

The Association of Finnish Municipalities: An impactful partner for local government

The Association's strategy 2020



Change phenomena that have influenced our strategy



- Digitalisation
- Climate change
- Urbanisation and regional differentiation
- Growing inequality
- Democratic transition and new means of influence

OUR VISION:

An impactful partner for local government



A SUCCESSFUL FINLAND MEANS LOCAL ACTION

Impactful advocacy within networks

Impactful advocacy requires solid finances

Impactful advocacy requires new competence

Impactful advocacy means leading the way

Impactful advocacy for diverging local authorities

Impactful advocacy for the sustainability of local authorities

OUR MISSION:
Local authorities lay the foundation for a good life for local residents.
The Association works hard to enable the success of local authorities.

The vision for the local government sector: A successful Finland means local action

The best sustainable solutions to promote wellbeing and vitality emerge according to the principle of subsidiarity and from bottom up action. Sustainability is based on each city's, municipality's, sub-region's and region's own conditions and specific features.

Local authorities have sufficient financial resources and operating frameworks, and a freedom to deliver their functions. Our society understands the value of consideration, development and innovation based on local circumstances.

A successful Finland is a locally global, networked and smart-technology based welfare society where residents can contribute and have a say in local matters that affect them.



Local authorities lay the foundation for a good life for local residents.

The Association works hard to enable the success of local authorities.

The Association's mission

Our values and the ways we work

Staying one step ahead

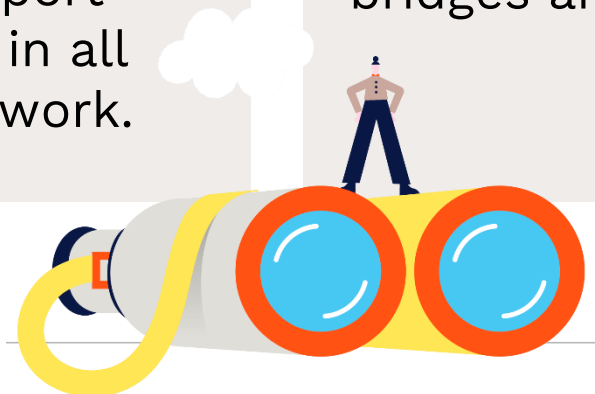
We use foresight together with local authorities to anticipate changes in the operating environment. We produce new kinds of solutions and bold initiatives to support local authorities in all aspects of their work.

Cooperation across boundaries

We build cooperation and open dialogue between the Association and different local authorities and areas of responsibility. We build bridges and networks.

Open operation culture

Openness builds confidence. Transparent information increases competence. This is why we work openly with local authorities and stakeholders. We communicate openly about our work and its results.



An impactful partner for local government

1. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

By sustainability, we mean economically, socially, ecologically and technologically sustainable cities, municipalities and service structures.

2. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY MEANS LEADING THE WAY

As a bold and proactive advocate, the Association raises socially important topics for discussion and leads the way.

3. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY FOR DIVERGING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Association pays greater attention to the growing differences between local authorities and gives voice to diverse groups. This requires a bolder approach to segmentation. We invest efforts in the activities and the facilitation of networks of different types of local authorities (large cities, regional cities and the adjoining municipalities, and small and sparsely populated municipalities.)

4. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY WITHIN NETWORKS

We draw on the competence of our member cities, municipalities, networks and stakeholders. We increasingly work across boundaries in line with our values. We promote networking and support the networks in goal setting.

5. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY REQUIRES NEW COMPETENCE

The Association is at the cutting edge of municipal interest representation, expert knowledge, co-development, network management, and all these combined. An organisation with high employee wellbeing, the Association anticipates changes and has a capacity for renewal.

6. IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY REQUIRES SOLID FINANCES

The Association's finances are in balance, and the Association and its affiliated companies are financially solid.

1. Impactful advocacy for the sustainability of local authorities 1/2

By sustainability, we mean socially, economically, ecologically and technologically sustainable cities, municipalities and service structures.

- **Social sustainability:** The Association will launch a set of actions under the theme of ‘Socially sustainable local government’ with the aim to improve the social sustainability of local authorities by planning and implementing solutions and measures around this theme. We will approach the theme from varying perspectives, such as the promotion of health and wellbeing, multiculturalism, security, accessibility, and the development of participation and democracy.
- **Economic sustainability:** The Association will draw up a programme for sustainable municipal finances introducing concrete measures relating to issues such as maintenance backlog, infrastructure funding and investment capacity, while also examining alternative long-term scenarios for development. The sustainability of municipal finances is also promoted by supporting the preparation and implementation of municipal financial consolidation programmes and service network studies.
- **Ecological sustainability:** The Association seeks to influence the conditions and means for local authorities to build sustainable communities and prepare for and mitigate climate change in its lobbying on the comprehensive reform of the Land Use and Building Act, in transport issues (the transport tax model) and in the support for local climate action and for strategic climate issues management.
- **Technological sustainability:** Support for the digital competences of diverging local authorities through new operating models, networking and projects.
- 8 The Association's tasks and responsibilities are organised and resourced to promote sustainable development (UN Agenda2030).

1. Impactful advocacy for the sustainability of local authorities 2/2

By sustainability, we mean socially, economically, ecologically and technologically sustainable cities, municipalities and service structures.

- We contribute to ensuring that the healthcare and social welfare services reform is prepared with consideration given to divergent cities, municipalities and regions on the one hand, and to the pivotal role of local authorities on the other. The reform should strengthen basic public services and shift the focus onto preventive activities and the integration of information systems.
- We contribute to ensuring that local authorities will have a prominent role in the organisation of employment services in the future. Aspects related to integration and municipal vitality will also be linked to employment issues.
- A sustainable organisation of educational services in the diverging local government sector will be ensured. Education as a Service solutions will be developed, activities across different forms of education will be promoted and the criteria for changing the funding of education will be clarified. The Association plans and carries out lobbying related to the Government's plan to raise the compulsory education age, and the measures involved.
- The Association will launch a set of actions under the theme of 'Local government, markets and vitality', with the aim to improve the conditions and capabilities for local authorities to operate on the market. The themes addressed may include public-private partnership models, innovative procurement and questions related to corporate responsibility.



2. Impactful advocacy means leading the way

As a bold and proactive advocate, the Association raises socially important topics for discussion and leads the way.

- We aim at new strategic openings, with an eye to the near future or further ahead: we proactively launch debates and carry out reviews, projects and forward-looking advocacy work.
- We employ communication to advance the interests of cities and municipalities in society.
- Communication is a task for every employee of the Association.



3. Impactful advocacy for diverging local authorities

The Association pays greater attention to the growing differences between local authorities and gives voice to diverse groups. This requires a bolder approach to segmentation. We invest efforts in the activities and the facilitation of networks of different types of local authorities (large cities, regional cities and the adjoining municipalities, and small and sparsely populated municipalities).

- We use communication to raise the themes that are important to different types of local authorities and to give information on the Association's work around these themes.
- The role of network coordinators is enhanced and supported from the perspective of key account management.
- We address the needs of large cities by collaborating with them to create a new operating model that will provide a firm foundation for lobbying, development and urban studies. The meetings between the senior management of the Association and the large cities will be extended to include the cities' heads of divisions and the Association's unit directors. There will be improvements to meeting agendas and reporting.
- The Association, its partners and the networks of different types of cities and municipalities will compile a consolidated foresight report on the opportunities and challenges that urbanisation and the progressing regional differentiation will present for Finland and the different types of local authorities.



4. Impactful advocacy within networks

We draw on the competence of our member cities and municipalities, networks and stakeholders. We increasingly work across boundaries in line with our values. We promote networking and support the networks in goal setting.

- This new operating model enables the Association to develop its activities across unit boundaries and engage networks and partners more closely with its work.
- Good governance in cities, municipalities and local authority corporations is supported by packaging municipal management services into a new, more impactful suite of services delivered by the Association, FCG, the Keva pensions institution and the KT Local Government Employers.
- We are intensifying cooperation with our affiliated company FCG to bring greater clarity to the suite of services and service paths and to make them better meet the needs of our customers.
- The networks of directors of education and culture, healthcare and social welfare, technical services, and finances, administration and development, and the role of the persons responsible for these networks, will be developed from the perspective of key account management. We will build contract-based cooperation with joint municipal authorities.
- The internationalisation of local authorities is supported by utilising and merging the networks of local authorities and those of the Association.
- ¹² We will develop practices to quickly and easily inform the networks of different types of cities and municipalities about the matters we are currently working on, or which are forthcoming.

5. Impactful advocacy requires new competence

The Association is at the cutting edge of municipal interest representation, expert knowledge, co-development, network management, and all these combined. An organisation with high employee wellbeing, the Association anticipates changes and has a capacity for renewal.

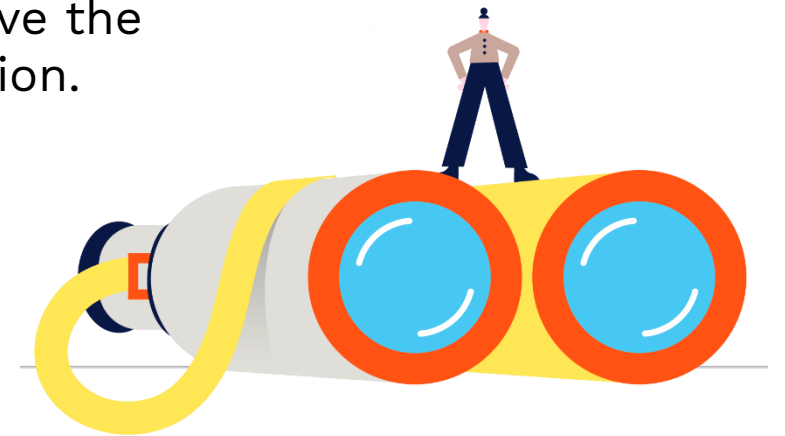
- Competence is a resource that grows with each use and the more it is shared. The Association's new operating model combines the competence of the different units and teams, while also combining expert and general competence.
- We offer high-standard management services to the Association's personnel.
- We develop and introduce a new competence management model with the following sub-areas: the definition of strategic capabilities, expert competence and general competence; the identification of competence and the areas for development; and the acquisition, development and utilisation of competence.
- The improvement of workplace wellbeing, identification of risks, uniform practices and communication.
- We will strengthen the Association's role as a centre of information, develop information products and launch a new analytics function that will become a cornerstone of the Association's work.



6. Impactful advocacy requires solid finances

The Association's finances are in balance, and the Association and its affiliated companies are financially solid.

- Membership fees, investment income, subsidies and sales revenue cover the operating expenses.
- Our financial management is clear and predictable, and we have the necessary tools for management based on economic information.
- We are raising the awareness of risks in the economy.
- The Association pursues active and responsible corporate and ownership policy and steering.
- External funding for areas such as municipal development is ensured.
- We allocate resources effectively and prioritise where necessary.



A woman with short dark hair, wearing a blue turtleneck sweater, is holding up a large Finnish flag. The flag is partially visible, showing the white and green horizontal stripes and the red cross. The woman is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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**KUNTA
LIITTO**

Association
of Finnish
Municipalities