

SYL

Students for a brighter future

The National Union of University Students in Finland's Policy Paper

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Introduction

The National Union of University Students in Finland (SYL) works politically for a brighter future for students, Finland, and the world. This policy paper defines the direction for SYL's operations. SYL's values guide the direction. Our goal is to defend education, show the way, and build an international and equal world. This policy paper binds the work of the elected board and the staff of SYL.

We have grouped our most important advocacy questions in three themes: *the university*, *society*, and *the university student*. Each section begins with a description of what we want to achieve through our advocacy work. In addition to the description of the ideal state we want to achieve, we also define concrete objectives for our advocacy work. Achieving these objectives will bring us closer to the ideal.

The policy paper is valid until further notice. The board or member unions may propose changes to the policy paper. Our depiction of the ideal state is intended to be a sustainable and long-term ideal state. The objectives for our advocacy work change with time and are updated when the political climate demands it.

The policy paper strategically guides the advocacy work carried out by the university student movement – which consists of the university student unions and SYL – but it is also a definition of who we are. We students must strengthen our role as builders of the Finland of tomorrow. The university student movement must continuously be prepared to improve in order to develop the world around us. The objective for the student unions and SYL is to be closer to the students and to work for them, so that students can build a brighter future both during their studies and after they graduate.

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Our values

The most important values for SYL are education, leading the way, internationality, and equality. These values form a solid base for our operations. They are what both everyday work and decision-making, as well as our long-term advocacy work, are based on.

SYL

- is a passionate defender of **culture**.
Culture entails having an open mind and the skills to listen, create, learn, and understand. Education and student activism form an integral part of the constantly evolving ideal of civilization.
- is a courageous **leader**.
 - Leading the way entails challenging old and creating new. Students open-mindedly build a better tomorrow.
- widely promotes **internationalisation**.
 - The academic community is a place for border-defying encounters. Genuine internationalisation calls for diversity in society and a non-discriminatory meeting of cultures.
- a defender of **equality**.
 - Equality is the foundation of a strong society with a high level of wellbeing. Everyone must have equal rights and opportunities to fulfil their potential and participate in their community to the best of their abilities, regardless of their background. Thus, SYL is a feminist, anti-racist organisation.
- A builder of a **sustainable** future.
 - Sustainability is by nature a value that affects all aspects of our organisation. SYL sees sustainability as an ecological, social, cultural and economic concept. We strive to fight the climate and biodiversity crises and other environmental problems within our own activities and in the context of the wider societal framework. Social and cultural sustainability enable the humane, free and ethical functioning of individuals and communities now and in the future, as well as the development and preservation of different cultures for future generations. Economic sustainability secures the continuity of our operations and in a broader sense also secures the future of the Finnish welfare state.

Society

The Finnish welfare state

The basis for the Finnish welfare state is a universal social insurance for all citizens, and publicly financed welfare services, which protect and support citizens when their situation in life changes, for example as a consequence of unemployment, having children, falling ill, or any other sudden change. No one's wellbeing or livelihood should be dependent on charity, nor on any individual's gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political opinions, disability, or any other personal characteristic. The services and social transfers within a welfare state must primarily be funded by means of taxation and general insurance contributions.

The taxation system should be socially just and comprehensive, and it should level out income differences. Those who benefit most from higher education financially will participate in financing the welfare state through progressive taxation. The taxation, as well as funding for businesses and energy production must guide towards socially, financially, and environmentally sustainable production and consumption. There must be adequate resources to fight the grey economy and tax evasion. Aggressive tax planning must be limited by legislative means. Finland has to be on the front line of promoting global responsibility and development cooperation. Finland's funding for development cooperation must be increased to 0.7% of the gross domestic product. And other expenses which will artificially increase the budget for development cooperation. Funds should be allocated so that also non-governmental organisations can use them. Education should be a central theme in the development policy programs. Finland must reach the UN's sustainable development goals, which are outlined in Agenda 2030.

Society must be free from all discrimination and it must promote equality. There is no place for racism or inequality in our society and we must actively take measures against such when we see it. By acknowledging the norms and the structures that affect how people act, we can build an equal society. People must have equal opportunities to fulfil themselves regardless of ethnic, socioeconomic, or personal background, beliefs, physical or mental ability, gender, or sexual orientation.

Internationality and diversity are cherished as central elements of the Finnish welfare state. Finland cannot afford not to welcome international professionals, but must instead make it easier for them to settle in Finland.

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Finland has to be active in the European Union. European values, such as free mobility and the principle of a constitutional state, are central to our identity. The European Union must assume its responsibility as the number of asylum seekers increases, and invest in the development of an effective system of reception and integration across the European Union. The European Union has to be a pioneer in international climate policy. Finland actively influences the social and education policy of the European Union. The jurisdictions for these themes should primarily lie with the member states in accordance with the subsidiarity principle. The EU institutions play an important role in furthering education as a fundamental right and as a public good. SYL's EU advocacy work is carried out both independently as well as in collaboration with the European Students' Union (ESU) and other stakeholders.

The safety nets of the welfare state

Intergenerational equity must be at the centre of societal policy: the justification for our welfare state is that every generation can trust that the insurances of the welfare state will protect them from risks. The level or extent of insurance must not be tied to short-term economical situations. Insuring one generation must not worsen the situation for other generations.

The activity of citizens must be examined from a wider perspective than simply based on whether or not they are carrying out paid work. All activities subservient to society must be valued. The foundation for the social security system should be an individual, gratuitous, simple basic income that enables a life of human dignity. A basic income would make it possible to smoothly combine self-development, studies, work, entrepreneurship, and family life.

In the working life of tomorrow, people must be able to move smoothly between paid work, studies, entrepreneurship, and unemployment. In addition to the need for a basic income, there is an increased need for unemployment insurance. All citizens should have the right to earnings-related unemployment benefits if they fulfil the criteria for time in employment. There should be no link between increases in the earnings-related unemployment benefits and the basic security benefits.

The pension system must ensure a sufficient living. The pensionable age should be tied to the changes in life expectation, but we need measures aimed at the entire work career in order for the effective retirement age to rise and to ensure longer work careers. Retirement

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ages are reviewed field-specifically, taking into consideration the physical and mental burden of the work. At the same time, we must ensure that the pension system remains simple and equal. It must also encourage longer working careers in all fields. It must be possible to study with the benefits received during illness without restrictions on study credits. The pension scheme must treat different generations equally and fairly. Pension contributions must not be increased. The demographic changes cause pressure on the pension system. These must be met in a way that is fair for different generations. A sustainable pension scheme must not be built at the expense of the younger generations.

All parents must have access to parental leave, and it should be distributed as equally as possible between parents. After the family leave reform, the distribution of parental care and leave must be monitored, with equality within families further promoted. Encourage parents to return to working life sooner than presently by improving possibilities to work part time, by decreasing the sizes of groups in day care, and by increasing the number of employees.

Advocacy goals:

- Social security builds on a basic income, which enables a smooth combination of studies, self-development, paid work and entrepreneurship.
- The age for when one starts to earn one's pension has been abolished, and the accumulation of old-age pension begins from one's first job.
- The current subsidy for caring for children at home is equally distributed between parents.
- The cost of parenthood for working life is equally distributed between all employers.

A modern working life

Working life requires continuous learning. A good job is inspiring, meaningful, and flexible. In working life, it is important to, on the one hand, continuously develop one's expertise and, on the other hand, to develop as a colleague and an active citizen. A higher education degree should offer provision for both. A higher education degree should be valued on the labour market.

Pay equality between the sexes is a central gender equality issue in working life. Equal pay is a prerequisite for a fair, high-quality, and productive working life. To reach equality in working life, employers must take all grounds of discrimination into account in all employment and at

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all stages of employment, as well as during internships, for instance. Unpaid internships do not promote justice in working life.

The work career must be considered to begin from one's first employment and not only after graduation. Combining studies and working should be easy. The protection against dismissal must be equally strong for all employees, regardless of their age. Legislative measures should strengthen the position of especially students and others in weak negotiation positions. Also, such employment for which there is no set minimum number of hours should make one eligible for unemployment benefits and the possibility to accept other work if needed.

All students and professions should be treated equally and consistently regarding studying while on unemployment benefits. Studying while on unemployment benefits must be equal and fair for all students and fields of study. The primary benefit for full-time degree studies should be the student financial aid, but when this is not possible, the student must be eligible for unemployment benefits. In the mid-long term, SYL is in favour of such a model for basic income that makes it possible to develop one's knowledge and skills.

There is an undeniable link between work culture and the quality and length of work careers. The culture at work should promote wellbeing at work, work community skills and creativity, and should encourage good leadership. Work must be organised in such a way that both the requirements of employees as well as employers are considered. Both employers and employees must feel they have responsibilities and duties, and they must care for their part for the implementation of working life legislation as well as occupational health and safety. The increasing amount of irregular work must be considered in social and working life legislation. The rigidity of social security must not hinder the opportunity to educate oneself, create something new, and entrepreneurship all through life. The collective agreements must in their turn take into account the needs of those who have atypical work.

The universities must actively support diverse student entrepreneurship, from growth enterprises to social enterprises. Those who wish it must be offered practical tuition in entrepreneurship, and studies must include sufficient time for networking, experimenting, and civil activities. Students have intellectual property rights to the tangible and intangible materials they produce during their studies. Universities must not use their position of power to require students to agree to the transfer of copyright. Students must also be provided with the necessary information and legal protection about the commercial potential of their ideas in the context of corporation collaboration in research leading to an academic thesis.

The everyday life of international students studying in Finland should be made as smooth as possible and obstacles for their employment removed. The guidelines for residence permits

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should make it possible to flexibly move between studies, working life and entrepreneurship. It is in Finland's interest that as many as possible of those international students who have completed a degree in Finland find work here after graduation. All who have completed a degree in Finland have the right to a permanent residence permit to find employment, and it is easier for them to get Finnish citizenship. There must be sufficient opportunities to develop important language skills. Employers should not require more advanced language skills in Finnish or Swedish than the job requires on a general level. International students must, in connection with their studies, receive the necessary skills for networking and working life required on the Finnish labour market as well as opportunities to be introduced to Finnish employers and Finnish job seeking culture. Adequate and paid internships as well as working life visits are an important way for international students to integrate and get to know into Finnish working life.

The work contribution of persons who are fit for part-time work should be appreciated as beneficial for working life and society in the same way as that of people who work full-time. Persons who can only work part-time must be offered work fitting their capacity. The norm of full-time work as the only form of employment must be broadened. Making part-time work possible also supports the goal of extending work careers mid-way. Part-time work as a choice must also be respected.

Advocacy goals:

- Work during studies is considered when net study time is calculated.
- Universities offer high-quality career services to all university students.
- Universities promote students' preparedness for starting businesses by offering a sufficient number of courses.
- Internship objectives are clear to students. Students are paid for, given feedback on and receive guidance all through their internships to support their learning.
- International students who have completed a higher education degree in Finland are automatically offered a permanent residence permit.
- International students are offered enough courses in Finnish or Swedish instruction so that graduates have not only basic language skills but also sufficient skills for working life.
- There is an increased use of anonymous recruitment in order to ensure equal treatment, especially for international students, immigrants, and people of all genders.

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- Work for student organizations or student unions is recognised at all universities as activities that develop learning. Students receive study credits for their work in student organisations.
- The cooperation between universities and employers concerning internships is increased.

A living municipality for students

City and community planning invest in a lively, common and free townscape, maintaining and developing diverse natural and environmental destinations, reducing inequality between city areas as well as investing in comfort. Cities have ambitious goals for coal neutrality, less waste, and globally sustainable consumption. Municipalities invest in culture and education. Students are included in city decision-making and seen as an important population group. Municipalities work closely together with higher education institutions and business life in order to promote the employment of young people.

Public transport, walking and biking are the primary ways of getting around in densely populated areas. Public transport is affordable in all situations of life. It is possible for students to travel by public transport both in the city they study as well as between their place of study and home. Public transport services are available for students everywhere in and the price is affordable. Densely populated municipalities have programmes to promote biking. The programmes further a culture of safe biking e.g. through biking lanes, bike pockets, and city bikes.

Student unions must work to become increasingly effective at the municipal, regional and provincial level. The Finnish social and health services reform must take into account the specific needs of students as users of social and health services. The reforms must focus on bringing about accessible and easy-to-use services that are uniform throughout the country, and which can also be used electronically by everyone. Students are identified as a group of service users, and they participate in the decision-making of wellbeing services counties and the City of Helsinki.

Advocacy goals:

- Students with children must have access to early childhood education and care services that meet their needs, and which are flexible in terms of the service times and number of hours of care required for these students to be able to study. Early childhood education and care must be made more flexible, for example by improving

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opportunities for evening and weekend care and by better recognising the need for care during non-standard hours.

- Student unions will be able to participate in the preparation of decisions in cities and wellbeing services counties.
- There are programmes to increase biking in university cities.
- Adequate and appropriate language skills meeting the needs of the clients must be ensured in municipal services.
- The services provided in the municipalities and wellbeing services counties must ensure adequate proficiency in the country's official languages and in other languages, including by the provision of interpretation services as necessary. The staff's cultural sensitivity must also be improved through training.
- The municipalities offer sufficient instruction in the Latin alphabet and in Finnish or Swedish to enable refugees and immigrants to apply to education.
- Everyone has the right to high-quality and modern library services, regardless of where they live.
- A 50 per cent student discount for using public transport is available for all students in cities and towns with institutes of higher education, regardless of age or place of residence.

A climate friendly and sustainable society

The consequences of human activity on the environment and biodiversity, in other words the environmental and climate crisis, is among the greatest generational policy questions of our time. The suffering, uncertainty and costs that the climate and environmental crisis causes will disproportionately affect young people, future generations and especially people and other species in the weakest position on a global scale. Finland must be a pioneer in the fight against climate change, enforce effective and ambitious climate and environmental policy, and listen to independent researchers and experts. Finland will invest more ambitiously in research and innovation combatting the climate and environmental crisis. Shifting to ecological sustainability and carbon neutrality must be globally just, and this requires quicker and stronger action in highly developed welfare states, such as Finland. Finland must also promote more ambitious climate policies both in international climate and biodiversity negotiations and within the European Union. Change must come in a socially just manner between nations.

Public authorities must take main responsibility for combatting the climate and environmental crisis. We cannot build a sustainable welfare state without necessary political

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decisions. Public decision-making must align with the current International Climate Agreement and seek to limit the global average temperature increase to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. Those in charge of public procurement and tendering must consider the effect the procurements have on the climate and the environment and make ecologically conscious and low-carbon decisions a high priority. Taxation and social support systems make choices that are in accordance with sustainable development more financially worthwhile alternatives for both society and individuals. Unsustainable activities are regulated. The role of public authority is to secure a just transition into a more sustainable welfare state. A growing inequality as a result of societal change poses a particular threat to certain groups, who must be supported during the change.

Combatting the climate and environmental crisis is not limited to political decision-making alone. All of society, meaning individuals, the private sector, the public sector, and the third sector, must in all of their actions commit to solving the climate and environmental crisis. Ensuring that this happens is the role of public authority. Our society needs to make a principled shift towards more sustainable production, global responsibility, and circular economy, away from overconsumption and an unsustainable use of natural resources. The education system as a whole, from early childhood education to higher education, offers the tools to comprehend and solve the causes and effects of the climate and environmental crisis, and the ability to take action for the sake of a more sustainable future. Future working life must also be able to respond to challenges posed by the climate crisis in an all-encompassing manner. Preventing climate and environmental crisis will be a cross-cutting part of society and its functions, and hence all industries must look for cross-cutting ways to prevent it.

SYL boldly combats the climate and environmental crisis, both by developing its own activities in a more sustainable and carbon neutral direction and by demanding necessary actions from society and universities. Universities engage and listen to student unions in the internal sustainability and responsibility work of the universities. The university student movement ensures that the voice of the young generation and students is heard when decisions are made concerning the climate and environmental crisis, bears global responsibility and does its part to build a more sustainable world for future generations.

Advocacy goals:

- The role of university research in combatting the climate and environmental crisis is strengthened. Future RDI investments must heavily emphasise the theme of climate and environment.

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- Emission offsets are the last option to attain carbon neutrality. The offsets are based on scientific knowledge and research.
- Finland is carbon neutral by 2035 at the latest and strives for carbon negativity. Carbon sinks and carbon stocks are increased.
- The loss of nature in Finland must be halted, and unspoiled and endangered ecosystems, such as old-growth forests, need to be protected and restored. The planning of land and water use obliges users to compensate for the harm they cause to biodiversity.
- Society transitions to completely sustainably and responsibly produced, fossil free or renewable energy sources. They are also made the most economically viable alternatives for consumers, households and enterprises, and technological developments and investments in them are supported.
- The long-term goal is to go over entirely to renewable energy sources. Nuclear power is part of the transition to more sustainable energy production, and its role as a part of decentralised energy production is vital.
- Using peat, oil, coal, or other fossil energy sources for energy production is prohibited.
- Society's tax and subsidy systems must be changed quickly so that they strongly steer to reduce emissions and take care of the environment.
- Carbon neutrality is promoted in regard to national transport. Public transport is accessible all around Finland. The special needs of student cities and students are taken into account. The railway network is improved upon and modes of transport using fossil-free or another form of clean energy must be the primary modes of transport within Finland.
- Flight is taxed in a manner that decreases the effects that flying has on climate as effectively as possible. Finland will promote a harmonised flight tax also at EU level.
- Business subsidies that are harmful to the environment must be given up. The condition for receiving subsidies is promoting a more sustainable future and responsibility.
- Society enables a sustainable food system that steers primarily towards eating vegan food and reducing food waste in delivery chains and consumption.
- Consumer products must include a label on their effects on the climate and the environment in order make sustainable consumption easier.
- Consumer products are taxed in a manner that makes it financially viable for consumers to choose the more environmentally friendly and sustainable alternative. Regulation and taxation of production, maintenance and repair services supports prolonging the life and reducing the lifecycle emissions of products.



SUOMEN YLIOPPILASKUNTIEN LIITTO
NATIONAL UNION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN FINLAND
FINLANDS STUDENTKÅRERS FÖRBUND

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- **The International Criminal Court (ICC) must criminalise the destruction of natural resources.**

The university

The Finnish cultural university

Universities are autonomous societal institutions with the mission of promoting free research as well as providing academic and artistic education. They offer teaching based on research and foster students to be active members of humankind. Universities are integrated parts of society. Research and teaching are free from ideological, political, religious, or financial power. The objective of the universities, science, the arts, and independent research is to develop humankind. It is important that the universities and the academic community engage in an active and critical discussion with the surrounding society. The scientific and arts community in Finland is by nature international and promotes cross-disciplinary societal debate. The university community must carry its global responsibility and promote a sustainable and just world. Universities must commit to ethical investments and not to invest in companies for fossil fuel, the weapons or tobacco industries nor companies with operations on illegally occupied land. Present investments in the above-mentioned are to be withdrawn within a reasonable transition period.

A free and civilized state like Finland must ensure the autonomy of our universities as well as scientific and artistic liberty. The state remains the main funder of universities through basic funding. Universities may not be dependent on private funding with compensation demands. Higher degree education in Finland must be tuition-free for students, regardless of the nationality of the student. A national funding system steers the funding of the universities. The system is predictable, transparent, and it rewards universities for, among other things, quality education and employment, effective research, extensive consideration of questions of sustainability and responsibility, collaboration with other higher education institutions, and internationalisation. Universities carry out their legislated missions based on their own strategies and profiles. University profiling respects university autonomy. Funding models for universities and channels of state research funding equally support different disciplines. The funding system includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators such as student feedback, the weight of which is increased in the funding model.

Finnish science and innovation policy understands that diverse science is needed for quality basic research, and thereby also for applied research and innovations. Higher education and science policy is persevering. University democracy and the prerequisites for it are secured by strengthening the democratic tripartite principle. The possibility for university communities to exert influence is strengthened in university law and through that in the operational

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culture in universities. The academic community, i.e. students, professors and staff, including teaching and research staff and other staff, is represented at all levels of university administration as well as in all phases of decision-making, according to the tripartite principle. University administration is transparent, engaging, and consistent. The principle of transparency applies also to the different bodies of the university. All members of the academic community take part in developing the university. All groups are treated equally and fairly.

University students are members of autonomous student unions. The student unions play an important role at the university and in surrounding society. Being globally responsible is part of the mission of the student union and the student union prepares students for an active, cognizant and critical citizenship. Central operating principles for the university student movement are internationality and participation. This means that international students have the possibility to fully participate in SYL's operations and that best practices for engaging international students in the student unions are spread. It is important to take into account all the diverse backgrounds when discussing international students.

Advocacy goals:

- Students are represented in the university boards at every university as well as in lower levels of the administration.
- International members of the academic community are able to participate in university administration. International members of the student unions are able to participate in all decision-making bodies of the student union.
- The learning outcomes for higher education degrees include implementing global responsibility and the UN's goals for sustainable development in the context of education, in changing the operational models of organisations and in the everyday activities of the individual.
- Finnish universities are carbon neutral by 2030. Carbon neutrality is achieved primarily through emission reduction, and secondarily through emission compensation.
- How the learning outcomes for sustainability and responsibility are met is observed as part of feedback and graduation surveys.
- The documents of publicly funded research, teaching material, and administrative documents are public.
- Research data is made more accessible by promoting open data at the universities, extensive access rights to databases and by opening library services.
- Financing models for universities emphasise indicators for the quality of degrees rather than degree completion time.

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- University leaders are elected adhering to the transparency principle.

The education path and educational equity

The Finnish education system should be seen as a whole from early childhood education to further education during the work career. This entails recognising lifelong learning as an important part of today's welfare society. Society must ensure that each individual throughout their life has such knowledge and skills as are needed for participating in the labour market and for active citizenship. Also, post-degree education must be attainable for people from different backgrounds and in varying life circumstances and with individual characteristics taken into account. The possibilities of lifelong learning must be attainable to all, regardless of background and socioeconomic status.

Education should increasingly advance social mobility. The effect of socioeconomic background, wealth, educational background of parents and other relatives, where one lives, and the environment on whether one applied to education must decrease. This is why society must use intersectionality as a multidisciplinary tool to find ways to concretely promote everyone's genuine access to higher education throughout society. In Finland, children must have a subjective right to free, quality, and flexible early childhood education. The number of places available in childcare must be increased without increasing group sizes. From the perspective of social mobility, it is important that all children participate in early childhood education before going to school. Part-time day care should be a realistic option. This requires more flexible day care services.

Basic education and secondary education must provide sufficient readiness and equal opportunities for applying to higher education. Each learner is seen as a potential higher education student. It is important that everyone in Finland completes at least an upper secondary education degree, which is why early childhood education, comprehensive school and upper secondary education must be tuition-free and truly accessible to all. Tuition-free education covers learning materials and essential study equipment. The education is tuition-free for the whole degree study time.

The education system must also take into account students in need of international protection and victims of human rights violations, and new supplementary study-based channels for entry to the country must be created for them. The integration of refugees and immigrants should be supported by offering them sufficient educational opportunities and promoting the identification of previously attained knowledge and education. Appropriations for affirmative action are made for early childhood education as well as

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primary and secondary education so that learners in need of especially strong support can be supported throughout their education path. Solutions for higher education accessibility are developed. The solutions consider the needs of such students who are in danger of being disadvantaged.

It is important for young people to receive adequate guidance counselling throughout their education path for them to be able to make conscious and informed decisions. Particular attention needs to be paid to including underrepresented groups in education. Normative gender roles must not restrict applying to education or choosing a profession. Educational institutions may not collect information about such personal characteristics of their students and applicants as are irrelevant for student admission and studying. Students always have the right to refuse to provide such information.

University admissions should be mainly through free entrance exams, selection courses, or other methods independent of one's success in upper secondary education. ~~The results of upper secondary studies may, however, be used as a selection factor in such fields as they are particularly suiting.~~ However, academic performance at secondary level can be used as a secondary selection factor in fields in which it is particularly relevant. Even in such cases, ~~Universities must always reserve a significant part of their admission quotas for students coming through pathways that are independent of study performance, and focus on suitability and motivation in student admission.~~ The evaluation must be professional, transparent and equal, with consideration for the special characteristics of the different disciplines. ~~Entrance examinations in the same fields should be conducted through national joint application examinations through the national joint application system wherever possible.~~ The system must eliminate the need for preparatory courses, and applying through the open university must not require unreasonable amounts of money and time. We must not switch over to a model of student admission where universities admit a large number of applicants to pursue a degree, only to at a later stage reject students based on study success. Developing open university studies must also not lead to such an arrangement. In the future, a student who is admitted the right to study for a lower university degree will, in principle, always receive the right to study for a higher university degree. The open university offers possibilities for supplementing one's knowledge and skills and applying to higher education at different stages of life, also without general higher education eligibility. The role of the open university is not to function as a paid-for way to circumvent the application system, and open universities should not award degrees. Quotas for first-time applicants are not a good way to speed up access to higher education.

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Higher education institutions and upper secondary education institutions should cooperate closely so that students can have a taste of higher education studies already during their upper secondary level studies. Cooperation between educational institutions physically far from each other can be supported through online tools. From the perspective of upper secondary level education, the collaboration must be as equitable as possible from a regional perspective. Students at all upper secondary schools must be able to complete higher education classes without cost to the student.

Advocacy goals:

- All children have a subjective right to free of charge early childhood education.
- Tasks requiring pedagogical skills in early childhood and pre-school education are the responsibility of university-educated, and possibly also kindergarten teachers who have taken a degree in Steiner education at a Steiner kindergarten, kindergarten teachers.
- **~~The implementation of the national accessibility plan for higher education must be promoted and monitored. The implementation of the accessibility plans of higher education institutions must be funded and monitored.~~**
- SYL will contribute to making access to higher education easier for vulnerable groups, and to creating structures that promote access.
- The number of refugees and immigrants who complete a second and tertiary level degree increases. Previous degrees are recognised when applicable.
- **For student activists who are victims of human rights violations, Finland must create a supplementary study-based entry channel into the country for those in need of international protection.**
- A survey of the competencies and skills of refugees and asylum seekers is made as soon as possible after they have entered the country.
- **Training and education to promote their integration should be free of charge. Education should aim to provide immigrants with independent skills in Finnish or Swedish.**
- Municipalities offer adequate preparatory education and support in transitional periods so that everyone who so wishes would have better opportunities for applying to higher education.
- International students have access to reliable, accessible, and equal basic services.
- Students in upper secondary education are offered options of completing university courses beforehand through, for instance, the use of digital online learning platforms.
- There are clear, transparent and unambiguous learning outcomes defined for all higher education, from individual courses to degrees.

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- There are increased possibilities for re-education during work careers.
- **The costs of lifelong learning should not be borne by the learner alone, but shared between the individual, the employer and the statesociety.** Updating one's competencies is possible for everyone, regardless of the wealth or employment status of the individual.
- ~~Lifelong learning must be developed in a way that does not undermine the resources available for education towards a degree.~~
- **Lifelong learning must be funded separately from the core funding allocated through the university funding model.**
- Upper secondary and higher education studies are offered openly when applicable.
- Universities offer graduates the possibility of supplementing one's knowledge and skills.
- ~~Access to universities must remain possible regardless of secondary school performance. The main way to ensure this is through an entrance examination. The main entrance route to university should be an entrance examination or course selection route, independent of secondary school performance.~~
- **The scoring model for selection based on school certificates should be based on the weighting of the skills that are relevant for the field the applicant is applying for. It should not be based on the number of courses taken in upper secondary school. The development of scoring models must be the responsibility of universities. Scoring models should be developed in collaboration with the whole university sector and in consultation with all programmes. Admissions departments, in cooperation with other programmes in the same field, should be given greater leeway to decide on the weighting of different subjects for the purposes of assessing an applicant's suitability for the field.**
- **The entrance examinations should be held primarily as a national joint entrance examination by sector. The examination should be based primarily on a combination of the material given in the examination and a short preview of the material. Entrance examinations should not be based solely on the upper secondary school curriculum.**
- **Entrance examinations must be digitalised in an accessible way. The accessibility of information systems must be ensured, and applicants must have the opportunity to borrow a computer for the entrance examination.**
- Quotas for first-time applicants are lifted.
- **The quotas for Sámi- and Swedish-speaking applicants must be maintained.**
- The open university route does not make up more than 10% of overall university admissions.

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Student-centred learning and study ability

The principles of student-centred learning include the student's freedom of choice and their responsibility for their own learning, participation, and planning their study track. Instead of reaching for good grades and study credits, students' motivation stems from collaboration, responsibility, and high-quality and topical teaching. Guiding the student in their learning and supporting them in making choices are emphasised in the role of academic staff.

Student-centeredness should be observed in degree structure, learning environments, evaluations, learning outcomes, and curricula. Learning environments must be accessible. Teaching should observe the diverse basic knowledge students have, their needs, interests, as well as different ways of learning. Teaching should use different teaching technologies in various ways, but without using them just for the sake of it.

Learning outcomes for university education must be defined on the levels of courses, modules, and degrees respectively. Recognition of a student's prior learning in both higher education as well as outside of higher education should be carried out in adherence with the learning objectives for the degree.

Higher education institutions should invest in developing teaching by offering teaching staff the resources they need, pedagogical instruction, as well as support for introducing and developing student-centred teaching. The pedagogical education should include ways of observing the needs of students with special needs. Teaching should utilise a variety of technologies, but only if they bring benefits and better results. The attendance requirements must be pedagogically well-founded, taking into account the students' varying life and family situations. The institutions must also support staff in the introduction of versatile, digital teaching tools as well as planning foreign language teaching aimed at multicultural groups. Suitable teaching technology makes possible flexible learning environments as well as diverse teaching and grading methods. The internal reward schemes of higher education institutions should reward high-quality teaching.

Digitalisation promotes the openness of teaching and materials in universities. The digital pedagogic competencies of university teaching staff are developed to give all students equal opportunities for learning. The possibilities digitalisation creates are utilised to increase the competencies of students, counselling, develop the quality of teaching and counselling, studying at another higher education institution, and developing the opportunities of lifelong learning. Digitalisation can also be utilised to anticipate competence needs. Digitalisation must take into account student-centeredness and the students' right to the information they own. In order to fully be able to utilise information provided by the students or their studies,

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it must be stored in a way that allows it to be used not only by the home university, but also openly outside of it. The need to utilise information in order to, for instance, recognise competencies acquired previously, must therefore not hinder studying in other higher education institutions. However, the refusal of a student to disclose certain information for education must not impede the completion of their studies. Increased digitalisation must also not make it more difficult for students to primarily receive contact teaching or counselling. Students are offered the opportunity to flexible digital studies or counselling when there are no pedagogical obstacles to studying or receiving counselling digitally. Developing digitalisation requires taking into account the challenges posed by the accessibility of necessary hardware and software and the socioeconomic status of students.

Everyone who completes a degree from a higher education institution should have got practice in working in an international, multicultural operating environment, as well as in understanding global development issues from the perspective of their own field. A mobility period is not a prerequisite for internationalisation: the principal of internationalisation at home brings teaching methods supporting global phenomena and multiculturalism into all degrees. Internationalisation at home and digital mobility are excellent things for accessibility. However, sustainable physical and international mobility must remain the primary mode of mobility, and it must be supported. The universities must invest in the teaching of foreign languages, and they must offer a wide range of foreign language courses. Studies completed during exchange studies must be included in the degree.

The quality assurance of higher education institutions must consider the quality of teaching, student-centeredness, student wellbeing, learning results, and employment. The feedback systems of higher education institutions must be nationally comparable and higher education institutions must in the long term develop their operations based on the feedback. Students should be able to take part in all phases of developing teaching. Students should regularly both give and receive feedback on their studies. The feedback is to be dealt with matter-of-factly.

Study ability is the student's work ability. It affects study progress, results, and the wellbeing of both the student and the community. Higher education institutions should promote study ability in all its fields: teaching and guidance, study skills, study environment as well as student health and resources.

Developing student support is advantageous also for the university. Students must have access to abundant support and guidance for planning their studies, career, and life on all levels of education. Higher education institutions should invest in integrating all new

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students into the higher education community. Students are informed about the support services offered by the higher education institution. Support services must be widely available all through the studies. The universities should offer support in all official languages of the university and in English.

Students should receive support from the university for them to find the learning styles and methods that suit them the best. Additionally, universities recognise and acknowledge the different, individual qualities of students that may affect learning. Universities raise the awareness among teaching and counselling personnel and students of learning difficulties in order to, for instance, help students get support on time and promote choosing teaching methods that support different ways of learning. Especially at the beginning of studies, students must also be encouraged to critical thinking and developing problem-solving skills. Through the support provided for them, students are able to define and verbalise their competencies as well as flexibly learn new things. Guidance and counselling support the development of prerequisites for lifelong learning.

Advocacy goals:

- Universities offer guidance service for planning and carrying out internationalisation modules.
- Higher education institutions plan diverse learning environments for different use at their facilities.
- Quality teaching and counselling is rewarded in the internal reward schemes of the universities.
- Pedagogical competence is one of the criteria when recruiting researchers and teaching staff.
- Exchange studies are financially supported and the recognition of study achievements during exchanges is smooth.
- Students get an appointment with the study counselling psychologist within a month of contacting them.
- Study counselling psychologist must collaborate more closely with the FSHS.
- All new students participate in a course in preparation for university studies. Teachers are trained in considering individual learning styles.
- Higher education institutions build a national web-based wellbeing and life skills programme to support students in their studies and everyday life.
- Every student is allotted a teacher tutor, who supervises the study progress at least once a year and when needed together with the student revise the objectives.

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Academic advice is available also in English. Teachers have working hours allocated for academic advice.

- The learning outcomes for degrees mention internationalisation skills and internationalisation at home is one of the guiding principles of degree planning.
- University staff must receive training to help them recognise mental health problems and problematic use of intoxicants and refer students to help.
- Increased digitalisation must not make it more difficult for students to primarily receive contact teaching or counselling.
- The use of digital learning environments and online teaching are part of the studies in university pedagogy.
- Higher education institutions have embedded early support models that provide clear and accessible guidance on what to do when there are concerns about a student's use of intoxicants or their mental health.
- University staff are trained to identify and account for minority stress.
- The study load is balanced and reasonable across disciplines and universities. Study credit accumulation must be monitored through feedback and analytics, and excessive workloads must be addressed. Students in all fields must have equal opportunities to participate in student representative activities within the framework of the schedule for the academic year.

The higher education system and degrees

The Finnish higher education system is to be developed as an entity. Universities need to closely cooperate both with other universities as well as together with the universities of applied sciences. Students must be able to move between higher education institutions without difficulties. Universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS) together form the Finnish higher education system. Universities and UASs differ in both their respective missions defined in legislation as well as through their strategies and profiles. The higher education institutions are to be publicly governed by the University Act and University of Applied Sciences Act respectively. They may form different consortiums.

The quality of Finnish higher education must be high in every aspect and the teaching must be based on current research. Every higher education unit must offer an adequate and diverse number of courses. Higher education institutions must have genuine collaboration across boundaries and offer international study modules. The structural reform of the higher education network must be carried out in dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Culture, universities, students, and required stakeholders. The focus in developing the higher education network is on quality and accessibility of education and research. The regional

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distribution of higher education institutions takes the different profiles of universities into account as well as the competence needs of the regions.

The Finnish higher education institutions succeed through internationalisation. From the point of internationalisation, it is important that the higher education institutions have students from all over the world. International students must be granted a residence permit right from the start for the entire duration of their studies, and the overall burden regarding costs must be alleviated in terms of the residence permit process and minimum income requirements. Higher education institutions must offer degrees that correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) to ease mobility. Students must be able to transfer between higher education institutions in all of Finland and all of Europe. The European Union promotes the value of cultural and academic freedom as well as functioning mobility and cross-border student cooperation. The development of education in Europe should be student-centred, and education must be available for underrepresented groups in all countries of Europe. On a European level, structures are developed that encourage students to move also outside the European higher education area.

Mobility within the Finnish higher education system must be encouraged. It must be possible to change discipline at the transition phase between degree levels within universities but also between universities, still acknowledging the special characteristics of different fields. Every student who has been accepted for university studies must nonetheless have the right to complete a second-cycle degree (master's). Higher education institutions are encouraged to develop the first-cycle (bachelor's) degrees to be broad degrees, with consideration of the special characteristics of different fields. Broad first-cycle degrees must be based on appropriate combinations of disciplines. The transition from first to second cycle studies must not become an obstacle for smooth advancement. Higher education must consider rapidly changing competence needs and offer ways for lifelong learning.

Higher education is developed by dismantling the dividers between higher education institutions and disciplines. Students must be able to flexibly choose courses from a common platform for the higher education institutions if the courses fit into the student's personal study plan. Students should be able to freely choose between studies offered by their own and other universities, acknowledging disciplinary characteristics. It should be easy to change subject and it should be accomplished through internal transfers with the higher education institutions so that transferring students do not affect the number of places available for new students. Higher education institutions have established practices for admitting transferring students into different degree programmes. Transfer students should receive equal treatment and appropriate academic advice.

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The number of degrees awarded must be nationally defined by the higher education institutions and the state in dialogue and considering the needs of society and so that high-quality teaching is ensured. Increases must not be made if they compromise the quality of teaching, guidance or support services. Degrees should have clearly defined learning outcomes, which are reflected both on degree and course level. When learning outcomes are defined, working life representatives as well as other relevant stakeholders must be heard. There is a sufficient supply of education available in Finnish, Swedish, and English.

Education should be free of charge for everyone. The consequences of tuition fees for students from outside the EU/EEA area for the internationality of universities, on the economy, as well as for equality should be actively monitored. All students are equal with regard to teaching and services regardless of some of them paying tuition fees. There are no quotas for courses or student housing.

The stipend system must consider the socioeconomic background of students and should be comprehensive, predictable and transparent. Neither development cooperation funding nor university basic funding may be used for the financing of the stipend system. Students have information on the criteria for awarding stipends as well as the size of the tuition fees already when they are applying. Neither criteria nor tuition fees may be changed during the studies.

As specialisation and further education subject to charge become more common, it is ensured that a free-of-charge degree is still enough for working life and that the individual must not buy competence in order to find employment. Education export must not decrease the resources for free degree education, but should increase them. Education export is carried out responsibly and ethically, and nationwide principles will be drawn up for it.

Advocacy goals:

- When assessing the number of degrees, there is consideration for the legitimate need for them, and for sufficient and proportionate field specific allocation of resources. There are clear indicators for the follow-up for the vision of the roadmap for higher education and research, and a monitoring group is set up for the purpose.
- Finland have reached the Bologna Process objectives. Degrees and study modules are recognised in all of Europe without lowering the quality of education.
- University students can freely choose their minor subjects from any higher education institution they wish. This can be accomplished through developing the JOO system, for instance.

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- The cooperation between universities is strengthened through the development on national field-specific study modules.
- A national platform for degree students and other continuous learners is developed in Finland. The common platform for higher education institutions also enables studies independent of time and location as well as encourages higher education institutions to collaborate. The platform model is implemented as a collaboration between higher education institutions using API and data sharing.
- The first-cycle degree offers broad readiness for transferring to complete a second-cycle degree in another field. The special characteristics of different fields is considered.
- Refugees and asylum seekers can continue their studies in Finland. Asylum seekers' opportunities for participating in higher education are supported for instance by offering preparatory transition studies or courses that prepare the student for the application process.
- If tuition fees are introduced, their impact is critically evaluated at least every other year. Tuition fees are abandoned as soon as possible.
- International students are granted a residence permit for their whole degree period. Degree programmes are planned in a way that enables international students to complete the number of credits required for a renewal of the residence permit, and the cooperation between authorities and educational institutions should run smoothly in all of Finland.

University students

A reasonable student income

Finland should see investing in students as a societal investment in the future. The support that society offers gives everyone equal opportunities to study, regardless of socioeconomic background or place of residence. **Student benefits need to be reformed as part of the wider social security reforms, and integrated into the new social security model that is to be introduced. The aim must be a universal and coherent benefit system within which income security is guaranteed and transitions between different life situations are smooth. The changes implemented in the social security system reforms must move Finland's social security system towards a basic income model that is free of charge for the recipient – this must be a goal of the reforms. Finland must switch to a basic income. Before the implementation of the social security reform Before the introduction of a basic income system, it must be ensured that income during full-time**

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studies is secured by adequate student financial aid. This would include a sufficient share of student financial aid for the necessary income, be distributed evenly over the period of study, and would treat students in different fields of study equally.

The student financial aid is the student's social security. The administration of student financial aid belongs under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The student financial aid system is clear, consistent and predictable. The system makes reasonable amount of paid work possible and thus improves students' livelihood and their post-graduation employment. The student financial aid system also supports international mobility. The parts of student financial aid mirror the general increase in living costs and the focus for developing student financial aid is on enabling full-time studying.

Student financial aid is adapted to other benefits and it flexibly considers diverse circumstances without endangering or weakening students' livelihood. The study grant for students with children includes a sufficient provider supplement. Students recovering from illness must be able to study part time while having a secured livelihood. Financial aid for higher education studies for students studying in Finland is only granted to students who are enrolled at higher education institutions (HEI) specified in Paragraph 1 in the Universities Act or who have been granted concession in accordance with the Polytechnics Act. The government guarantee for the student loan is granted for studies at the National Defence University.

The most important aspect of the support for students' living costs is that it corresponds to real living costs. Student housing is supported in the form of an all-year, individual housing benefit scheme, which seamlessly combines with other benefits for students and which on a sufficient level and has sufficient income limits. The form of the housing benefit should allow for a moderate income and react flexibly to varying income. The level of housing allowance should not be dependent on the size of the apartment or the form of housing and it should meet the diverse housing needs of students.

The student loan is well known among student as an optional form of supplementing their livelihood. The emphasis in developing the student loan system is on improving the risk defences in such a way that they sufficiently protect the borrower. **The conditions for student loan repayment and exemptions from payment must be fair for low-income student debtors.** Students have access to extensive and diverse information about the student loan system. The student loan is not considered income when the need for welfare benefits is evaluated.

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Advocacy goals:

- Student financial aid is moved from the Ministry for Education and Culture to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.
- **Students should be considered eligible for general housing allowance. The general housing allowance should be individualised. The problems caused by the household-based requirement for students and young people need to be addressed by making financial support more individualised.**
- The student loan is not considered income when the need for welfare benefits is evaluated.
- The conditions of the student loan compensation only consider months when the student has received student financial aid, for the compensation awarded while the person is still studying.
- **Student loans should be covered by state interest protection, and the conditions of the interest allowance must be improved. There must be a ceiling on the interest rate for student loans.**
- **The amount of student financial aid must be increased in such a way that the level of cash benefits for students rises to the level of basic social security, while at the same time there is a move towards the new social security model and basic income.**
- Students are engaged in the reform of social security and possible trials. **A new, broader trial of the basic income model is needed, including people from different walks of life.**
- The demand for a minimum of 20 study credits per academic year in order to receive study grant is eliminated.
- **The number of months of student financial aid per degree should be increased to 54 for bachelor's and master's degrees, and proportionately for degrees of other lengths.**
- The maximum number of study credits that must be earned during sick leave is to be abandoned.
- ~~The annual income limit for student financial aid is raised so that it is possible for a student who receives aid for nine months within a calendar year to earn 18,000 euros without the income affecting the aid.~~

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Student meals and the meal subsidy

Student meals must be available to all students. It is important that the student meals are of high quality, healthy, affordable, varied, as well as produced in a sustainable fashion, with consideration of dietary needs. Student meals are an important support for promoting public health and sustainable development. Student meals should encourage a vegetarian diet and guide towards less consumption of meat and less food waste.

Student meals are supported through subsidised meals. The universities must be aware of their responsibility for organising meals for students and staff. They must also carry their responsibility by continuing to pay for the costs for investments and appliances for the student restaurants as well as for rent for facilities. For student restaurants operating in facilities that are not within the higher education institution, support may still be granted in the form of an extra grant per meal. This is compensation for the cost of facilities and permanent appliances. The maximum price of a student meal may only be increased if also the meal subsidy is increased.

Advocacy goals:

- Students' right to subsidised takeaway lunches should be made permanent.
- The level of the meal subsidy is secured to increase in line with the increase in production costs. The increase in the maximum price of a meal must be tied to an increase in the meal subsidy.
- Student restaurants offer quality and nutritious vegetarian and vegan food.
- Students know where the food is from and can easily access the nutritional information about the food, as well as its carbon footprint. Student restaurants emphasise ecologically produced ingredients.
- The meal subsidy limit to one meal per day per student must be abolished.

~~High-quality and affordable student housing~~

~~Students must have the right to affordable housing. Building affordable housing for all requires society to offer sufficient support for production.~~

~~A sufficient supply of student housing decreases the housing shortage in growth centres and eases the housing situation for others of limited means. The state should grant sufficient support for building new student apartments as well as for renovations so that the apartments are affordable and of high quality. Municipalities must ensure~~



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~~that there is a sufficient number of lots available for supported student housing production by assigning lots to the organisations who build student apartments and by planning lots for student housing. The state should promote lot availability by turning over its own protection free land to an advantageous price to student housing communities. The regulations for changing the purpose of use are alleviated so that empty premises can be used for permanent or temporary student housing.~~

~~When building student housing, attention must be paid to quality, easy access, accessibility for the disabled, environmental friendliness, comfort and support for a sense of community. Building and maintenance should pay particular attention to health issues, such as the quality of the indoor air. Student apartments must be close to good public transport, as well as good possibilities for walking and biking between the apartments, the campuses, and the centre. Higher education institutions, student apartment organisations, and cities have a shared responsibility for the housing provided for international students. The higher education institutions must take responsibility for the cost of housing for international students. Also the higher education institutions must carry responsibility for temporary emergency accommodation. The integration of international students and staff in the community must be promoted by increasing housing for internationals in the same houses and areas as where Finns live.~~

~~The rent level for student apartments must stay below market prices. Contributing to this are the state production support, more flexible planning and parking regulations, as well as the elimination of a minimum size for the apartments. The taxation of renting or owning one's flat must be similar so that these remain equally attractive alternatives, and people can choose how they live according to their own preferences.~~

Advocacy goals:

- ~~• The Ministry of the Environment anticipates the need for production of new student apartments through a regular student housing survey.~~
- ~~• To achieve the objectives for student housing production, a programme on youth and student housing is initiated.~~
- ~~• The state ensures a sufficient lot supply by including a separate quota in the agreements on land use, housing, and transportation in growth centres. The quota for the yearly production of student apartments is a long-term loan with an interest subsidy.~~
- ~~• The excess interest of the 40-year loan with interest subsidy is decreased to 1% for student apartments.~~

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- ~~Student housing must be included within the sphere of special-group investment grants, with the investment grant percentage increased to 20 per cent.~~
- ~~The production subsidies for building new student apartments is primarily targeted at areas where the housing situation for students is worst.~~
- ~~Student apartment are entitled to the same grants depending on the financial situation as others are.~~
- ~~Student housing is taken into account already in the planning stage. Student apartments are simply planned and released from the demands on facade material and street-level businesses.~~
- ~~Students apartments are exempt from the regulations on parking spaces.~~
- ~~Student housing must be exempted from the parking standard and the ban to use business premises for housing. The requirement to have a playground and a civil defence shelter should also be lifted.~~
- ~~Higher education institutions must be responsible for unoccupied student housing caused by varying numbers of exchange students.~~
- ~~Creative housing solutions are promoted by eliminating the regulation regarding minimum size for apartments in the scheme~~
- ~~The payment of tuition fees must have no bearing on the selection of tenants for student housing; all students must be treated equally.~~
- ~~The standards determining the purpose of use of premises and cooperation between the construction industry must be developed so that empty business premises can be converted flexibly into student housing, for example.~~
- ~~The subsidies for building student housing should encourage a wide range of environmentally friendly solutions and enable us to invest in them extensively without raising rent for students.~~
- ~~Student housing must support students' holistic wellbeing by various means, for example by providing residential activities, community support and cooperation with various student support networks.~~

Quality and affordable student housing

In order to enable students to study full-time and to ensure their social needs, wellbeing and stable economic situation, they must have the right to quality housing that meets their needs. Student housing policy should be based on students' needs and wishes, and not be guided by compulsory means or income-related incentives or conditions.

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Student housing is social housing targeted at a low-income group with special housing needs. For this reason, the affordability of student housing must be ensured through adequate and effective production subsidies, less stringent regulation and the provision of affordable land. Tenant selection needs to be developed to take better account of students' changing housing needs, for example by taking equality and communal living into account.

A national target must be set for new student housing, and a commitment must be made to achieve it through policy measures to remove bottlenecks that hinder and slow down student housing construction. Municipalities must set targets for student housing, and the state must encourage municipalities to set and achieve them.

Student housing must be developed in line with modern requirements. For students, sustainable housing and sustainable consumption are high on the list of values, but the choice and affordability of sustainable housing is often poor. The energy economy and environmental friendliness of student housing must be promoted by developing production subsidies and building regulations, but without leading to significantly higher rent.

High-quality and sufficient student housing should be made attractive for both Finnish and international students. In addition to the above measures, the overall objective requires improving tenant democracy and new solutions to promote communal living. More attention must also be paid to the specific needs and circumstances of international students.

Advocacy objectives:

- **Student housing must be kept within the scope of investment aid for specific groups. The investment aid must be sufficient for all student housing projects.**
- **The long-term support loan model's excess interest rate and repayment schedule model must respond to changes in the economic environment, and sufficient state support must be ensured. Student housing projects should also be subject to the same subsidies as other state-subsidised rental housing.**



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- **Municipalities should set aside sufficient plots for student housing. These should be designed to be simple, and should not be subject to overly prescriptive zoning regulations in terms of construction. Student housing should be exempt from car parking, commercial space and playground requirements.**
- **Student housing tenant selection needs to be improved to take better account of equality, community living and other developing tenant needs, and to facilitate international students living in student housing.**
- **The state should set and commit to a national goal of making student housing the main form of student accommodation.**
- **The state should encourage municipalities to build student housing through land use, housing and transport agreements (MAL agreements in Finnish). These require setting a municipal target for student housing, relaxing planning requirements for student housing, and ensuring sufficient land supply.**
- **Production subsidies for student housing should provide a wide range of incentives for environmental friendliness and enable firm commitment to them without environmentally friendly solutions leading to unreasonable increases in student rents.**
- **The cost control of projects by the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) needs to be developed towards assessing life-cycle costs and life-cycle carbon footprints.**
- **New systems for improving resident democracy, access to information and participation must be introduced in student housing, using the special exception for groups in the act on joint management of rental buildings (1169/2022).**
- **Communal housing solutions should be made possible by allowing the related costs to be covered by ARA's production subsidies. Shared housing should also be facilitated in the selection of tenants, and quotas for Sámi- and Swedish-speaking applicants should be maintained by removing obstacles in the preference system.**
- **Student housing must be made attractive for international students to encourage them to come to and remain in Finland. The growing number of international students and the need to live in student accommodation even after graduation must be taken into account in the construction of student accommodation and the selection of tenants.**



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Student health care and FSHS

The health care system and sufficient funding for health care services support wellbeing and uphold work and study ability. The health care system evens out differences in health and wellbeing between different population groups. The system is also closely connected to the social services. Resources for health care must be aimed at prevention of problems and at low threshold services. The importance of physical activity for improving health must be considered. Everyone must have access to sports. Digitalisation must be utilised in health care, as must the options offered by self-care.

The health care system is to be based on a life course perspective. Services must be planned and realised mainly per age group. This way much information about the typical health problem for that group is accumulated. The life cycle perspective promotes a holistic approach to the need for service, both individual and population groups. An important part of the life cycle perspective are the services offered by the student health care.

The role of the student health care is to promote health and wellbeing for students and for the whole study community. Student health care must go beyond simply caring for students' health. It must become a statutory package aiming at community health and prevention, as a part of which students are offered basic-level health care and hospital services. It is about community health and preventive work, an entity in its operations and by law, in which is included offering basic health care services to students. Particularly important entities for the student health care are the well-functioning mental, sexual and reproductive health as well as dental care. Health guidance and physical examinations must be organised also for those young people who are not a part of the student health care. All students studying for a basic degree must be entitled to student health care services. The higher education institutions should organise occupational health services that correspond to their health needs and have enough resources. All undergraduate students must be entitled to student health care services. Higher education institutions must provide postgraduates with occupational health care with sufficient resources that meet their health needs. The service chains between student health care, social services and the public health care are smooth and clear. The transfer of client information between different parties is smooth.

The student health care for all basic degree students and all international exchange students at all higher education institutions and who are members of the student union must be organised through the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). The FSHS is a part of the publicly funded health care system. Students participate in both the decision-making in the FSHS board and in the financing of the FSHS. The latter is a legislated healthcare fee, which is

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mandatory and collected by the student unions. The funding of the FSHS must be predictable and based on long-term contracts. Students must be offered functioning health care services at the same level, regardless of where they live and study.

The Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) and other parties providing publicly funded healthcare must offer services and inform about them in Finnish, Swedish and English. FSHS staff must be trained regularly, and they must have competence in equality-related matters. The staff of the FSHS must be trained regularly and they should be familiar also with equality issues. FSHS must offer low-threshold services on campuses, for example. FSHS must be a pioneer in digitalisation and invest in community health and cooperation between educational institutions. FSHS must lead the way in digitalisation and invest in community health and cooperation with the education institutions. FSHS provides higher education students with a high-quality service package that includes general health, oral health and mental health services.

Advocacy goals:

- FSHS staff must be trained to provide better service for all students. Student health staff must be equipped to deal with students who belong to various minorities. Staff must be given the relevant training in order to ensure equal treatment of students regarding in order to avoid racism, ableism and other forms of prejudice and problematic assumptions.
- The student health care for all basic degree students and all international exchange students who are student union members, at all higher education institutions, must be organised through the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS).
- The FSHS is a part of the publicly funded health care system. The future funding of FSHS is secured.
- The FSHS is a leader in digital health care services, self-care in both official languages as well as English, and in new low threshold campus practices.
- Students have a quick access to low threshold mental health services offered by the student health care. The student health care offers diverse mental health services that best suit each individual, such as individual and group therapy and digital services.
- Mental health care services, as part of student health care, must be available on short notice and at a low threshold, offering a range of mental health services suited for everyone, such as individual and group treatments and digital services. These services are also available in English, and take into account the variety of cultural and language backgrounds.
- All youth under 29 years of age and all higher education students are offered the possibility of free rehabilitative psychotherapy.

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- To ensure that there are enough psychotherapists, psychotherapy education must become publicly financed and free for psychotherapy students.
- Student health care and publicly funded health care must provide free contraception for people under the age of 29 and to all students covered by FSHS.
- The higher education institutions organise occupational health care for and corresponding to the needs of all postgraduate students. The occupational health care is sufficiently funded.
- The health care for secondary education students is transferred to the school health care, both legislatively and operation-wise. Treating mental disorders is added to the tasks for school health care defined in legislation.
- Health guidance and physical examinations are organised also for young people who are not a part of the student health care.
- The social and health care services in student cities and belonging to the publicly funded health care system offer basic services in Finnish, Swedish, and English.
- It must be possible to begin the process of seeking treatment at any time. FSHS should have a 24-hour contact channel to assess the need for treatment.
- The service chains between students health care, social services and public health care are clear and fluent. Patient data is easy to transfer between the different actors.