

# CIVIC POLICY PROGRAM OF THE CAPITAL REGION STUDENT UNIONS



**HELGA**



**Laureamko.**



# Foreword

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the Urban Policy Program of the student unions in the Helsinki metropolitan area. This program serves as a guide for student representatives, outlining how we believe the region should develop in the coming term.

Throughout 2017, representatives from ASK, Helga, Laureamko, METKA, O'Diako, and HUMAKO collaborated to create this program. These student unions have long been involved in urban policy advocacy, with a notable collaboration during the OPKU6 service design project in 2017.

In spring 2017, a working group was formed with representatives from each student union to develop the Urban Policy Program. The group included:

Chair

Maria Jokinen, METKA

Vice Chair

Saana Simonen, Laureamko

Members:

Annika Eskman and Roni Huttunen, ASK

Aleksi Säteri, Andrey Veremenko, Jani Mäntysaari, and Sini Heino, Helga

Gurmann Saini and Theo Tyrväinen, HUMAKO

Jari Nuutinen and Juha Rautiainen, Laureamko

Aleksi Nenonen, Matti Tujula, and Outi Häkkinen, METKA

Hannele Kirveskoski and Iiris Hynönen, O'Diako

The group aimed to finalize the Urban Policy Program by the end of 2017 for approval by the student unions. Our goal was to provide a clear and effective tool for both policymakers and student advocates.

Early on, the program was divided into three main areas: housing and urban planning, services, and transportation. We sought input from experts within our unions and welcomed comments from boards, representatives, and students. The program was approved by the student representatives in autumn 2017.

Collaboration among the student unions has been marked by a focus on solutions, teamwork, and a shared commitment to enhancing student life. Open dialogue has been crucial in ensuring a program that benefits everyone involved. We hope this commitment shines through in the final product.

The student unions of the Helsinki metropolitan area encourage questions and discussions to further improve our region.

Enjoy reading!

Maria Jokinen

Chair, Urban Policy Program Working Group

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## Introduction

The Capital Region comprises four cities: Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, and Kauniainen, together forming a hub with approximately 1.2 million residents (1). Among them, about 100,000 are university students (2), making up roughly 10% of the region's population. Additionally, there are approximately 61,000 secondary education students in the area (3). Municipalities in the Capital Region are legally obligated to collaborate on waste management and public transport (4), and further cooperation is outlined in agreements like MAL2016, focusing on land use, housing, and transportation (5).

Arcada Student Union - ASK, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences Student Union Helga, Humak University of Applied Sciences Student Union HUMAKO, Laurea University of Applied Sciences Student Union, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Student Union METKA, and Diaconia University of Applied Sciences Student Union O'Diako represent students in the Capital Region's universities of applied sciences.

These student unions aim to unite their members within their respective universities and advocate for their social, educational, and overall well-being in society. Their activities are governed by Section 41 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014).

The student unions in the Capital Region are dedicated to the goals outlined in this political program and are committed to its ongoing development. This urban policy program for Capital Region student unions was enacted by their decision on November 30, 2017, with provisions for updates as needed.

## City Policy Program

This policy program focuses on three crucial areas of influence for students:

- Housing and urban planning
- Services
- Transportation

These areas are vital for supporting students' well-being through city development.

Everyone, including students and city residents, can easily participate in shaping the city's future. Discussions with city officials and decision-makers are open to all. The city's planning process strives to engage a diverse range of city residents in these discussions.

## Housing and Urban Planning

*Students form a diverse group with varying housing needs. They represent a broad range of demographics, so it's important to consider accessibility for those with disabilities and the different requirements of students who have families.*

*When building student housing, it's crucial to adapt to changing trends and cater to the varied needs of students. Instead of focusing on dormitory-style living, there's a push towards constructing studios and apartments suitable for shared living among friends.*

*Students in the Helsinki metropolitan area should have access to affordable housing close to their campus and with good transportation links. Rather than clustering students together, housing is distributed across diverse residential neighborhoods near essential services. Efforts are also made to prevent segregation in urban planning and new residential developments.*

*The urban environment is maintained to be clean and efforts are made to enhance its attractiveness. Urban culture development emphasizes community engagement, improving opportunities for events within residential areas. Green spaces are preserved, and new planning includes innovative solutions like rooftop gardens.*

### Objectives

- Housing
  - Ensure affordable student housing.
  - Increase the production of new student apartments, focusing on shared and studio options that cater to diverse groups, including families.
  - Ensure all housing allows for separate lease agreements.
  - Prioritize accessibility in all construction projects.
  - Develop temporary housing options responsibly to prevent them from becoming permanent solutions.
- Urban Planning
  - Plan student housing near campuses and accessible transportation routes.
  - Promote diverse, inclusive residential areas during planning and construction to prevent segregation.
  - Preserve and enhance green spaces, including creating new features like rooftop gardens and urban farms.
  - Let market demand determine parking needs in housing developments.

### Services

*The municipalities in the Helsinki metropolitan area provide digital access to services and documents in Finnish, Swedish, and English. Students receive comprehensive healthcare regardless of their residence or study location. Early childhood education is high-quality, free, and flexible. Efforts are underway to enhance service availability and offerings in Swedish and English.*

*Municipalities offer diverse and free recreational opportunities. Cities support public events and encourage community-initiated activities.*

## Goals

- Digitalization
  - Wireless, free internet is available throughout the Helsinki metropolitan area.
  - City services are accessible on common internet-connected smart devices.
  - A mobile app integrates all city services seamlessly, eliminating redundant information requests.
  - The city encourages digital service delivery by housing providers, ensuring safety documents are digitally accessible.
- Healthcare and Family Services
  - University of applied sciences students primarily access healthcare through the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS).
  - Healthcare services are accessible in both study and residence municipalities.
  - Beyond basic healthcare, students access dental care, maternity and child health services, mental health support, and sexual health services.
  - Free contraception and STI prevention are available to those under 25.
  - Students benefit from free basic healthcare, childcare, and after-school activities as local services.
  - Early childhood education is free, and daycare services are offered flexibly around the clock.
  - All services maintain quality standards and metrics for improved accessibility and quality.
- Leisure and Recreation
  - Each student enjoys local access to free sports facilities, playgrounds, after-school clubs, libraries, and service centers with reservable spaces.
  - Streamlined event organization facilitates small events with minimal bureaucracy.
  - Nearby parks, jogging paths, and local sports facilities are freely accessible to residents.
  - Community-focused city culture development promotes event hosting in residential areas.
  - Libraries and service centers lend items for infrequent use.
  - Youth services tailor offerings to 18-29-year-olds, catering to specific age groups.

## Transportation

*In the Helsinki metropolitan area, students and others move easily, effortlessly, and ecologically using public transportation. Significant discounts on public transportation services are granted to all students. The public transportation network is extensive and connects campuses together, making commuting easy.*

*New ways are being devised to integrate bicycles and private cars into public transportation, making them a natural part of it. Cycling is smooth and safe throughout the Helsinki metropolitan area. Public transportation is heavily focused on rail networks. Shared-use cars and similar services are accessible to everyone, with cities providing the framework for these services.*

### Objectives

- Maintain and expand student discounts for public transportation services for those over 30 years old.
- Ensure ecological and safe considerations in public transportation planning.
- Cities create frameworks and incentives for shared-use car services.
- Emphasize park-and-ride facilities and safe bike storage, ensuring smooth integration of various modes of transport.
- Ensure safe public transportation at all times of the day.
- Expand the rail network beyond the city center to make it more attractive and improve cross-city traffic.
- Develop cycling infrastructure with safe, sensible, and clearly delineated paths.

**Lähteet:**

(1) <https://www.helsinginseutu.fi/hs/selkosivut-fi/kaupungit/paakaupunkiseutu/>

(2) <http://www.worldstudentcapital.fi/fi/tutkimus/>

(3) [https://vipunen.fi/fi-fi/\\_layouts/15/xlviewer.aspx?id=/fi-fi/Raportit/Ammatillinen%20koulutus%20-%20opiskelijat%20-%20maakunta.xlsb](https://vipunen.fi/fi-fi/_layouts/15/xlviewer.aspx?id=/fi-fi/Raportit/Ammatillinen%20koulutus%20-%20opiskelijat%20-%20maakunta.xlsb)

(4) <http://finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2009/20090829>

(5) [http://www.ym.fi/fi-FI/Maankaytto\\_ja\\_rakentaminen/Maankayton\\_suunnittelun\\_ohjaus/Maankayton\\_liikenteen\\_ja\\_asumisen\\_aiesopimukset](http://www.ym.fi/fi-FI/Maankaytto_ja_rakentaminen/Maankayton_suunnittelun_ohjaus/Maankayton_liikenteen_ja_asumisen_aiesopimukset)