



We are All Different

There are blond ones, overweight ones, physically disabled ones, deaf ones, Roma, the religious, those who have to visit offices with a child in tow, the elderly taking public transport, the foreigners visiting the capital – they are all „different“. In Budapest, there live 970 thousand women, 60 thousand Roma, 85 thousand disabled, 540 thousand elderly, and 468 thousand who follow a faith other than the majority (who are Roman Catholic). Any majority is really a sum of different minorities.

When we travel abroad, we are the ones belonging to a minority. The diversity is just as important for humanity as it is for nature. This diversity is just what makes us valuable. The respect of this, the tolerance, the mutual confidence and the common values are the best guarantees for peace and safety in a society. For

that very reason it is necessary that in the city of Budapest, the basic human rights are guaranteed without fail, together with respect for such rights of others.

Everybody Has the Right to a Life without Discrimination

To stigmatize minorities, discrimination, separation and the reprisal today are not only recognised to cause social tension, but are punishable by law. Our peace, our general well-being improves when the inhabitants having protected characteristics, as well as the guests of Budapest can feel themselves at home, and are free of any fear.

To achieve this, people with different cultural backgrounds, gender, age, health condition, ethnicity, or religion should be able to coexist, and exclusion should be replaced by tolerance and acceptance.

According to the Treaty of Rome, protected human characteristics are those that can lead to discrimination, and can include the citizen's gender, age, religion, and affiliation to ethnic minority, health condition, sexual orientation or any other human characteristics.

Creating Values

When we pay more attention to the disadvantaged, more people can get services that are more suitable to their needs, and thus are better. The number of people who are excluded from society will decrease, their quality of life will improve, and the marginalisation of many could be prevented.

If the talented young, Roma and non-Roma get appropriate assistance to supplement their knowledge brought from home, if they can find plenty of good examples in a supportive environment, then not only they, but all of us can live richer, more valued life.

A Little Attention Only

Ensuring equal opportunity often does not cost, and only requires some appropriate attention. A play corner for children at the customer service, information signs with large letters, and flexible working hours for employees with young children, acknowledgement of good examples, rewarding a thoughtful team of an institution – these are all elements of a good equality policy. These are already suitable to reduce the obstacles to the elderly, those with young children, the hearing- or visually impaired, and the homeless people.

The Municipal Equal Opportunity Program of the Capital

The Municipal Equal Opportunity Program of Budapest – before being tabled at the General Assembly, the supreme decision making body of the city –, was developed in close collaboration with experts, through professional workshops, conferences, and discussions with local governmental and non-governmental organisations. Commissioned by the Municipality, the Budapest Chance Non-profit Ltd. organised the professional survey of the special needs of the groups with protected characteristics, and gathered information on the already existing, valuable equality-promoting activities. At the end of the consultation process involving recognised experts in the equal opportunity field, an answer was formulated for each of a total of about one hundred identified problems of the six special characteristics groups at risk. The material was further developed into a complex, coherent system through professional workshops, consultations, on-line discussions, organised by Budapest Chance. Under

the co-ordination of the Civil Co-ordination Council of the Municipality, 152 metropolitan organisations expressed their opinion on the drafts, providing modifications and complementary recommendations, during 12 sectorial workshops.

The Municipal Equal Opportunity Program of Budapest is internationally recognised as an outstanding model, of which all citizens of Budapest can be proud of. In Hungary, it can become an example to follow. The implementation of the program starts in the summer 2010.

Who We Talk About?

The protection and support of the Municipality is available to anyone, who, due to some special personal characteristic, suffers discriminative treatment. At the same time Budapest – because of their considerable weight as social problems – wishes to provide enhanced protection and support for the following:

- disabled people,
- members of Roma minority,
- women, men, those having a family,
- disadvantaged children and youth,
- older citizens (aged above 45)
- homeless people.

Do Not Walk on Each Other

The aim of this initiative is to offer a commonly accepted partnership minimum instead of hate and exclusion. Hate stinks; paying attention to each other is good, and it enriches all of us. This is relevant in the neighbourhood, on the street, workplace or at school.

Youngsters ought to notice, recognise and avoid discrimination in their own behaviour. The campaign primarily targets the young, through specially tailored programs, websites, and competitive calls for application. Budapest Chance is willing to partner with institutions, citizens, student circles, and employers, who consider it important that our children grow up in an attentive, embracing city environment, and to ensure that they create such a future for themselves.



BUDAPEST – MORE, THAN CHANCE

ABOUT THE MUNICIPAL EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM OF THE CAPITAL



Services without Obstacles

The elderly, the physically disabled, the hearing- or visually impaired, the mothers, the ones with young children – all have to face several obstacles. They often cannot access an educational, cultural or health care institution; have difficulty in the streets or public transport. There can also be info-communication obstacles, too: the information needed is not written, only announced, or, if written, is unreadable, incomprehensible, or confusing.

To ensure equal access to goods and services provided by the community is a basic expectation for a 21st century urban policy. This requires the elimination of obstacles. Access to the municipal public services for all citizens is of major importance for the City of Budapest. Accordingly, the Municipality reviews those institutions that are not yet obstacle-free, and develops a program to eliminate these physical and info-communication obstacles.

So that You Know what to Focus on

This wide problem area is today a basic obstacle for the wider social acceptance of the principle of equal opportunity. The reason for such lack of consciousness which is easiest to handle is lack of knowledge. Beside this, prejudice of different degree is also widespread. When providing its services, the Municipality intends to pay special attention to the disadvantaged, wishing to reduce the rejection of „otherness“. Accordingly, the sensitivity, awareness and consciousness of its employees towards this area are developed through regular, specialised training courses. To realise this, Budapest Chance – involving recognised specialist civil organisations – is working on a sensitizing training package that provides information about the specific needs of different groups, and develops the specialists' communication and conflict management skills. The training courses will be tailored over the next couple of years taking into account the specialities of the area and of the citizen-clients.

BUDAPEST - TÖBB, MINT ESÉLY!

An Accepting Workplace

The prejudice of an employee hinders the chances of gaining permanent employment of a person with protected characteristic, and so the possibility of this person providing a living for herself and her family. Age, origin, health status, or family obligations may create a condition, due to which (despite the prohibition of such) a less sensitive employer rejects a job seeker or dismisses an employee on probation. A more enlightened employer is more accepting. A workplace that accepts and values diversity will soon experience that their employees work better, and demonstrate more loyalty – thus the sensitivity is worth it. An accepting workplace thus contributes to the employment of more job seekers, and to the lasting employment of more employees in the capital. The capital supports the metropolitan institutions and firms with the Municipal Equal Opportunity Program by offering trainings, counselling, publications and complex development programs.

Accountability

The regular review of the Equal Opportunity Program is meant to ensure the decrease of equal opportunity deficits, the monitoring of the interventions and their effects, the coordination of activities of the related fields, and the development of additional interventions. Within the review framework we assess the achievement of milestones, the identification of newly realised or increasingly important equal opportunity problems, we analyse the adequacy of policy measures, and extend or modify them accordingly. By next year, the monitoring system giving feedback on the progress of the Equal Opportunity Program will be finished. Apart from this, the program offers a website, civil forums, programs, and media platforms for population and civil organisations to present and discuss their ideas, doubts, and questions. This is to ensure that the feedback is incorporated into a continuously evolving Municipal Equal Opportunity Program.

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