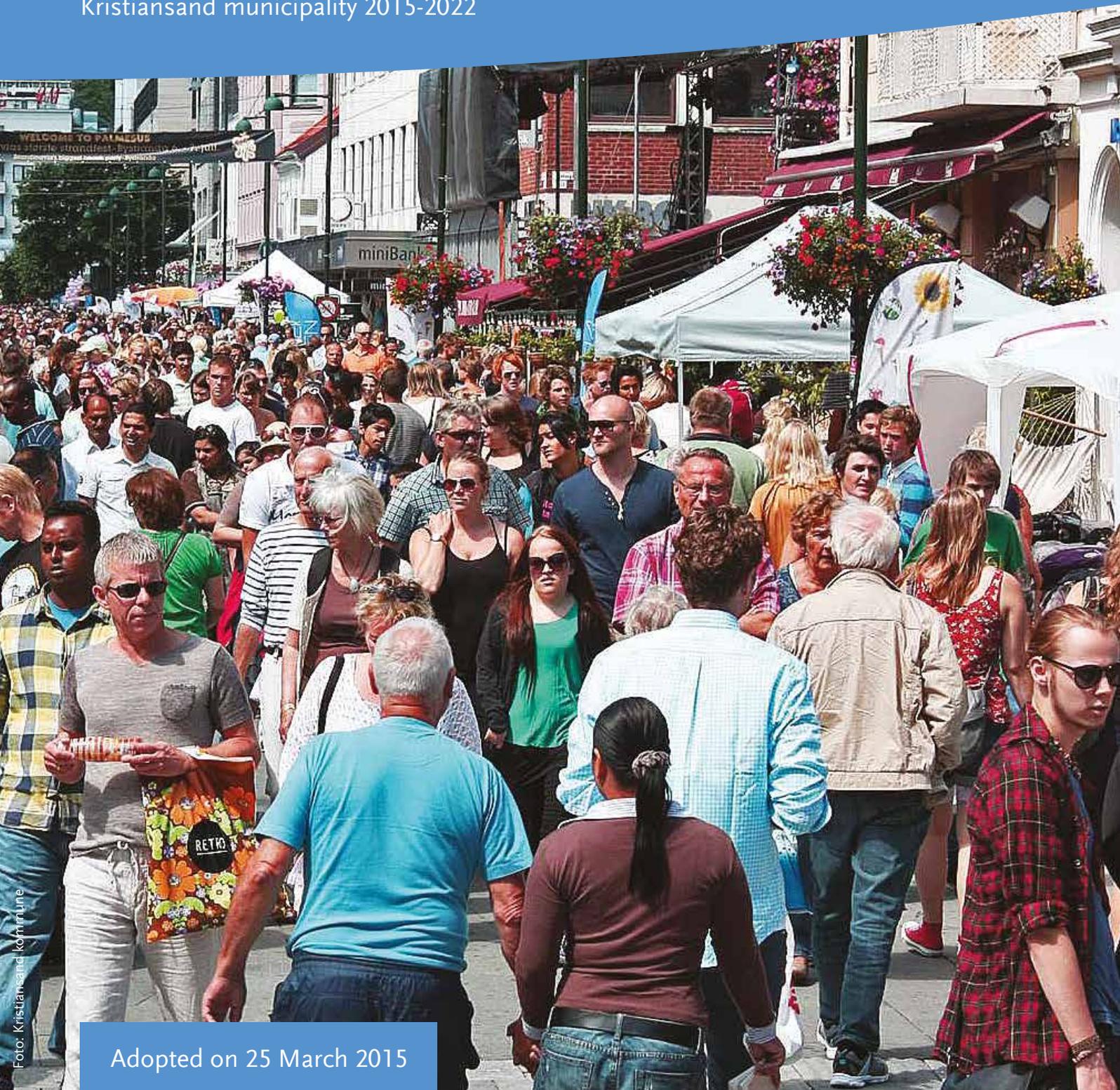




KRISTIANSSAND
KOMMUNE

It's all about people!

Strategy for equality, inclusion and diversity.
Kristiansand municipality 2015-2022



Adopted on 25 March 2015





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It's all about people!

Equality in a broad perspective concerns us all. The same applies to the work of the municipality –all citizens will require the municipality's activities at one point or another during their lives.

Strategy for equality, inclusion and diversity will provide a common direction for how the municipality, in a most efficient and goal-oriented way, can work to increase equality in the exercise of all its tasks and roles, so that the city becomes a good place to live for everyone.





Foto: Anders Martinsen fotografer

Preface

Equality, inclusion and diversity is a condition for our city to be a good city to live in for everyone. All citizens, regardless of gender, ethnic or religious background, functional ability, or sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity, should have the same opportunities to participate in society. They should also have the same access to and quality of services from the municipality regardless of background.

This Strategy document will provide a common direction for how the municipality throughout its work can contribute to people with different backgrounds, resources and needs having equal opportunities. The Strategy will be a tool for making Kristiansand a leading municipality when it comes to equality, inclusion and diversity.

The Strategy was approved unanimously by the City Council on 25 March 2015.

Kristiansand, 25 March 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arvid Grundekjøn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Arvid Grundekjøn
Mayor

Introduction

For Kristiansand municipality, "equality" implies that everyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity has the opportunity for community participation on equal terms. This is important both for benefiting in full from the resources in the community, and with regard to justice.

This document replaces the Strategy document "Equality is profitable and fair", adopted by the Municipal Committee on 29 April 2003, the "Action plan for how we can recruit more immigrants to jobs in Kristiansand municipality" adopted by the City Council on 5 June 1996 and revised in 2000, "Strategy for ethnic equality 2004-2009" and "Action plan for improving quality of life among lesbians, gays and bisexuals", adopted in the Executive Committee on 11 June 2008.

Kristiansand is a city in development, with an increasing diversity among the citizens. The municipality requires all citizens to have the opportunity to contribute to the further development of the city.

Until 2013, the responsibility for promoting equality and preventing discrimination was distributed among different sectors in the municipality, and the strategies and action plans were prepared for each separate grounds of discrimination. In 2013, the Chief Municipal Executive decided that the municipality's work for equality should involve all grounds of discrimination that are regulated by the legislation on discrimination. The equality perspective should be integrated into the municipality's ordinary activities, and a management responsibility. The work should be coordinated by the Technical Director's Urban planning and development Unit with the aid of a cross-sector administrative resource group for equality and diversity. (Decision of the Chief Municipal Executive's

management team, 17 October 2013). In line with this, one saw a need to prepare a new, common Strategy for equality, inclusion and diversity.

The term "equality" implies, in this document and thus for Kristiansand municipality, the grounds of discrimination incorporated in the legislation on discrimination: gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, functional ability, and sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Age, which is mentioned in the Working Environment Act, is part of the employer role. The gender perspective will have a special significance in the Strategy since this applies to everyone, regardless of other background. We moreover assume that combinations of different grounds of discrimination together may influence people's opportunities in life.

The Strategy document is rooted in the municipality's general plan, Municipal Plan 2011-2022, "Strength in opportunities". It has the same timeframe, but will become a rolling plan if this is considered required. The basis of the document is, in addition to the municipality's own governing documents, both national laws and treaties, and international conventions and charters that Norway has committed itself to follow. The Strategy document is also regarded in relation with Regional Plan Agder 2020 and the Regional plan for equality, inclusion and diversity in Agder 2015-2027, the "LIM Plan". The LIM Plan has been prepared pursuant to the Planning and Building Act, and is binding for the municipality.

The Municipal Committee is the municipality's political Equality Committee, cf. the Municipal Committee's Regulations [Reglement for Kommunalutvalget], § 2 b.

How to use the Strategy?

Strategy for equality, inclusion and diversity in Kristiansand municipality provides a common direction for how the municipality, in a most efficient and goal-oriented way, can work to increase equality in the exercise of all its tasks and roles. The objectives of the document will serve as a basis for prioritizing measures in the annual action plan process. As a strategy, it does not specify specific goals. These must appear in the action plan process when measures are prioritized. The Strategy does not stipulate any costs, both because much of the equality work is a matter of attitudes and consciousness that will

not entail special expenses, and because any costs of priority measures will appear in the action plan.

The Strategy document is arranged according to the municipality's roles: Administrator and community developer, service provider, employer and organizer of democratic bodies and volunteering. For each role, the status and challenges that form the basis for the objectives of the Strategy are outlined.

The objectives will form the basis for prioritizing measures in the action plan process.

Equality is fair for the individual, and it is also fundamental to a democratic society that people with different backgrounds participate with their resources.

Kristiansand municipality assumes that equality is a matter of everyone having the same opportunities for community participation regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Citizens meet the municipality as an administrative authority and as a community developer, as a provider of services, as an employer and as an organizer of volunteering.

It is of great importance that the municipality in all these roles meet the inhabitants, users and employees with respect, and as individuals with their unique circumstances, resources and requirements, regardless of the background they have.

Equality mainstreaming

Work on equality, inclusion and diversity in Kristiansand municipality will be a natural part of the activities as a whole. Efforts to promote equality and combat discrimination are part of the sectors', entities' and the individual employee's regular work. The responsibility lies with Line Managers. The professional responsibility lies with the individual Director. The leaders have a responsibility to promote equality both with respect to the professional content of the activities, and with respect to the relationship to the users and employees. This is in harmony with national and international strategies for working with equality, and the met-

hodology is called "equality mainstreaming". For this methodology to function well, there should be an entity that coordinates, is the driving force for and has expertise on equality. Training, instruction and management support must be given in the organization.

In Kristiansand municipality, the Urban planning and development Unit has this responsibility. The Unit manages a cross-sector resource group for equality and diversity that takes care of these functions in the organization.

Kristiansand municipality as an administrator and community developer

Kristiansand has, by and large, the same challenges as other cities when it comes to equality, inclusion and diversity, although some of the challenges appear to be greater in Kristiansand than in the other major cities. In a diverse population, people have different daily routines and different requirements. Reports, plans and decisions may have different consequences for women, men, girls, boys, immigrants, disabled or LGBT-people, among others. (LGBT refers to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.) Equality mainstreaming implies that urban development and planning work should have a broad equality perspective as well.

Equality has much in common with, and is related to, public health and living conditions. To promote good public health, it is recommended to strengthen values that give individuals and groups opportunities for responsibility, participation, solidarity, mastery and control over their own lives and their own situation. These are values central to equality work as well.

Kristiansand has, in 2014, citizens from more than 160 countries, and according to Statistics Norway, approximately 16 % of citizens are immigrants or Norwegian-born to immigrant parents. It is important that this part of the population is even more



involved in contributing to making the city open, diverse and characterized by international orientation.

The immigrant population has, according to Statistics Norway, higher unemployment and lower incomes than ethnic Norwegians. Affiliations with the labour market and income, however, vary with where they come from, the reason for immigration and period of residence in Norway.

Generally, it is women with immigrant background who have the highest unemployment, and it is especially important to focus on this group.

Women generally have lower affiliation than men with working life, and lower affiliation in Kristiansand than in the other major cities. Working life and education choices are characterized by traditional gender roles. Fewer women than men are in paid work, they more often choose occupations with lower wage levels, and women work more part-time than men do. All these factors lead to women having lower incomes than men, and this affects the living conditions.

The booklet "LGBT: Status 2014" from the LGBT Centre confirms better living conditions for lesbians and gays than ten and twenty years ago. Attitudes towards lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender people and other queers are becoming increasingly positive. We nevertheless know that for many, being LGBT still presents challenges. (LGBT refers to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.) Still there are LGBT people who feel they must hide

their identity; living conditions are in several areas poorer on an average, and the suicide numbers are worrisome. LGBT people who are not open often struggle with shame and fear of being revealed. The municipality can contribute to increased openness by clearly signalling that citizens with this background also are wanted in the community, and by counteracting heteronormativity¹ in the activities.

People with a disability are underrepresented in working life and community life. Kristiansand municipality is a pilot municipality on universal design of buildings and outdoor areas. This is important, but not enough. There must be a conscious effort to recruit people with disabilities to gainful employment and organizations, and encourage community participation, so that the community can benefit from the resources they represent.

Prostitution takes place in Kristiansand. The municipality has appointed a multidisciplinary operational team, and participates in metropolitan networks to handle this in the best possible way.

Domestic violence is an important issue with respect to equality and inclusion. Victims may be both users of municipal services, employees/colleagues or residents of the city. The same applies to the assailants. It is important that the municipal organization has expertise in how this may be revealed, handled and prevented.

¹ That heterosexuality is considered normal in society; taking for granted and organizing society as if everyone is heterosexual.

Objectives:

Kristiansand is an open and inclusive city that regards diversity as a resource. This pervades the activities as a whole, and is clearly signalled in documents and profiling.

Kristiansand is a leading municipality as far as equality, inclusion and diversity are concerned. The municipality shares expertise and experience to contribute to promoting equality. This also applies to the cooperation with industry and other participants.

Kristiansand municipality analyses and assesses consequences for women, men, people with disabilities, people with immigrant background or with different sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity when plans and other documents that will affect citizens' daily routines are formulated.

Objectives:

Kristiansand municipality provides services based on the individual's circumstances and requirements.

The services are equally accessible, have equally good quality and give an equally good result regardless of the user's gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity.

Users are treated with respect and feel that they are appreciated for who they are.

Service units have a diverse staff.

Employees and managers have high competence and good reflection when it comes to their own role.

The general rule is that employees have full-time positions.

Services for the individual

Most citizens will need municipal services during their life, such as kindergartens, schools, health services, social services, or senior care. Everyone, regardless of gender, ethnic or religious background, functional ability or sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression, is entitled to an individual assessment and to being met with respect when they require public services.

It may occur that certain individuals or groups unintentionally receive a smaller share or lower quality of services than other groups. Kristiansand municipality has participated in various projects and programs where surveys show that this can happen. The results show that the municipality as a service provider must be very conscious of providing services to the individual, and regard the person's unique situation, resources or requirements independently of background or stereotypes incidentally related to the background. Equal services may often imply unequal treatment. Solid expertise, diversity and continuity among staff is an advantage in order to provide equal services with high quality.

To succeed in a goal-oriented and long-term equality work, the equality perspective must be integrated into municipal services for children and youth. A staff characterized by diversity will provide good role models. An approach in kindergarten, school or recreational activities that helps the individual to become aware of and develop their own strengths and talents will be able to give children and young people greater freedom to choose education and occupation regardless of the expectations of others.

With a continuous immigration from other countries, there will always be users of municipal services who do not speak Norwegian. Good communication is essential to ensure appropriate services. Professional interpretation and translation services will often be required to ensure good communication. We must also take into consideration that many immigrants are not accustomed to dealing with a Norwegian service apparatus.

Users with a disability may struggle with loneliness and a negative self-image, and we find an overrepresentation of mental issues and substance abuse in this group. It is important that the municipality provides services that are adapted to the individual and contribute to the user becoming as self-reliant as possible.

LGBT people (LGBT refers to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people) are also at greater risk of mental and substance-related issues than others. This is mainly due to negative attitudes, or fear of negative attitudes, from the surroundings. LGBT people in ethnic minority groups or in certain religious contexts face challenges with acceptance in their own communities and with finding affiliation in LGBT communities. Heteronormativity and the two-gender model –taking for granted that everyone is heterosexual or defines themselves as the gender they are born with – contributes to making life more complicated for lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people. In the provision of services, it is therefore important to be aware that people have different sexual orientations and family relations.

Kristiansand municipality as an employer

Kristiansand municipality is the region's largest employer. So the way in which the municipality functions as an employer concerns very many people, and gives clear signals to the surroundings.

The municipality must work actively and in a goal-oriented way to attract a diversity of competent applicants, and to benefit from and keep the resources of a diverse working staff. It is a challenge that many workplaces in the municipality do not reflect the background of the population. It is also a challenge, as regards service quality and work environment as well as estimation, that some sectors and workplaces are very homogeneous.

More than two thirds of the employees in the municipality are women, and several of the workplaces have a skewed distribution when it comes to the employees' gender. For instance, approximately 95 % of those working in kindergartens are women (2013). These are trends that have been stable for many years. A more balanced distribution in the municipality's workplaces, when it comes to gender, ethnicity, functional ability as well as age, might have a positive impact on both service quality and work environment, and may provide new impetus to the further development of the organization.

The proportion of employees with ethnic minority backgrounds in the municipality has not been surveyed in recent years, but the objective of reflecting the population's cultural background does not seem to have been reached. It appears that people with ethnic minority backgrounds are underrepresented in executive positions, full-time positions and positions that require higher education.

The proportion of employees with disabilities has not been surveyed. For employers, it is essential to be aware of conscious recruitment of employees with disabilities, to encourage job applicants with disabilities, and to adjust the work situation according to the requirements of each individual employee.

Gender diversity among employees has not been surveyed. It is important to avoid discrimination against LGBT people (LGBT refers to lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people) when employing, and to ensure that everyone safely may be open about their background in the workplace. Research (FAFO 2013) shows that most gays, lesbians and bisexuals have a good life and are satisfied with their workplace. It is not certain how many of these are open about their sexual orientation.

According to the municipality's Annual Report for 2013, well over half of the women in the municipal organization work in less than a full-time position. This proportion has remained stable in recent years. This is a challenge when it comes to wages, living conditions, affiliation with the workplace and opportunities for skills development, and not least when it comes to the quality of services. The proportion of the city's women working part time is, according to Statistics Norway's Equality Index for 2012, higher than in the other major cities and the national average. The same applies to the proportion of women who are not economically active.

The proportion of part-time workers with a minority background or a disability in the municipality has not been surveyed.

Objectives:

Kristiansand municipality has a conscious recruitment in order to achieve a reflection of the population among the employees when it comes to gender, ethnic background and functional ability.

The municipality strives for an as far as possible balanced composition when it comes to gender, ethnicity, age and functional ability among staff at each workplace.

The employees in Kristiansand municipality have the same wage terms, opportunities for promotion and professional development, and equal opportunities for interesting assignments regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion or belief, functional ability and sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

The leaders of the municipality have expertise in managing a diverse staff, and treating each individual employee as a whole person and according to the employee's own circumstances.

In Kristiansand municipality, the general rule is that employees have full-time employment. Part-time employment is an option.

Employees in the municipality have respect for each other and appreciate their colleagues as whole persons. It is safe to be open about one's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

There is zero tolerance of bullying and harassment.

Objectives:

The municipality cooperates with NGOs to encourage diversity at all levels of the organization.

The municipality arranges for the contributions of NGOs to reach a diverse population.

The municipality lays the groundwork for voter turnout from all groups, and broad representation when it comes to gender, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, functional ability and age in elected bodies.

The municipality has zero tolerance of harassment in social media.

Kristiansand municipality uses the media consciously to make groups that are otherwise underrepresented visible.

Kristiansand municipality as an organizer of volunteering and democratic bodies

NGOs, elected bodies and public media are important arenas for community participation and democracy. It is desirable to ensure that everyone's views and experiences are attended to through these channels, and that there are, in practice, equal opportunities for participation. One way of measuring this is to see if participation reflects the community at large.

The municipal organization primarily has the role of organizer as far as these arenas are concerned.

It is the political parties that recruit and nominate representatives to elected bodies. As far as media are concerned, the municipality only has control over its own information activity. The NGOs also function according to their own guidelines.

There is a persistent under-representation of women, ethnic minorities, people with a disability, youth and elderly in elected bodies. In Kristiansand municipality, the proportion of women in the City Council was 39.6 % in 2013. This proportion is the lowest of all the major cities. The proportion with immigrant background or a disability is, cf. Statistics Norway, lower than the proportion in the population. Who participates in discussions in

public media is important for which arguments are asserted and which nuances come to light, as well as for the opportunities to lead a democratic dialogue on issues across different backgrounds. As far as Norwegian newspapers are concerned, women, people with immigrant backgrounds and people with a disability are underrepresented both as sources and as interviewees. A new framework for public media has led to new media habits and debate venues. On the one hand, this gives more people an opportunity to participate in debates, but on the other hand, the threshold for harassment and abuse that frequently concerns the person has become lower. Especially women are subject to this, cf. NOU 2012:15 "Policy for equality", among others.

NGOs represent an invaluable social contribution, carrying out tasks in areas where the public does not suffice. Participation in NGOs may be a good introduction to Norwegian society and Norwegian democracy, and assist in building networks. Kristiansand municipality clearly strives for, and has the need for a close cooperation with NGOs, and a separate Volunteering Statement was adopted by the City Council in 2010.

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ABOUT THE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

The case was addressed by the City Council on 25 March 2015, Case 46/15

Unanimous decision:

- 1 The City Council adopts the Strategy for equality, inclusion and diversity in Kristiansand municipality 2015-2022.
- 2 The City Council requests that the administration considers discussing unemployed immigrant women with approaches to the issues and objectives.

The work with developing the Strategy was organized in a project. The project group consisted of external experts on the different discrimination areas, as well as representatives from the municipal administration and employee organizations.

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