

# ANTIRACISM AND ANTI-ABLEISM ACTION PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

The 2022 Programme of Objectives includes the objective of creating an anti-ableist and antiracist action plan for the Student Union of the University of Helsinki (HYY). The aim of the action plan is to assess the problem areas occurring in the Student Union, at the University of Helsinki and in society and to define the actions and influencing measures the Student Union should take to promote anti-ableism and antiracism. Specialists from outside HYY's Central Office have also been utilised in the creation of the action plan.

The purpose of the action plan opposing racism and discrimination based on disability is to strengthen the strategic and systematic promotion of equality in the Student Union. The document serves as an action plan complementing HYY's Equality Plan.

HYY's Representative Council and members have been consulted in the process of creating the contents of the action plan. In addition to comments from our community, we have also used various sources, such as the Government Action Plan An Equal Finland, various sources from the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and HYY's Policy Paper. The action plan has been commented by Associate Professor in Disability Studies Hisayo Katsui, Professor of Ethnic Relations Suvi Keskinen and members of Kynnys ry, a human rights organisation working for people with disabilities.

The action plan is carried out in 2023–2025. Measures taken based on the plan are assessed in autumn 2025. The measures are incorporated into existing documents, such as the Policy Paper and the Equality Plan, as required.

## DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Racism: Making value judgements on different groups of people based on their skin colour and assumed culture.

Anti-ableism: Active work against discrimination based on disability. Anti-ableism aims to examine assumptions related to people’s ability to function as well as measures taken to oppose discrimination based on disability.

Ableism: The assumption that people have a certain kind of ability to function and the favouring of non-disabled people. Related prejudiced thoughts are based on being disabled considered inferior to being non-disabled.

Disablism: The consequence of ableism – discrimination based on disability.

Accessibility: Equal opportunities for people to function in their living environment regardless of their physical or mental abilities. Accessibility is related to the physical, mental and social environment.

Physical accessibility: The accessibility of the physical environment (the Finnish equivalent, *esteettömyys*, is usually translated simply as accessibility, but refers specifically to physical accessibility).

## STUDENT UNION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Objective	Measure	Indicator
HYY adheres to the EU’s European Accessibility Act and the Act on the Provision of Digital Services.	An accessibility review of HYY’s website is conducted once the service provider has been changed and the most acute fixes made.	Realisation of the A and AA level criteria of the WCA Guidelines (yes/no)  Accessibility review has been conducted (yes/no)
Organisations operating under HYY ensure that their	HYY provides organisations with training on accessibility, including physical	Training events have been organised (yes/no)

<p>activities are accessible to all students.</p>	<p>accessibility, and antiracism. The parts on antiracism and the prevention of discrimination based on disability in the equality guide for organisations are expanded.</p>	<p>Guide for organisations has been updated (yes/no)</p>
<p>HYY's premises are as accessible as possible, and their accessibility information can be found easily.</p>	<p>Comprehensive accessibility information on the premises is made available on HYY's website after the lift renovation in Staircase A has been completed, and communication on the matter takes place regularly. The accessibility of HYY's premises is improved.</p>	<p>Percentage of HYY's premises that are accessible (%)</p> <p>Accessibility information can be found on HYY's website (yes/no)</p> <p>Improvements on accessibility have been made (yes/no)</p>
<p>HYY's events are organised in accessible premises.</p>	<p>Events are organised in accessible premises and, when this is not possible, communication on non-accessibility is as detailed as possible.</p>	<p>Non-accessible events (%)</p> <p>Communication has been done (yes/no)</p>
<p>The people at HYY's Central Office have a broad understanding of different forms of racism. They are also able to process racism cases in an appropriate manner.</p>	<p>The Student Union provides its Central Office with training on antiracism at regular intervals. The training must be organised by a party from outside the Student Union.</p>	<p>The Student Union's Central Office has been provided with training on antiracism (yes/no)</p>

		The training is organised by a party from outside the Student Union (yes/no)
HYY monitors the nature of harassment occurring in the University community.	The Student Union regularly collects statistics on the number and nature of contacts related to harassment cases.	The Student Union collects statistics on the number and nature of contacts related to harassment cases (yes/no)
HYY is aware of the kinds of challenges faced by student representatives belonging to a minority in particular.	HYY investigates ways in which it can take antiracism and opposition to discrimination based on disability into account in student representation activities. Data collected in this review are utilised in connection with the assessment of the action plan in autumn 2025.	<p>Challenges faced by student representatives have been charted (yes/no)</p> <p>Data collected in the review have been utilised in connection with the assessment of the action plan (yes/no)</p>

## UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Objective	Measure	Indicator
All students receive information on equality and the prevention of discrimination.	HYY investigates whether the University of Helsinki could create a study unit on equality. Based on this review, HYY takes further measures to facilitate the creation of the study unit. The aim of the study unit would be to increase understanding of different equality themes, such as antiracism and	<p>The possibility of creating the study unit has been investigated (yes/no)</p> <p>The UH is offering a course on equality in 2026 (yes/no)</p>

	opposition to discrimination based on disability.	
It is easy for students to find information on the services and support measures provided by the University.	The Student Union encourages the University to communicate about the services it offers, such as harassment contact persons, individual arrangements and equality and accessibility liaisons, more regularly and extensively.	The University's communication about equality services (number)
The University has an anonymous channel for reporting harassment and discrimination.	HYY looks into the possibility of developing an official anonymous form together with the University. If this is possible, the University creates the form.	<p>The possibility of creating an anonymous form has been investigated (yes/no)</p> <p>The anonymous form has been created (yes/no)</p>
The University has an electronic system allowing students to declare their need for individual arrangements.	Together with the study psychologists, HYY lobbies the University to begin developing an electronic system for declaring the need for individual arrangements.	It is possible to declare the need for individual arrangements electronically (yes/no)
The accessibility information and accessible entrance routes for the University's premises can be easily found on the website and in the course details.	HYY advocates for the inclusion of the accessibility information and information on accessible entrance routes on the University's website and in the course details.	The information is available on the website and in the course details (yes/no)

<p>The University conducts more systematic work against racism and discrimination based on disability.</p>	<p>HYY lobbies the University to create an antiracist strategy programme with a clear plan for antiracist action. HYY advocates for the inclusion of an extensive selection of measures against discrimination based on disability in University's accessibility plan.</p> <p>HYY lobbies the University to hire antiracism and accessibility specialists who coordinate and monitor the realisation of the strategy programme and accessibility plan.</p>	<p>The University has an antiracist strategy programme (yes/no)</p> <p>The University has an accessibility plan (yes/no)</p> <p>The University has hired antiracism and accessibility specialists (yes/partially/no)</p>
<p>The implementation plans of the University's Strategic Plan pay more attention to equality themes than at present.</p>	<p>HYY influences the implementation plan for 2025–2028 to ensure that it accounts for the promotion of antiracism and accessibility.</p>	<p>HYY's objectives are realised in the implementation plan (%)</p>
<p>Study units have flexible completion methods whenever possible.</p>	<p>HYY assesses problem areas related to the completion methods of study units together with the persons in charge of academic affairs in organisations.</p>	<p>Problem areas in the selection of flexible completion methods have been identified (yes/no)</p>

## SOCIETY

Objective	Measure	Indicator
The Ministry of Education and Culture links the accessibility plans of higher education institutions as part of their performance management and quality assessment.	HYY follows the discussion on the role of accessibility plans in the funding model and quality assessment of higher education. The matter is next brought up in connection with updating the sections on equality in the Policy Paper.	HYY has highlighted the role of the accessibility plan in the funding model and quality assessment of higher education (yes/no)
The Equality Act is amended in such a way that the actions of higher education institutions and other educational institutions are recognised as discrimination in situations where an institution is informed of a student having experienced harassment but fails to take appropriate measures.	The Student Union supports the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman in advocating the amendment.	Attention has been brought on the need for the amendment (yes/no)