

## SoVe project (Sovittelu verkossa - Eng. Online Mediation)



### ORGANIZATION\*

Finnish Forum for Mediation.

### COUNTRY AND CITY/IES

Finland, nationwide

### FIELD OF WORK

Online restorative mediation for all.

### THE ACTION IS ADDRESSED TO (BENEFICIARIES)

Anyone (including immigrants) in need of mediation or guidance related to social conflicts in the school, neighbourhood, or family.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The aim of the project was to support people in resolving various conflict situations by providing free and confidential low-threshold help online and to increase the visibility of mediation activities. Project staff developed and piloted a form of online service that provided immediate assistance in resolving your own conflict over a phone, chat, or video connection. The main goal of the online service was to advise and guide the handling of conflict situations, and, where appropriate, to mediate conflicts remotely. This type of networking enabled a low-threshold service where the mediator, together with the contact person, could look at the situation and consider an appropriate course of action (conflict) to resolve the situation. The aim was to meet the need for mediation when face-to-face meetings were not possible. Online mediation also made mediation more accessible nationwide as it was not bound to a location. Also, the Corona pandemic has influenced the everyday life in many ways, giving rise to an increase in conflicts.

### MAIN GOALS

- Provide low-threshold mediation services for everyday conflicts.
- To meet the need for mediation when face-to-face meetings are not possible.



### IMPACTS OF THE ACTIVITY

- Meeting needs for mediation when face-to-face meetings were not possible.
- Increasing accessibility to mediation. Online mediation makes mediation more accessible nationwide as it was not bound to a location.
- Increasing impact of pandemic. The Corona pandemic has influenced the everyday life in many ways, giving rise to an increase in conflicts.
- Increasing flexibility. Remote mediation is flexible and responds quickly to these kinds of needs.
- Increasing number of participants. Remote mediation provides the opportunity to lower the threshold for many customers to participate in conciliation activities.
- Increasing safety conditions. In escalating conflict situations, the encounters with the other party could feel safer over remote connections.
- Increasing the flexibility of appointments. Appointment times were more flexible to arrange when there was no time to travel.

### COOPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The project was funded by STEA (Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations) and provided to all people in Finland. The action collaborated with other mediation programmes and guided clients to other services as needed.

### SUSTAINABILITY (ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY)

The funding ended 31.12.2020 but part of the action has continued; the chat is not available anymore and guidance regarding which services or actors to turn to when needing mediation is mostly provided by the telephone service.

### TRANSFERABILITY

The action is nationwide and could be transferred to other countries as well.