

# BRINGING IMMIGRANTS TO THE POLLS?

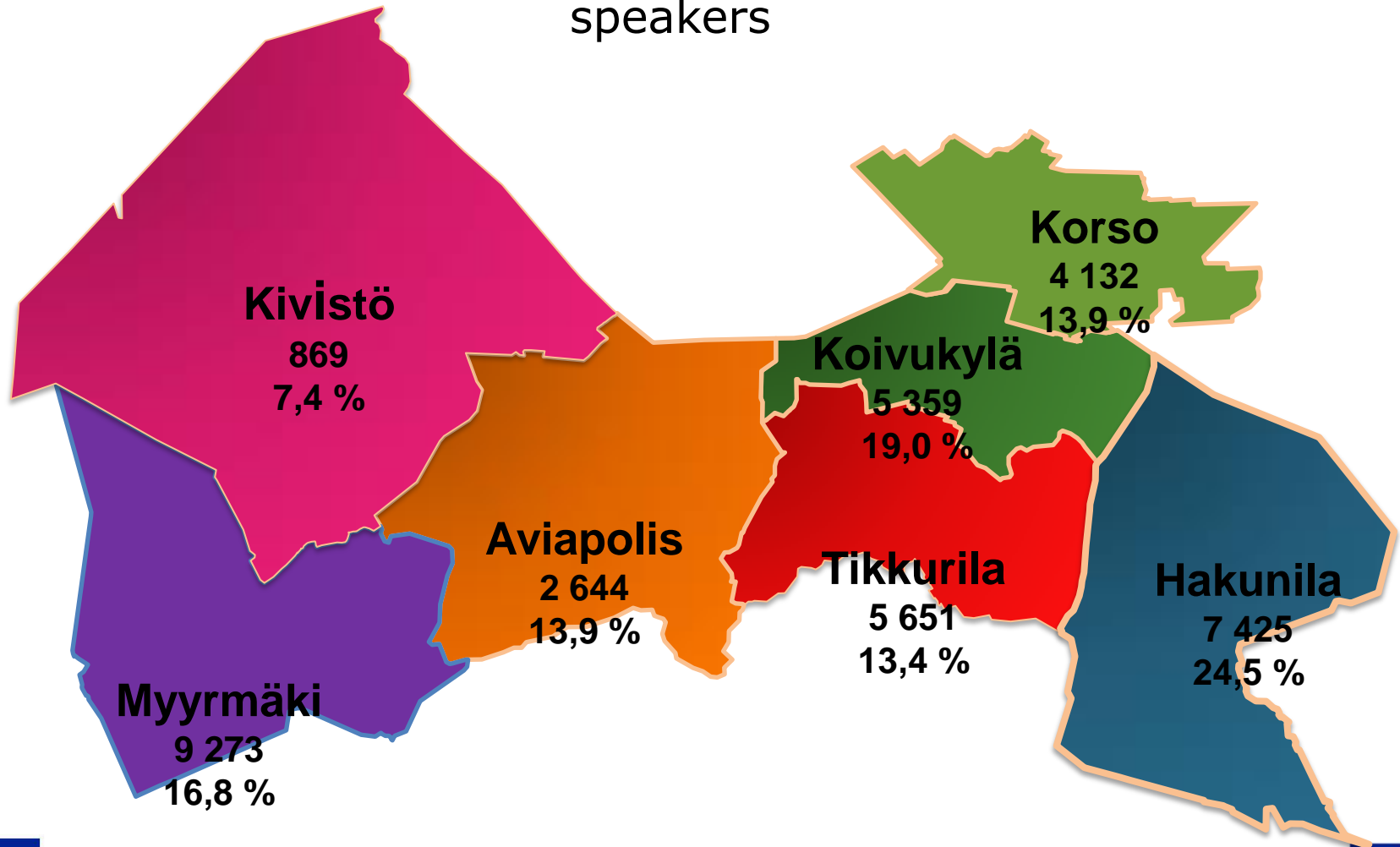
## Immigrants and political participation in the City of Vantaa

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Vantaa is the most multicultural municipality, more than 17% (2017) of the population are not native Finnish/Swedish speakers



Total population **219 341**, non-native Finnish speakers **36 447 (16,6 %)**

Source: Statistics, Finland



Connecting cities  
Building successes



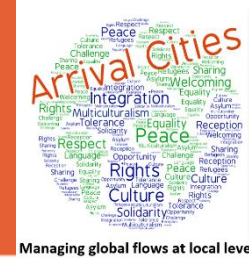
# Most widely spoken languages in Vantaa in 2017

Language	2016/2017
<b>Finnish</b>	<b>177241</b>
Estonian	7757
Russian	7267
<b>Swedish</b>	<b>5631</b>
Somali	2404
Arabic	2046
Albanian	2011
Vietnamese	1372
English	1295
Kurdish	1188
Turkish	888
Chinese	866

**Total  
population:  
219 341**

**Total number  
of foreign  
languages:  
117**

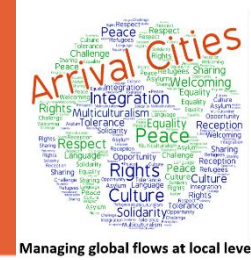
# 1. Setting the context



The most important matters of a city are decided by the city council (kunnanvaltuusto). The members of the city council, i.e. the city councilors, are elected through the city election. The election is held every four years and the number of municipal councilors depends on the population of the municipality.



# 1. Setting the context

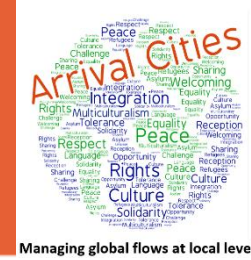


## Who can vote?

You can vote in the city elections if:

1. You are a citizen of Finland, another EU country, Norway or Iceland and turn 18 on the election day, at the latest. In addition, your municipality of residence must be the municipality in question 51 days prior to the election day, at the latest.
2. You are a citizen of any other country and turn 18 on the election day, at the latest. In addition, your municipality of residence must be the municipality in question 51 days prior to the election day, at the latest. You must also have had a municipality of residence in Finland for a continuous period of at least two years.

# 1. Setting the context



## Who can be a candidate?

Candidates can be placed by:

1. parties in the register of political parties
2. persons entitled to vote who have set up a constituency association. A constituency association must have at least 10 members.

A candidate must be a person:

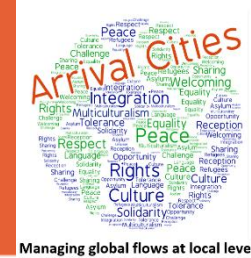
1. who has the right to vote in municipal elections
2. whose municipality of residence is the municipality in question
3. who is not under guardianship.



European Union  
European Regional Development Fund



# 1. Setting the context

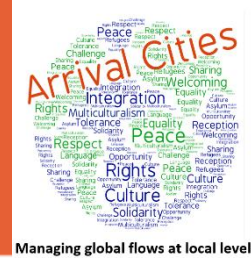


Managing global flows at local level

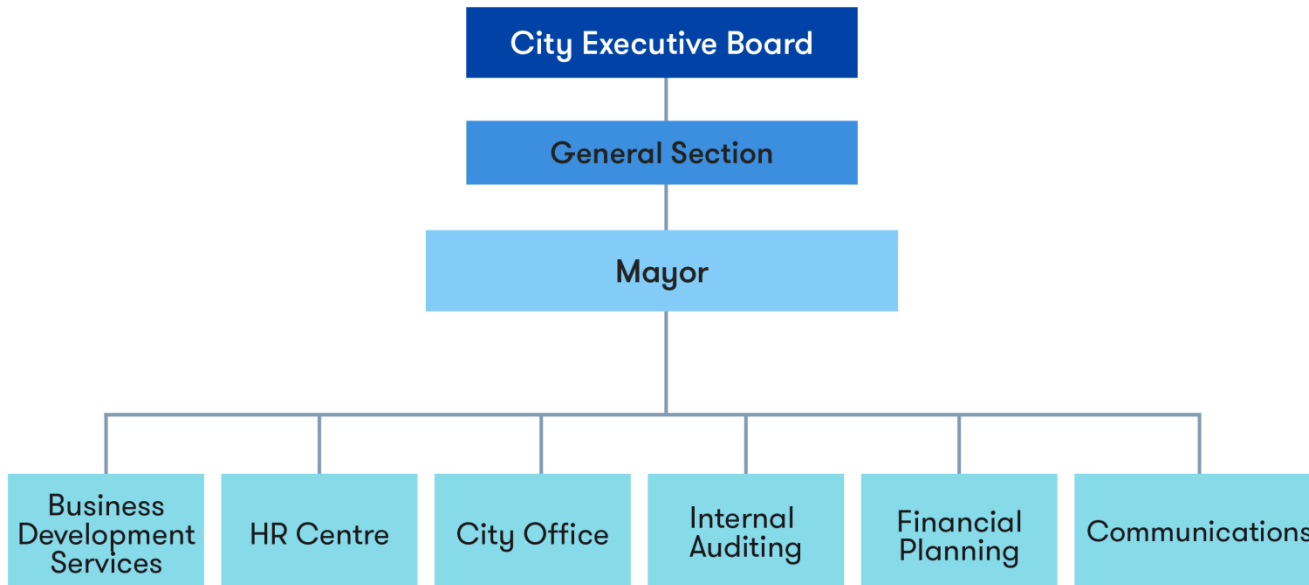
- The city council is responsible for the municipality's operations, whereas the city executive board is responsible for the city's administration and finances.
- The city executive board is also responsible for preparing council decisions, implementing the decisions, and monitoring their legality. The city executive board supervises the municipality's interests, and, unless otherwise stated in the regulations, represents the residents.
- Vantaa City Executive board consists of 13 members (the National Coalition Party/4, the Social Democratic Party/4, The Greens/2, The Finns Party/1, the Left Alliance/1, and the Centre Party/1).



# 1. Setting the context

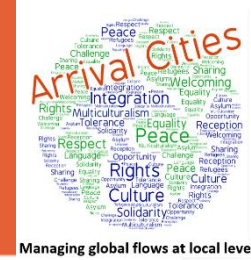


## MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT





# 1. Setting the context

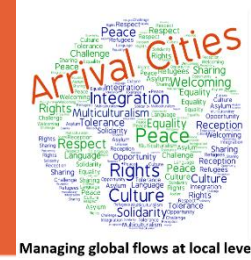


## PATH TO BECOMING A DECISION-MAKER: FAYSAL ABDI

- First candidacy in 2012, elected.
- Second candidacy in 2017, elected.
- Member of the City Executive Board, the first member with an immigrant background.



# 1. Setting the context

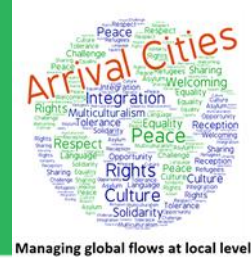


- There is a marginal increase in terms of voting turnout during the 2017 City municipal elections.
- In comparison to the national voting turnout, the City of Vantaa is comparatively lower than other Cities. However, residents with immigrant backgrounds have a considerably higher voting turnout.
- 6 out of 67 City council members are with immigrant backgrounds → 3 males and 3 females





# 3. Challenges/Difficulties



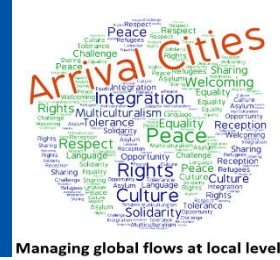
Managing global flows at local level

## Getting the immigrants to vote:

- Can I vote? → Lack of information
- Why vote? → not understanding the implications of not voting
- Who to vote? → Limited contact with candidates or political parties
- Language barrier
- Cultural differences



# 4. Case questions



Considering the demographic structure of the City of Vantaa, there is a significant interest in initiatives and actions that would increase immigrant voting turnout in the coming years. How can we effectively engage immigrants to get out and vote? Are there good practices in your own cities that Vantaa can learn from?

