an equitable manner irrespective of their cultural background.
14. Libraries of municipalities have an important function in serving ethnic minorities of all ages. The computer and Internet services libraries provide are a good instrument in integrating immigrants and in developing ethnic relations in general.
15. Municipalities can develop co-operation with local newspapers as they have a substantial role in informing and influencing attitudes. Local newspapers may also offer space for writers belonging to immigrant and ethnic minority groups. Municipalities will be encouraged to take into account in their public information services the needs of immigrants and inform all the inhabitants of the municipality especially when the municipality receives quota refugees or persons who have received a residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

5.3. Joint local measures

1. Due to religious and philosophical issues and to prevent potential disagreements and conflicts, co-operation should be reinforced and permanent forms of co-operation established between municipalities and the non-governmental organisations, congregations and religious communities effecting in the municipalities as well as representatives of ethnic minorities.
2. It will be recommended that political parties will encourage party organisations effecting in municipal policy to include members of ethnic minorities in their activities and to appoint them as candidates in municipal elections and to elect their representatives into committees and other positions of trust. Political parties will also be encouraged to recruit persons with ethnic backgrounds as election officials in municipal elections.

5.4. Other local measures

Developing and maintaining co-operation between various participants is a part of the continuous development process to enable municipalities to implement good practices in the changing circumstances. It is possible for municipalities to further develop their co-operation with neighbouring municipalities and communities and vital participants effecting outside the municipality. The government stresses the importance of the following measures:

1. In a good municipality, good governance and service culture are developed and sustained and the needs of ethnic minorities are taken into account. It will be recommended that municipalities see to it that their subordinate administration does not have rules or practices that infringe the rights of ethnic minorities or place them at a disadvantage.

2. The functional prospects of especially small municipalities can be reinforced by developing co-operation with neighbouring municipalities through joining immigrant services and staff and expert resources in order to reinforce coverage and prevent ethnic discrimination and racism.
3. The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities Municipalities will support municipalities as they implement the government programme at the municipality and the regions.
4. As municipalities are becoming more international, they will have the opportunity to utilise the added value provided by residents with immigrant backgrounds.

6. THE ROLE AND STATUS OF THE MEDIA

The media has through the images it creates a crucial influence on the ethnic relations prevailing in society. Therefore they have great power and responsibility when it comes to ethnic issues. The media may by using generalisations and superficial newscasts and use of headings reinforce in some of the readers and viewers negative or prejudiced attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic minorities and immigration in general. This weakens the prospects of developing good ethnic relations in society. Correspondingly, the media also may convey phenomena and events truthfully from various aspects and in the right proportions. This supports the measures to develop good practices and prevent racism and ethnic discrimination.

Included in the research series on creating a surveillance system of ethnic discrimination and racism, the research report on racism and ethnicity in Finnish newspapers during autumn 1999 (Raittila, Kutilainen: Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Tampere) shows, however, that the greatest problem of the Finnish media in handling ethnic relations is not open racism and hatred of foreigners. Features that stigmatise ethnic minorities, discriminate against them and reinforce potentially racist attitudes often lie under the surface. According to the study, the Finnish media has underlying biases that are reflected in working habits and use of language and may regenerate racism and discrimination that has earlier been absent, even when the journalist believes that he is working to combat racism and discrimination.

Discrimination against ethnic minorities and describing them in a biased way in the media often are not caused by conscious discriminative choices but by habitual working routines, lack of time and other unintentional reasons. In the future, as the status of immigration and ethnic issues becomes highlighted, it will increasingly be reflected in the media. The media will take into account the need for developing expertise in immigration and ethnic relations similarly to earlier phases when it noticed the need for editorial staff specialised in economy, the labour market, sports and culture.

The media has both in the framework of international co-operation and at national level defined itself ethic behaviour models and codes. The Council for Mass Media and the Consumer Ombudsman may intervene in newscasts, contents of published texts and advertisements, if they can be considered to violate good editorial practice and be offensive towards an ethnic group or groups. The Ministry of Justice and judicial authorities may intervene in newscasts and public information if they can be considered to be offensive or incite to hostility towards an ethnic group.

The European Union stresses in its action plan to combat racism the importance of continuous co-operation between public authorities, the media and non-governmental organisations when aiming

to prevent racism and ethnic discrimination in society. It is recommended that the media will develop its ethic codes in a continuous process. Examples from several countries also show that recruiting journalists with an ethnic minority background in editorial and news staffs promotes good ethnic relations and society's ability to comprehend and encounter ethnic diversity. Also when using outside assistance, writers and experts with immigrant or ethnic backgrounds should be taken into account as potential interviewees. An example of good practices are the pages and columns reserved for immigration and minority issues in daily and other newspapers.

Various professional publications, magazines of public authorities and organisations represent a wide and significant forum in which some are publishing more and more material on ethnic relations, the increasing diversity of society and issues related to immigration.

Yellow journalism, local radio and the Internet broadcast and distribute news and programmes that are openly racist and insulting towards entire ethnic groups. The printing products, recordings and national and international material they distribute through the Internet reinforce racist subcultures. Preventing this activity requires monitoring and also authority intervention that leads to legal consequences. In addition to national measures, international co-operation is needed to prevent the worldwide use of the Internet to racist purposes.

- **The Ministry of Education** will develop education in co-operation with communications theory and mass media institutions and other parties organising journalist and communications education for example so that it will always include ethnic relations and the history and status of the immigrants living in the country.
- **The Ministry of Education** will launch in co-operation with other Ministries responsible an investigation in order to prepare a proposal on national measures to monitor and prevent the distribution of racist material in the electric media.
- **The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour** will investigate the possibilities and suitable ways of supporting financially establishing traineeship and apprenticeship training for reporters and reporter trainees who belong to ethnic minorities.

7. FINANCING THE ACTION PROGRAMME

Most measures in the government programme to combat ethnic discrimination and racism do not require separate finance as they can be implemented within the framework of the current appropriations allocated for this work. Some measures can be realised through implementing the principles of good governance.

There are sections in the action programme that require separate appropriations in the budget. These measures are as follows.

Section 3.1: Measures of the government

- **subsection 7:** The study to determine whether the rules, regulations and practices of public authorities include practices that infringe the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities, discriminate against them or place them at a disadvantage and to evaluate adherence to the Administrative Procedure Act in the various branches of the administration.

For the purpose of this study, FIM 200,000 will be reserved from the budget of the Ministry of Labour so that the study can be launched in the year 2001.

- subsection 8: The Ministry of Labour will establish under it as of 1 September 2001 the post of **Discrimination Ombudsman**.

The change will be realised in the year 2001 through the expense appropriations of the Ministry of Labour, provided that the budget for the year 2002 includes the additional resources required.

- subsection 11: Ministries responsible (Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Ministry of the Environment) will prepare establishing a surveillance system of ethnic discrimination and racism. This will require that the ministries will include in their framework for years 2000 - 2004 surveillance of racism and ethnic discrimination essential for preventing ethnic discrimination and racism, research projects and statistics as the Management Group for monitoring racism and ethnic discrimination has proposed (Työhallinnin julkaisu 193/8). In addition to this, resources will be required into 1) organising training, 2) developing public informing and 3) supporting victims of ethnic discrimination and racism.

The ministries responsible will reserve a joint annual appropriation of FIM 1,000,000 for the purpose of implementing the research, surveillance and education plans presented in this section.

From the budget sub-item 34.07.21 of the Ministry of Labour (reception of refugees and asylum seekers by the State, estimated appropriation) funds may be used for surveillance of racism and ethnic discrimination and training to combat discrimination. According to the sub-item investigation, there is FIM 400,000 available. A corresponding proposal is included in the budget proposal of the Ministry of Labour for 2001.

Also, an appropriation should be appointed to Statistics Finland for the production of the annual statistics on changes in the employment situation of immigrants and for the periodical immigrants' living conditions study.

The Ministry of Justice will reserve in its framework an appropriation for studies on victims of racism.

- subsection 21: The Ministry of Education will develop the support system and its coverage for immigrant and ethnic minority organisations and culture and publication activities.

Annually there should be an appropriation of FIM 2,500,000 by the state sub-item 29.90.50. (year 2000).

- subsection 22: Coordination between the Slot Machine Association subordinate to **The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health** and other support activities will be developed.

Support of the Slot Machine Association will be granted for activities that promote the integration, education and access to the labour market of immigrants and ethnic minorities.

- **subsection 23:** A national acknowledgement and incentive prize will be established and it will be granted annually to a municipality, municipalities or other community which has successfully promoted good ethnic relations and acted in order to combat racism.

The purpose is to give recognition and encourage work in municipalities or other communities towards utilising ethnic diversity and promoting good practices. At the same time the aim is to find good examples and distribute information about innovative solutions and ideas. Diversity can be seen as the joint equal objective of various ethnic groups, cultural groups and people with various characteristics, abilities and life experiences in developing a society where diversity is seen as richness.

When evaluating plurality, the situations of the municipality or other community will be taken into account so that even small municipalities can participate in an equitable manner. The aim is to grant the prize for the first time in the year 2002. The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) will organise this competition to find the most plural municipality or other community and act as the judging committee.

It is proposed that the prize should be FIM 200,000.

Section 4.1: Regional measures

- **subsection 2: Employment and economic development centres will be developed** into regional service centres of expertise, counselling and consultation in matters of ethnic equality. Employment and economic development centres will be responsible for communication and co-operation between regional authorities in matters related to ethnic relations and multiculturalism as well as the availability of public services.

Employment and economic development centres organise at least once a year in co-operation with state provincial offices a conference and training for the authorities and other vital participants of the region. The purpose of the conferences is to support planning and unite the measures of various participants in order to reinforce effectiveness and prevent ethnic discrimination and racism in the regions.

For this purpose, employment and economic development centres which are situated in an area which has a number of immigrants and ethnic minorities larger than average should have 4-5 man years at their disposal. The added resources would take care of the new regional coordination, informing and monitoring functions of employment and economic development centres. In addition to this, an appropriation should be appointed to employment and economic development centres for the purpose of organising conferences and training.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry should ensure that the above-mentioned employment and economic development centres get the resources referred to above .

Section 5.2: Municipal measures

- **subsection 1:** As required by the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, each municipality has a municipal integration programme which defines the framework and prerequisites for integrating immigrants in the municipality. Municipal integration programmes must clearly state also the measures to combat ethnic discrimination and racism, or alternatively have a separate action plan to combat ethnic discrimination and racism adopted by the municipal council.

The aim is that during the reign, FIM 20,000,000 should be granted in the main division of the Ministry of Labour for national funding of the action programme combating discrimination and for securing implementation and planning of the measures and projects to combat ethnic discrimination and racism included in the integration programmes of municipalities. Government subsidies would be payable on the grounds defined separately by the Ministry of Labour.

The Council of the European Union decided on 27 January 2000 on the establishment of an action plan to combat discrimination (COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION, 2000/750/EC). It is possible through the plan to apply for financing for the projects for combating discrimination. The decision is based on article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. On the basis of the same article, the Council also adopted two Directives last year: the Council Directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, i.e. the racism Directive, and the Directive prohibiting work discrimination, i.e. the work discrimination Directive. The Member States shall pass the laws, regulations and administrative provisions required for the observation of the Directives by the year 2003.

8. MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME

The importance of monitoring the implementation of this extensive and long-term action programme is essential. Through monitoring it will be detected which sections of the programme become implemented and which are experiencing delays. Monitoring provides an overall view of the situation together with information, which are required in the report the government will submit to Parliament, international co-operation and reports and in planning local and regional measures. In this monitoring, the requirements placed by preparation of the report to Parliament in 2002 will be especially taken into account as part of monitoring management by results.

- The government will submit to Parliament in 2002 a report on the measures promoting ethnic equality and combating ethnic discrimination and racism in the context of submitting a report on the implementation of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers.
- In ministerial administration the Ministry of Labour will be responsible for monitoring and reporting to the government.
- Employment and economic development centres will in co-operation with state provincial offices be responsible for local monitoring and reporting to the Ministry of Labour.

- Implementation of the action programme will be monitored in municipalities as part of the integration programme provided by the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers.

APPENDIX 1

DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPTS

The concepts used have a substantial importance because they create images and can either impede grasping phenomena and the connections between them or lead to their understanding. In appendix 2 the legal norms on discrimination are clarified but it is important to notice that the concept 'discrimination' can be used also in other than judicial contexts, for example when investigating the experiences and observations of various individuals and groups. In Finland for example the concept 'ageism' is generally used in connection with discrimination on the grounds of age. In order to ensure mutual understanding, participating in international co-operation also requires adopting the concepts used internationally. Concepts have contents and they describe in one or two words a phenomenon, an adopted set of values and ways to function. 'Race' and 'race discrimination' were key concepts in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the year 1948 and have been since up to the 1980's.

Immigrants or ethnic minorities do not compose a homogenous part of the population in a society. Racism and ethnic discrimination occurs also between various minority groups and also the attitude of a member of an ethnic minority towards the Finnish concepts of justice and democracy can be reserved or negative. Because of this, immigrant and ethnic minority representatives and organisations are needed in implementing practices that promote good ethnic relations.

Ethnic discrimination

The phenomenon where a person is the target of discriminative attitudes on the basis of the race or ethnic origin he or she represents is called ethnic discrimination. The various forms of ethnic discrimination may manifest themselves as discrimination in employment, housing, education and private and public services. The rules, regulations or their implementation instructions of state or local authorities may in some cases have features that cause the authority implementing them to either knowingly or unknowingly become guilty of ethnic discrimination or place the client at a disadvantage on the basis of his ethnic origin.

It is the case with many individual persons or groups who discriminate against ethnic minorities that they are ignorant or believe that ethnic discrimination is justified on the basis of employment, housing or other grounds. With some people ethnic discrimination is not far from racism. It is also important to see the difference between ethnic discrimination and displacement. For many people, ethnic discrimination especially in employment leads into displacement and exclusion.

Racism

Racism is an ideology in which it is believed that persons or groups who represent a certain race, ethnic origin, religion or philosophy do not have equal human dignity or the same mental abilities as the ones who discriminates against them and that this justifies hatred of foreigners, even violent behaviour together with isolation, discrimination, displacement and exclusion from society.

Multicultural, multiethnic

Culture is a system of knowledge, beliefs and values through which people process their experiences and observations, operate and make choices. Culture is transferred through communication and learning. Multicultural means equal coexistence of various cultures. Ethnicity is the way a person or a group sees themselves in relation to others. Ethnicity depends on the situation and changes with time. Beside multicultural, concepts multiethnic and multinational are used. Multiethnic stresses that society consists of various ethnic groups, various cultural groups. Multinational stresses that society consists of individuals of various nationalities who can even in legislation be multinational through double citizenship.

APPENDIX 2

LEGISLATION, INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Constitution and the rights and obligations regulated

In Finland, regulations concerning equality were made in 1995 in the renewal of basic rights at the level of the Constitution, and have been included also in the new Constitution which entered into force on 1 March 2000. According to Section 6 of the Constitution of Finland (731/99) all are equal before the law. No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the basis of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or other reason that concerns his or her person. Section 17 of the Constitution mentions especially the right of the Sami and other groups to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Public authorities shall in accordance with Section 22 of the Constitution guarantee the observance of basic rights and liberties and human rights.

Section 6 Paragraph 2 of the Constitution includes the extensive prohibition of discrimination although the concept 'discrimination' is not used. Discrimination can be defined in several ways, and a simplified definition is that discrimination means non-acceptable separation of people on the basis of the differences between them. In the Constitution, the bases of discrimination have been listed mainly according to international treaties and the list is not intended to be exhaustive. Terms 'race' or 'skin colour' have not been listed, as the term 'origin' refers also to ethnic origin.

Section 17 Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of Finland secures the Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Provisions on the right of the Sami to use the Sami language before the authorities are laid down by an Act. The rights of persons using sign language and of persons in need of interpretation or translation aid owing to disability shall be guaranteed by an Act. This provision of the Constitution has also affected legislation on our pre-school education and schools, where the linguistic rights of the minorities have been guaranteed. The Act on the Finnish Broadcasting Company, which prescribes the production of public services, provides an obligation to produce programmes in minority languages as well.

Further legislation

According to Section 11 Paragraph 8 of the **Penal Code**, one who distributes to the public statements or other publications which threaten, slander or insult a national, racial, ethnic or religious or a comparable group shall be sentenced for incitement against a group. Section 11 Paragraph 9 of the Penal Code forbids discrimination in business activity, professional conduct, customer service, official functions and in other public posts on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, skin colour, language, sex, age, family relations, sexual orientation or health or religion, social opinion, political or professional activity or other comparable cause.

Section 47 Paragraph 3 of the Penal Code forbids discrimination in employment. Employer or a representative of an employer who, without a valid, acceptable reason places a job applicant or an employee at a disadvantage on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, skin colour, language, sex, age, family relations, sexual orientation or health or religion, social opinion, political or

professional activity or other comparable reason when advertising a post, choosing an employee or during employment shall be sentenced for discrimination in employment.

According to Section 17 Paragraph 3 of the **Employment Contracts Act** (320/70), employers must treat their employees in an equitable manner so that no one is without reason treated differently from other persons on the basis of origin, religion, age, political or trade union activity or other comparable reason which means that employers have an universal obligation to treat employees in an equitable manner. **Seamen's Act** (423/1978) regulates the prohibition of discrimination in maritime work.

According to Section 11 of the **State Civil Servants Act** (750/94) public authorities must treat civil servants in their service in an equitable manner so that no one is without reason treated differently from others on the basis of origin, nationality, sex, religion, age or political or trade union activity or other comparable reason. Section 2 of the **Act on Employment Relationship Security of Holders of Municipal Offices** (484/96) also includes the prohibition of discrimination.

Act on the Labour Protection Administration (16/93) regulates the duties of the labour protection administration. Each substantive law, like the Employment Contracts Act, states which matters belong under the jurisdiction of labour protection authorities. Occupational Safety Inspectorates offer advice on how to apply the regulations on employment relationships and working conditions, and monitor adherence to them in workplaces. Regulations under monitoring also include the regulations in the Employment Contracts Act concerning discrimination in employment.

Equality between women and men is provided by law in the **Act on Equality between Women and Men** (609/86). The purpose of the Act is to prevent discrimination on the basis of gender and promote equality between women and men and with regard to this, improve the status of women especially in working life. The Equality Ombudsman and the Equality Board are responsible for monitoring the Act on Equality. The **Act on the Equality Ombudsman and the Equality Board** (610/86) states the functions and organisation. The Equality Ombudsman is a special authority whose main function is to monitor the Act on Equality. The Ombudsman also has the statutory duty of promoting the implementation of the aims of the Act on Equality.

Future reforms

Especially due to EU Action Policy, Member States are required to take measures to prevent ethnic discrimination and racism. In addition to this, changes in international functional surroundings require that national politics and policies be developed. The government predicts the following reforms will be required during the years 2001-2003:

1. Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty which entered into force in the beginning of May 1999 grants the European Union specific powers to act in order to prevent discrimination based on sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or conviction, disability, age or sexual orientation. The EU has stated that the prevention of discrimination and racism is one of its largest challenges. Presently Finland does not have systematic surveillance of racist occurrences or discrimination. While it is difficult to estimate the amounts, discrimination based on various grounds does occur in Finland. In addition to organising surveillance, the focus of active measures should be on active prevention.

On the basis of the previously mentioned Article, the European Commission has made the proposals for Directives forbidding discrimination and the Action Programme which supports practical measures to prevent discrimination in the Member States. The proposal for a racism Directive includes regulations which regulate that Member States should establish autonomous bodies to promote equal treatment of people with different ethnic backgrounds. Labour and Social Affairs Council has adopted the Directives on 15 June 2000.

2. An important reformation concerning Europe is the entry into force of the **European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights Protocol No. 12** in June 2000. The Protocol will expand the prohibition of discrimination in Article 14 of the Convention so that it will apply to all forms of discrimination.
3. To reinforce monitoring and preventing **discrimination**, the government will change the present post of Ombudsman for Foreigners into the post of Discrimination Ombudsman attached to the Ministry of Labour as of 1 July 2001. Accordingly, the Discrimination Ombudsman will have the function of monitoring ethnic discrimination. This will require changes in the Aliens Act, the Act on the Labour Protection Administration and the Act on the Ombudsman for Foreigners.

The most important international treaties binding Finland

Several international treaties include norms that concern discrimination, the most important treaties concerning the prohibition of discrimination are as follows:

- ❑ **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** 10th December 1948, Article 2 states that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration irrespective of, for example, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion.
- ❑ **European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** and the protocols connected to it include the prohibition of discrimination (Article 14).
- ❑ **European Social Charter** includes the prohibition of discrimination and several separate equality regulations.
- ❑ **UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** states in Article 26 that all persons are equal before law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law.
- ❑ **UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, Article 2 states that the States Parties undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind.
- ❑ **UN International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination**, Article 2 states that the States Parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races.

- ❑ **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women** (1979) entered into force in Finland in 1986.
- ❑ **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** Article 2 states that the States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention to each child.
- ❑ **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has in several Conventions recognised the principle of equal treatment. In the view of discrimination in employment, the most important ILO treaties are Convention No. 111 concerning discrimination in employment and occupation and Convention No. 100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women.
- ❑ **Council of Europe** has prepared and Finland has ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities which entered into force in 1st February 1998.
- ❑ **Council of Europe** European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages entered into force in 1st March 1998 and has been ratified by Finland.

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination concerns and recommendations concerning Finland

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination heard the representatives of the Finnish government on 1 and 2 August 2000. The Committee had a favourable opinion of Finland's periodic report and also valued the additional information provided. The Committee adopted on 9 August 2000 on the basis of the hearing and Finland's periodical report the following concluding observations.

1. The Committee notes the lack of a uniform terminology on discrimination in different Finnish laws. In light of article 1 of the Convention and in order to better combat acts of racism, the Committee recommends the adoption of an explicit anti-discriminatory legislation.
2. The Committee reiterates its concern at the absence of a law prohibiting organisations which promote and incite racial discrimination and of a provision in the Penal Code declaring any dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred punishable by law. The Committee reminds the State party to give due consideration in this respect to the Committee's General Recommendation VII relating to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention. The Committee also recommends the State party to consider adopting provisions in order to increase the severity of sentences for racially motivated crimes, in particular racial violence.
3. The Committee is concerned that Roma continue to experience discrimination in the fields of housing, education and employment. It also expresses concern about reports that Roma are sometimes denied access and service in public places such as restaurants. The Committee recommends that the State party take additional measures at national and municipal levels to improve the situation of the Roma minority, with a view to preventing social exclusion and discrimination against them.
4. The Committee regrets that the question of land ownership of the Sami has not been resolved yet and that Finland has not acceded to the ILO Convention No.169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal

Peoples in Independent Countries. Furthermore, it expresses its concern about activities authorized by State bodies in Sami reindeer breeding areas, which may threaten Sami culture and their traditional way of life. The Committee urges the State party to pursue its ongoing efforts, together with the Sami people, towards the adequate resolution of the land dispute, giving due consideration in this respect to its General Recommendation XXIII, and requests the State party to provide full information on this issue in the next periodic report.

5. The Committee expresses its concern that in some cases the new accelerated procedure in the revised Aliens' Act would result in the repatriation of an asylum seeker while his or her appeal is still pending. The Committee recommends that the State party take all available measures to guarantee the legal safeguards of asylum seekers.

6. The Committee is concerned about the fact that in respect to racially motivated crimes, the police does not always intervene or its action is not always appropriate and that prosecutors hesitate to initiate criminal proceedings. It also notes that, according to a 1999 study on attitudes of public authorities towards immigrants, police and frontier guards have the most negative attitude. The Committee recommends the continuation and strengthening of training programmes for police and all law enforcement officials and the improvement of communication between officials and immigrants in order to enhance mutual confidence. In cases where police officers are personally involved in racially motivated acts, it recommends that an independent body investigate and invites judges and prosecutors to be more active and firm to prosecute these cases.

7. The Committee notes with concern that immigrants, refugees and minorities, in particular Roma, have higher rates of unemployment, have difficulties in accessing to housing and social services, and have higher rates of school drop-out. The Committee is concerned about the low number of judicial proceedings initiated related to incidents of racial discrimination, including cases of discrimination in employment. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to alleviate the situation of immigrants, refugees and minorities, in particular Roma, at national and municipal levels especially with respect to housing, employment and education.

8. In the light of article 6 of the Convention, the Committee notes that the only way of obtaining reparation or satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of an act of racial discrimination is through penal proceeding. The Committee recommends that the State party consider ensuring alternative measures to penal proceedings in cases of discrimination.

9. The Committee is concerned about the increasing number of racist acts. Also, it notes with concern reports showing that a significant percentage of Finns declare themselves racist or partially racist and are opposed to the practice of Islam by immigrants (refugees). It notes also that media often present immigrants and minorities, in particular Roma, in a negative light. The Committee invites the State party to strengthen measures to promote tolerance and combat prejudices in particular in the field of teaching, education, culture and information. It also recommends the State party to find adequate modalities to make journalists and people working in the media sector more aware of racial discrimination.

10. The Committee further recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to establish the Office of the Discrimination Ombudsman and to provide the necessary human and financial resources to enable the Office of the Discrimination Ombudsman to carry its tasks in an effective way.

11. The Committee further invites the State party to ensure the wide dissemination of the text of the Convention, as well as of the report, and the concluding observations adopted thereon. The accepted individual communications procedure under article 14 of the Convention should be widely publicized throughout Finland for the benefit of the general public.

12. The Committee recommends that the State party's next periodic report, due on 16 August 2001, be an updating report, and that it address the points raised in the present concluding observation.