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DůVĚRA

JAKO PODMÍNKA
SOCIÁLNÍ PRÁCE

15.—16. 5. 2025

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Counteracting disinformation via personal contact

Hisingens method

Social administration Hisingen together with Democray and citizen service

Hatice Tarhan, Jonna Åström, Zlate Musli

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How did it all start?

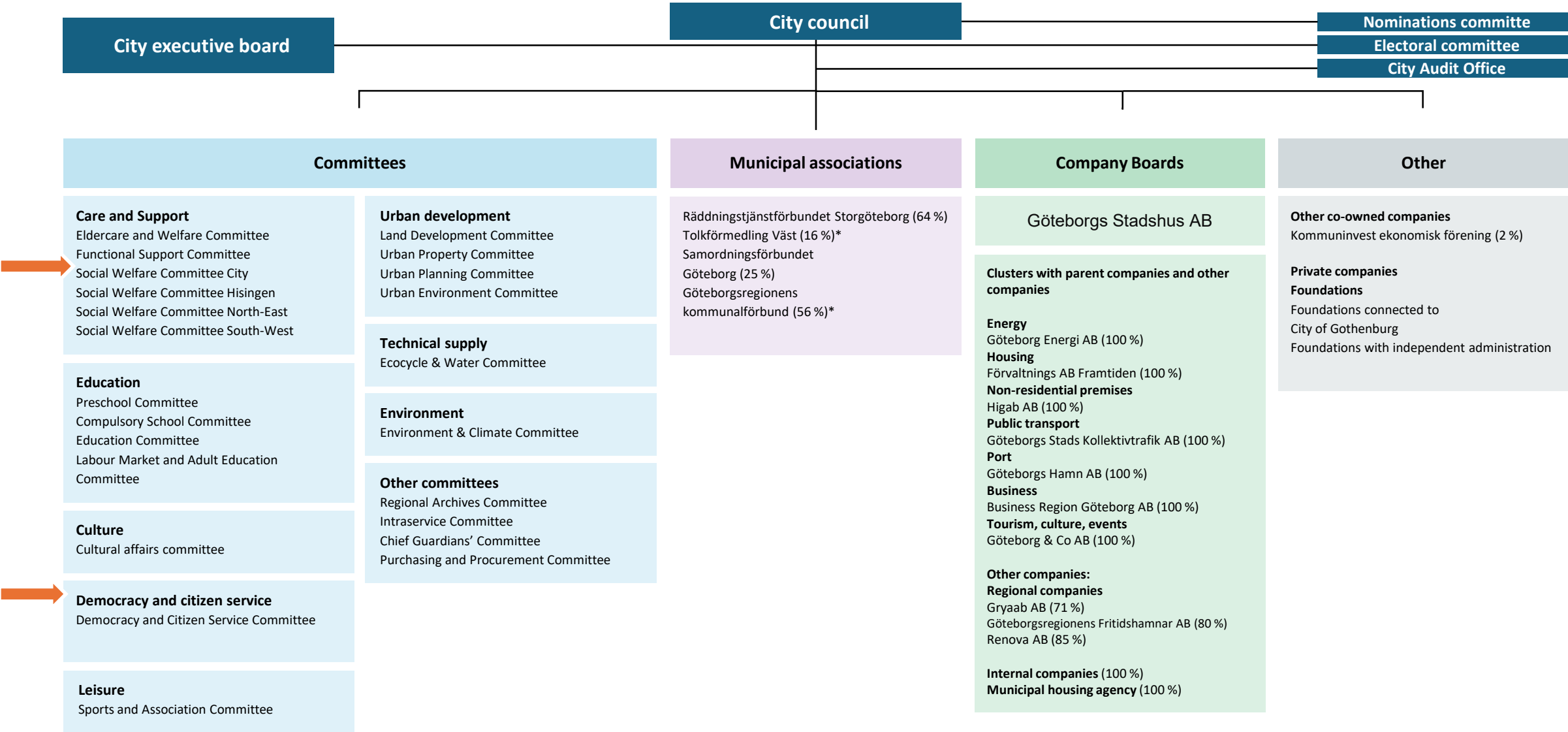


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City of Gothenburg organisation



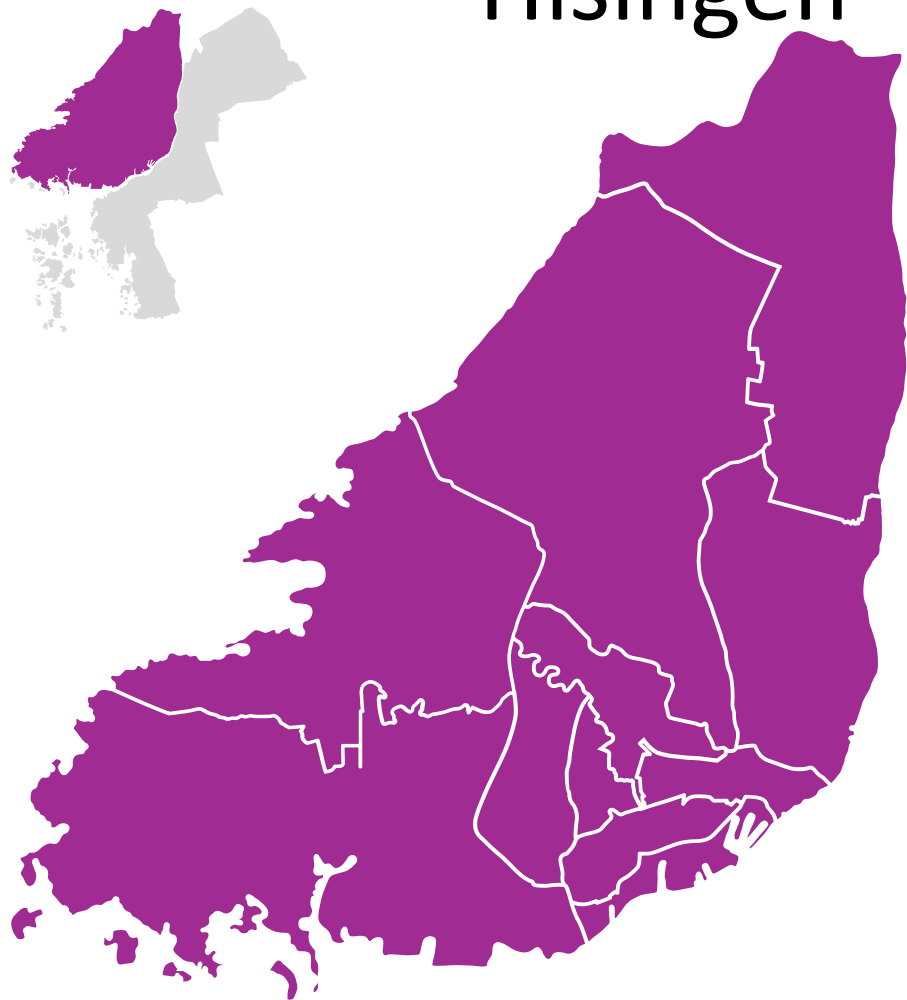


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District administration Hisingen

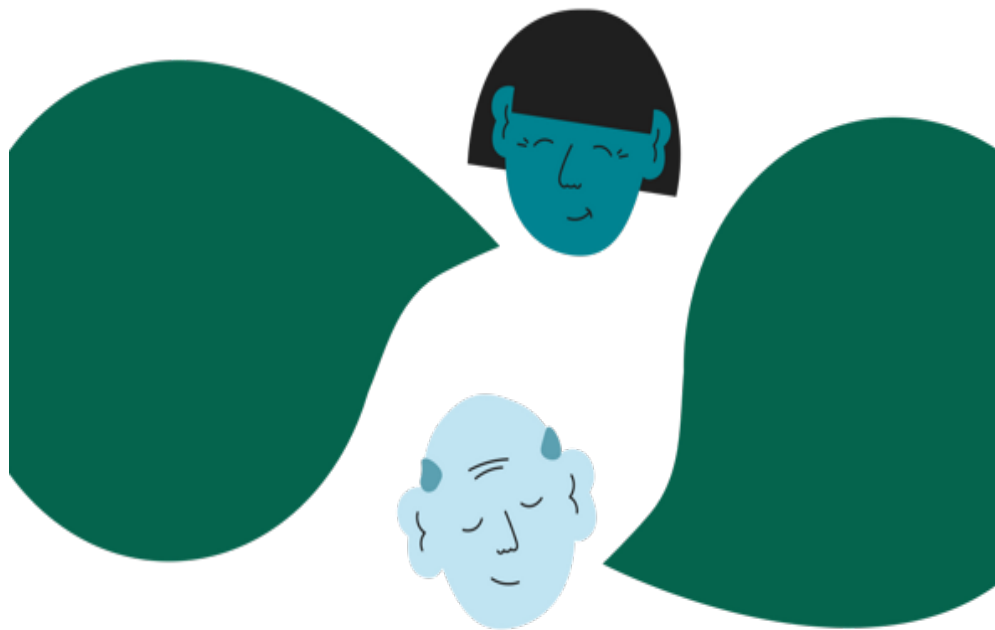


- 173 000 inhabitants (Gothenburg total 609 000)
- Variation of socio-economic conditions.
- Mixture of urban areas, from rural areas to suburban and residential areas.





Initial purpose of the work



- Initiate a dialogue based on the disinformation about social services that has emerged, as well as the disinformation that we heard locally.
- Counter the campaign through **dialogue** and **information**, and plan for future dialogues and collaborations to build trust between the city and its residents.
- Consider the importance of responding to the questions and fears that come from the residents and then adapt the content and communication accordingly.



How is the work organized?

Steering group

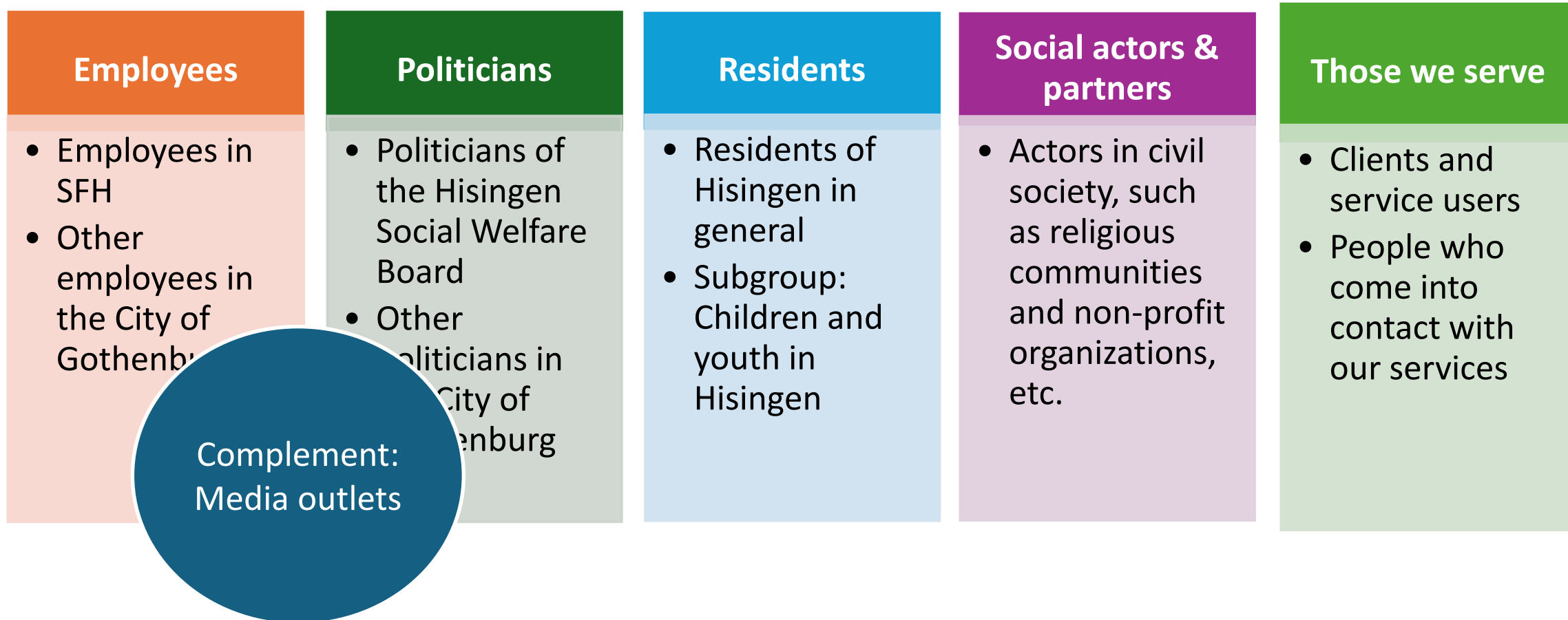
- Director of administration of social welfare Hisingen
- Head of departments from both administrations
- Processmanager from both administrations
- Social worker
- Communicator

Working group

- Strategic to operational



Identified target groups





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The method

Example and experience

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Why dialogues?



- 2 social workers work half time with dialogues.
- All employees at the social services can contribute to increasing trust in the social services.
- Fears regarding forced custody are best addressed on site, face to face and where people feel safe.
- The dialogues contribute to increase knowledge about the social services and more people can get support and help they may need.
- Broad representation of the social services employees in dialogues contributes to a good climate of conversation and competence in several issues.



Examples of appropriate contexts for dialogue



Contact with local associations and religious communities that citizens trust – Meeting in safe and known environments

- Religious communities – Mosque, Hindu temple, Christian Parish
- Center for Adult Education
- Civic orientation efforts / Swedish for Immigrants
- Parent/teacher meetings at local schools and pre-schools
- Students and parents at high schools



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Demand from other professionals who encounter our clients in their operations



When employees in, for example, schools, healthcare, and childcare feel confident in how Social Services operate and trust what we do, the likelihood of submitting a report of concern increases. Moreover, it enhances the reporter's ability to reassure parents during their interaction with Social Services.

Providing information during staff meetings leads to more invitations to present at parent meetings.

Employees in schools, healthcare, and childcare are also parents who may need to have their trust in Social Services strengthened.



What we talk about at dialogues

Information regarding Social Services

- What is Social Services?
- Reports of concern
- Inquiries /assessments
- Different types of support that Social Services offer
- Legislation – Voluntary vs forced
- Statistics

Frequently asked questions/topics

- Personal experiences
- Setting boundaries / guidance
- Forced custody/foster care
- How social services makes assessments
- Critique
- Why more is not done to counteract disinformation



The effects of the dialogues

Comments at the beginning:

- "The first thing I think of when social services call is the angel of death."
- "We are afraid of social services — afraid they'll take our children."
- "Do you automatically take the children when there's a report?"

Feedback at the end of dialogues:

- "Now we know that we can get help and support."
- "We are not afraid anymore."
- "I got help with my son and tell others not to be afraid to get help."
- "Why do you have such a bad reputation when you are doing such a good job?"
- Several people say they are interested in becoming foster parents or contact persons.
- Proportion that gained increased trust in social services is 20 % a little more and 80 % much more trust.

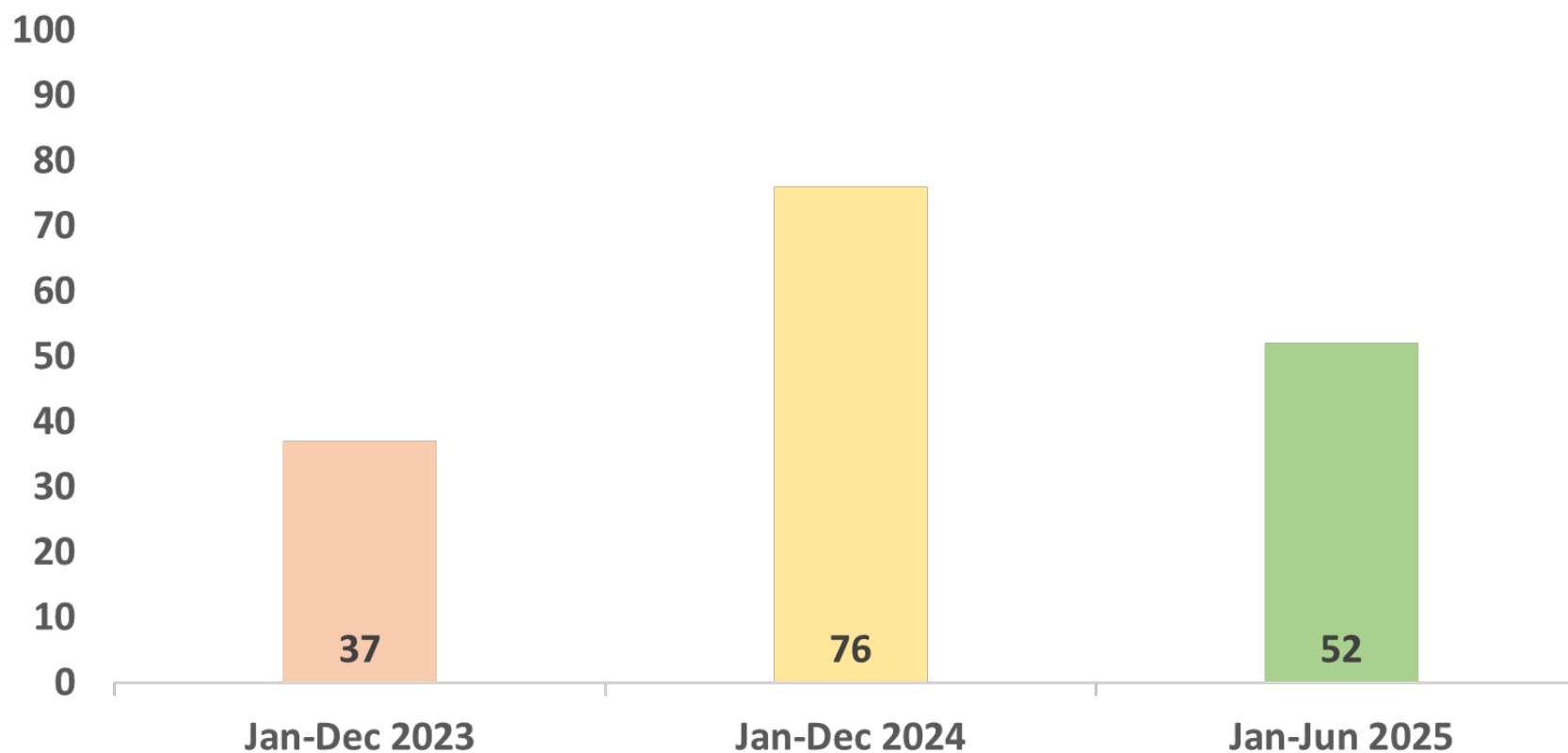


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Statistics on completed dialogues





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Community guides

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Background and purpose



Work outreach and reach more people.

A group of people of different ages, stages of life
and who speak different languages.

Community guides guide residents on important
social issues and how to make their voices heard.

Resident Guides guide the municipality with a
resident perspective.

Increase participation, trust and communication.



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The contribution from Democracy and citizens service committee



- Neutral part
- Sounding board
- Ear to the ground
- Support during meetings
- Informs and counteracts in regular work



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Conclusion

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5 things to remember!

- It's important to involve the right people who can engage in dialogue
- Being open about the fact that it is a sensitive issue and acknowledging the sense of powerlessness in relation to an authority, but shifting the focus to why concerns are reported and the long process leading to it
- We have gone from citizens not wanting contact with social services to receiving requests for dialogues and info meetings.
- Misinformation regarding social services is not an isolated phenomenon but is influenced by other actions/events in the city/country.
- The work against disinformation is a long-term project that needs to continue over time – have patience!



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Thank you!

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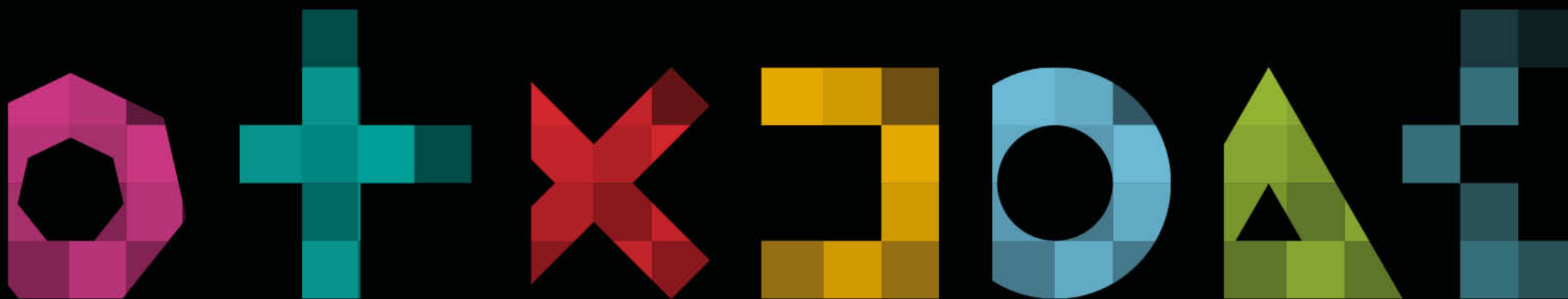
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