

APPROVED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE  
COUNCIL ON 30 MAY 2023

# EQUALITY PLAN OF THE STUDENT UNION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI





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# EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2026

## ABOUT THE EQUALITY PLAN

*‘Equality means that all human beings are equal regardless of their gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion and belief, opinion, disability, health, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.’<sup>1</sup>*

The Student Union of the University of Helsinki works towards being a diverse, intersectionally feminist community. The Student Union works to identify and eradicate discrimination that occurs in its operations and structures. Everyone must be able to feel safe in the Student Union’s activities and experience equal treatment. No-one’s integrity should be violated, and even though everyone has the right to express their opinion, speech that violates the equality of other people is not tolerated. In conflicts, the Student Union respects the presumption of innocence, recognising it as an essential component of a safer environment, whilst also providing appropriate support to all involved parties.

Discrimination, harassment, racism and unequal treatment must not occur in the Student Union or the organisations operating under it. Different forms of discrimination include discrimination related to disabilities or health status, or ableism; age discrimination, or ageism; discrimination related to gender, or sexism; discrimination related to ethnicity or background, or racism; linguistic discrimination; discrimination related to social class; discrimination related to religion, ideology or opinion; and discrimination related to sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status.

Everyone has the right to their privacy in the Student Union. Everyone can choose what they wish to tell or not tell others about their personal matters, including gender, sexual orientation, background, income level, health status or any other matter covered by privacy protection.

The Equality Plan for 2024–2026 is a document guiding the operations of the Student Union. The plan describes how the Student Union, its Board and its employees promote equality in both the Student Union and the organisations operating under it. The purpose and operating methods of organisations operating under HYY must not conflict with the Student Union’s objectives or Equality Plan.<sup>2</sup> The Student Union is also supported in its equality work by its committees, while HYY ensures and supports the realisation of equality in the committees. The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/mita-on-yhdenvertaisuus>, 5 April 2023, unofficial translation.

<sup>2</sup> Rules for organisations operating under HYY, approved by the Financial Committee on 28 February 2023.

33 Equality Plan does not describe how the Student Union influences the realisation of equality at the  
34 University of Helsinki or in society. The Student Union's Policy Paper defines HYY's advocacy goals  
35 related to equality.

36 The Equality Plan was updated during spring 2023. Members of the Student Union,  
37 HYY's committees and organisations operating under HYY were all given the opportunity to  
38 comment on the previous plan, and the Representative Council held a preliminary discussion on  
39 the plan's update process in its February meeting. The open comment round lasted through  
40 February. Five members and two organisations submitted their comments, which focused especially  
41 on discussing racism more openly, the inclusion of students who belong to gender or sexual  
42 minorities, equality between campuses and increasing communication about HYY's equality work.

43 The first proposal for the new Equality Plan was drafted in March. The Central Office  
44 was given an opportunity to comment on the draft, after which the Board discussed the new version.  
45 A comment round for the Representative Council was organised in April, and the Board then  
46 reviewed the final version once more. The Representative Council approved the new plan in May.

47 This plan consists of 5 sections and 34 objectives. The sections are divided by theme.  
48 Listed in the sections are objectives, measures, the parties responsible for the implementation of  
49 each entry and indicators to help monitor the realisation of each objective. The objectives portray  
50 an ideal state of affairs that the Student Union strives towards, whereas the measures are concrete  
51 steps to be taken in 2024–2026: HYY conducts its work according to the measures in order to reach  
52 the objectives in the long run. Most of the objectives include two measures. The first section mainly  
53 concerns HYY's internal structures and guidelines, whereas the other sections deal with HYY's  
54 events, communication, language policy and organisations operating under HYY.

55 The implementation of the Equality Plan is assessed with a report made annually, and  
56 the objectives are assessed on a scale of achieved (all featured measures achieved) – partly achieved  
57 (at least half of the measures achieved) – not achieved (less than half of the measures achieved).  
58 The main responsibility for the assessment lies with the member of the Board and specialist who  
59 are in charge of equality. The plan will be updated in 2026 to meet the needs and goals of the time.

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## HYY'S STRUCTURES AND INTERNAL OPERATIONS

No.	Objective	Measure	Responsibility	Indicator
1	Everyone at HYY's Central Office is acquainted with the Equality Plan.	The new Board is introduced to the Equality Plan at the start of each year. New employees are introduced to the plan when they start in their position. The entire Central Office is introduced to the plan whenever the plan is updated.	Main sector	Board has been introduced to the plan (yes/no), new employees have been introduced to the plan (yes/no), the entire Central Office has been introduced to the plan after any possible update (yes/no)
2	HYY actively realises and monitors equality in the Student Union.	The Student Union has an equality sector operating in it. One specialist and at least one member of the Board have equality as their area of responsibility. The realisation of the Equality Plan is monitored, and an annual report is made on this.	Main sector, equality sector	Equality sector includes a specialist and a member of the Board (yes/no), annual report has been made and presented to the Representative Council (yes/no)
3	The Student Union offers help and support to students who have experienced bullying, harassment, racism or other inappropriate treatment at the University, within the Student Union or in an organisation operating under the Student Union.	The Student Union has two harassment contact persons who offer help to HYY's members and organisations operating under HYY. The contact persons receive training on their duties from HYY. The contact persons record the number and nature of harassment cases. Information on the harassment con-	Main sector, harassment contact persons	Two trained harassment contact persons (yes/no), number and nature of cases has been recorded (yes/no), information on the harassment contact persons has been provided to members and organisations (yes/no)

		tact persons is provided to members and organisations.		
4	HYY has principles of safer space in use, and students are familiar with them.	The need to update the principles of safer space is assessed every year. The Student Union's members are reminded of the principles at the start of the academic year and when participating in HYY's events or the operation of its administrative bodies. The principles are also easily available on HYY's website and physically on display at HYY's events.	Equality sector, events sector	Principles have been assessed (yes/no), communication about the principles has been done, and the principles are available on the website and physically on display at HYY's events (yes/no)
5	Every student knows how to act in a harassment situation.	HYY has instructions on how to act in harassment situations easily available in Finnish, Swedish and English. The instructions are placed on display on HYY's premises, and members are reminded of them at the start of each academic year.	Equality sector	Instructions exist (yes/no), communication about the instructions has been done (yes/no)
6	HYY treats all applicants equally in recruitments regardless of their background or other personal characteristics.	The Student Union encourages people from different backgrounds to apply in recruitments with a diversity statement. The principle of positive action is used in the recruitment of personnel. HYY uses anonymous recruitment in the first	Main sector	Diversity statement and positive action in use (yes/no), anonymous recruitment used (yes/no)

		stage of the recruitments.		
7	HYY is a multilingual work community.	HYY is a multilingual work community. The level of Finnish proficiency required for different duties is assessed whenever new employees are recruited.	Main sector	Required level of Finnish proficiency for different duties has been assessed (yes/no)
8	An atmosphere in which the beliefs and opinions of other people are respected prevails in the Representative Council.	Representative Council members receive training on developing and upholding a good operating culture and respect for other people's opinions. Common ground rules are established for election campaigning in the Representative Council elections.	Main sector	Representative Council has received training (yes/no), ground rules for campaigning have been established (yes/no)
9	The Student Union takes gender diversity into account in its activities.	HYY avoids gender-based categorisations and gender-specific terms as well as challenges stereotypical views of gender. If it is necessary to ask a person's gender in surveys or forms, the provided options take gender diversity outside the binary into account.	Equality sector	Gender-based categorisation is not used (yes/no), when asking for gender, the provided options allow people to decide not to respond and take gender diversity into account (yes/no)
10	The Student Union supports students with children.	Students with children are provided with information on studying with a family. The information is available online, and it is kept up to date. Students with children receive	Equality sector	Information is available (yes/no), communication about Little HYY and the instructions has been done (yes/no),

		regular communication about Little HYY's childcare services. Funding for Little HYY is sought from the City of Helsinki, and one full-time employee is recruited for Little HYY.		funding for Little HYY has been sought from the City of Helsinki (yes/no), Little HYY has one full-time employee hired by HYY (yes/no)
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63 EVENTS

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No.	Objective	Measure	Responsibility	Indicator
11	The Student Union's events are accessible.	The required level of accessibility is defined for each of HYY's recurring events. Different aspects of accessibility are considered, including but not limited to price, premises, location and sensory issues.	Events sector	Required level of accessibility has been defined for HYY's events (yes/no), different aspects of accessibility have been considered (yes/no), HYY's events have achieved the required level of accessibility defined for them (yes/no)
12	HYY decreases period poverty at its events.	Menstrual products are available at HYY's events.	Events sector	Menstrual products have been available (yes/no)
13	The accessibility information for events can be found easily.	Comprehensive and up-to-date information on the accessibility of events is provided in event details and communication.	Events sector	Accessibility information has been provided in event details (yes/no), communication on the accessibility information has



				been done (yes/no)
14	HYY's events are accessible to students from different campuses.	The Student Union organises activities, such as events and meetings, on all four campuses. Feedback is collected to increase HYY's visibility on all campuses.	Main sector, events sector	Activities have been organised on all campuses (yes/no), feedback has been collected (yes/no)
15	HYY ensures that the quality of catering at its events is the same regardless of diet or drink preferences.	Participants are asked for their diet and drink preferences in advance. Feedback is collected on the catering.	Events sector	Dietary information has been inquired in advance (yes/no), feedback has been collected (yes/no)
16	Event safety persons at HYY's events know how to operate in difficult situations and promote safety.	HYY provides its event safety persons with training on equality and possibly first aid. HYY collects feedback to assess the safety of events and to improve the accessibility of the event safety persons.	Events sector	Event safety persons have received training (yes/no), feedback has been collected (yes/no)
17	Finnish, Swedish and English songs are sung at HYY's events. They do not contain offensive lyrics.	HYY selects diverse songs to be sung at its events. The songs are discussed beforehand to prevent the use of discriminatory language. Feedback is collected on the songs. Song practices are developed based on received feedback.	Events sector	Songs in different languages have been used at HYY's events (yes/no), songs have been discussed in advance (yes/no), discriminatory songs have not been sung (have been sung /have not been sung) feedback has been collected (yes/no), song practices have

				been developed based on received feedback (yes/no)
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## LANGUAGE POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

No.	Objective	Measure	Responsibility	Indicator
18	The Student Union communicates and serves its members trilingually.	HYY has English and Swedish translators. HYY's recruitments aim at a situation in which there are people working at the Central Office who speak fluent Swedish and English. If the language proficiency of employees is not at the required level, investments are made in language training and other supportive measures.	Main sector	Translators for Swedish and English (yes/no), member and organisational services are available trilingually (yes/no)
19	International and Swedish-speaking students see the Student Union's organisational field and operating in organisations as an attractive option and as an opportunity for everyone to participate regardless of their language.	The Student Union encourages organisations to operate multilingually. HYY's Guide for Organisations includes instructions on how to take international students and language matters into consideration in organisational activities and, for instance, a trilingual glossary. The Student Union offers training on and communicates about internationality	International sector	Guide for Organisations includes information on internationality and language affairs (yes/no), training on internationality has been offered (yes/no)

		and multilingualism in organisations.		
20	International students are able to actively participate in the Student Union’s activities.	HYY supports its committees, such as the International Committee, and other low-threshold ways to get involved in the Student Union’s activities. HYY advertises its activities and the opportunities it offers to international students.	International sector	International Committee operates in HYY (yes/no), HYY communicates to international students (yes/no)
21	Swedish-speaking students are able to actively participate in the Student Union’s activities in their own language.	HYY supports its committees, such as the Bilingualism Committee, and other low-threshold ways to get involved in the Student Union activities. HYY advertises its activities and the opportunities it offers to Swedish-speaking students.	Volunteer sector	Bilingualism Committee operates in HYY (yes/no), HYY communicates to Swedish-speaking students (yes/no)
22	International and Swedish-speaking students see volunteering positions as attractive options and as an opportunity for everyone to participate regardless of their language.	HYY communicates clearly about volunteering positions in which everyone can serve regardless of their language. HYY offers support to English- and Swedish-speaking volunteers.	Volunteer sector	Language requirements have been clearly stated in communication (yes/no), support has been offered (yes/no)
23	Committees receive linguistic support from HYY’s Central Office.	Committees are encouraged to communicate in multiple languages when possible and can use the services of HYY’s translators.	Volunteer sector	Translators are available for committees (yes/no), committees have been informed about the translators (yes/no)

24	All services and communication of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS), Nyyti ry, the Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region (Hoas), the Finnish Student Sports Federation and UniSport are realised equally in Finnish, Swedish and English.	HYY monitors the organisations' communication and cooperates with them to strengthen their trilingual communication.	City sector	Services and communication are trilingual (yes/no)
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69 COMMUNICATION

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No.	Objective	Measure	Responsibility	Indicator
25	HYY adheres to the Act on the Provision of Digital Services.	An accessibility survey and accessibility statement are made on HYY's communication, and accessibility is developed based on these measures.	Communication sector	Accessibility survey has been conducted (yes/no), accessibility statement has been made (yes/no)
26	HYY's communication reflects the diversity of HYY's members and other target groups.	Special groups, such as various minorities and students with children, are taken into account in HYY's communication. HYY's image is diverse and represents different students. Stories about the diverse members and organisations in HYY and the student community appear in HYY's communication.	Communication sector	Different groups are taken into consideration (yes/no), different groups are represented (yes/no)
27	HYY's work on equality is visible to its members.	The Student Union communicates about its equality work to its members through an	Equality sector	Blog post or some other publication has been

		<p>annual blog post or other publication. HYY annually creates content for social media in cooperation with minority groups' interest organisations operating under HYY, introducing the activities of the organisations in question. The Student Union runs a pilot on rewarding the equality act of the year within HYY. HYY conducts equality surveys investigating the state of equality in the Student Union and at the University at regular intervals.</p>		<p>written and communication about it has been done (yes/no), content on the activities of minority groups' interest organisations has been created for social media (yes/no), survey has been conducted (yes/no)</p>
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72 ORGANISATIONS

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No.	Objective	Measure	Responsibility	Indicator
28	Organisations operating under HYY promote the realisation of equality in their activities. HYY encourages and supports the organisations in their work for equality.	HYY annually provides organisations with diverse training on various themes related to equality, such as event safety, the prevention of harassment, accessibility and ways to actively combat racism, ableism, ageism, sexism and discrimination and hate speech based on sexual orientation, gender or social class. HYY offers organisations guidance with	Organisational sector	Training events have been organised (yes/no, number of training events, number of organisations that signed up), guidance has been offered (yes/no)

		difficult situations in Finnish, Swedish and English.		
29	Training for organisations is offered in Finnish, Swedish and English.	HYY produces its training materials in Finnish, Swedish and English and investigates the possibility of offering training in multiple languages in cooperation with other student unions. The feasibility of recording training events and subtitling the recordings is investigated.	Organisational sector	Materials have been offered trilingually (yes/no), possibility of multilingual training events has been investigated (yes/no), feasibility of recording and subtitling has been investigated (yes/no)
30	HYY has an up-to-date Equality Guide aimed at organisational use.	HYY has an Equality Guide for organisations to help them increase equality in their activities. The guide is updated to expand the parts on antiracism and anti-ableism. More extensive information is also added to the guide on the prevention of discrimination based on disability, sexual orientation, gender and social class.	Equality sector	Equality Guide exists (yes/no), Equality Guide has been updated (yes/no)
31	HYY and organisations cooperate to promote equality.	HYY annually meets with and consults minority groups' interest organisations operating under it as well as other people interested in advancing equality in organisations, such as harassment contact persons and equality officers, and facilitates	Equality sector	Equality-themed meeting with minority groups' interest organisations operating under HYY and the people involved in organisations has been held (yes/no),

		cooperation between such people. HYY communicates to organisations about the Equality Plan and Equality Guide.		communication on the plan and guide has been done (yes/no)
32	HYY provides organisations with a financial incentive to work on the promotion of equality in their activities.	The allocation model for the operating grants includes a section on equality. The Financial Committee is given a recommendation to review the equality section of the allocation model.	Organisational sector	Allocation model has an equality section (yes/no), equality section has been updated if needed (yes/no)
33	The Student Union's premises are accessible.	An accessibility review is made for the New Student House and the building's accessibility information updated after the renovation has been completed. Detailed accessibility information is compiled on the premises and made available on HYY's website. The information also takes sensory issues into account.	Organisational sector	An accessibility review has been made (yes/no), detailed accessibility information has been published (yes/no)
34	HYY has accessibility aids that can be borrowed.	The acquisition of new accessibility aids is investigated. Organisations are provided with information and instructions on using the induction loop as well as any other accessibility aids in the Equality Guide.	Equality sector	Acquisition of aids has been investigated (yes/no), communication on the induction loop has been done (yes/no)