



# 2024 Environmental Programme of the Student Union of the University of Turku

*Student Union Council meeting 11 Sep*

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## 2 1. Introduction - TYU as an environmental actor and climate influencer

3 TYU Environmental programme provides guidelines for considering  
4 environmental issues in the Student Union of the University of Turku. The  
5 focus of the programme is on the internal activities and influencing of the  
6 Student Union, but it also serves as a basis in supporting the activities of  
7 student organisations. Under each perspective have been entered related  
8 objectives **and measures to achieve them**. The target of TYU climate  
9 influencing include TYU members, organisations, university and other  
10 stakeholders as well as decision-makers in different levels of administration.  
11 Serving as example, monitoring actions and communicating while utilising  
12 this programme constitute key forms of TYU climate influencing.

13 The term environment primarily refers to the local and global living  
14 environment, the state and quality of which people's physical, social and  
15 cultural activities impact on. Climate influencing is an established part of TYU  
16 activities. In accordance with TYU Political Agenda, the Student Union shall  
17 have an active role in the societal discussion related to environmental and  
18 climate crisis and in the activities preventing the climate crisis. The Student  
19 Union shall be a pioneer discussing actively with stakeholders, such as the  
20 University of Turku, the City and students.

21 TYU Strategy raises the ecological, social, economic and administrative  
22 responsibility as the key principle of the activities of the Student Union. Based  
23 on this, the Environmental Programme especially servers in pioneering  
24 ecological responsibility, but also interacts with other themes related to  
25 sustainability.

26 Responsibility in stopping the climate crisis and the biodiversity crises is with  
27 the public power, especially in the global north. Public decision-making shall  
28 be in line with the valid International Climate Convention and to target  
29 controlling the rise of the average temperature of the Earth at the current  
30 level of 1.5 degrees. Finland needs to be a pioneer and to promote a more  
31 ambitious climate policy in international climate negotiations and in the  
32 European Union.

33 TYU demands actions to stop both the climate crisis and the biodiversity  
34 crises and to take actions to reproduce the environment. The Political  
35 Agenda states that: *"In all decision-making, the effect of the decisions on the*



36 *equality between generations should be taken into account*". The climate  
37 crisis is the largest generational policy issue of our time, since due to  
38 insufficient political actions, the many consequences of the climate crisis,  
39 overuse of natural resources and biodiversity loss as well as the psychological  
40 burden are accumulated in young people.

## 41 **2. Sustainable TYU**

42 The climate crisis and biodiversity loss are the biggest challenges of our time  
43 and will heavily influence our future. TYU has its part both in the  
44 environmental burden and in solving the crises. TYU activities cause negative  
45 environmental impacts, for example, through emissions. These impacts can  
46 be minimised, for example, through emission reductions and choices that  
47 take the environment into account. In addition, TYU can show example for its  
48 own organisations on how they can be part of solving these crises in their  
49 activities. This section states how TYU pursues climate positivity in its  
50 activities. Hence, in addition to influencing, TYU can also prevent the climate  
51 crisis and biodiversity loss with its own activities.

52

### 53 **2.1 Reducing emissions and negative impacts**

54 By reducing the emissions of its activities, TYU can minimise the negative  
55 environmental impact it causes.

56 **TYU makes a two-year emissions reduction plan** (environmental sector,  
57 Executive Board).

- 58 – In order for the emissions reduction to happen in reality, TYU makes a  
59 two-year emissions reduction plan on the basis of the results of  
60 measuring the carbon footprint and biodiversity footprint.

61

#### 62 **2.1.1 Partnerships**

63 Partnerships and company cooperation are a growing part of TYU activities.  
64 What sort of partnerships TYU advertises and uses in its activities impacts  
65 both TYU's own activities and the choices made by TYU members. In the  
66 selection of partners, TYU values and the objectives of the environmental  
67 programme will be taken into account. In addition, partners are evaluated  
68 from the perspective of their own environmental impact. TYU aims at  
69 selecting as responsible partners as possible.



70

71 **Partnerships are evaluated also by considering the environment** (company  
72 relations, environmental sector). The sustainability of the cooperation partner  
73 is evaluated from these perspectives:

- 74 – Do the values of TYU and the possible partner meet?
- 75 – The climate and environmental impact of the activities. What are the  
76 activities of the partner like and how big impact do the activities have  
77 on the environment?
- 78 – What sort of actions the partner takes in order to minimise  
79 environmental impacts.
- 80 – Whether the partner has environmental or responsibility programme  
81 or similar. Does the possible partner aim at minimising environmental  
82 harm?

83

#### 84 **2.1.2 Sustainable events**

85 TYU organises every year numerous small and large events. As with other TYU  
86 activities, events should also be aimed at organising as sustainably as  
87 possible. By organising events and occasions with a consideration of the  
88 environment, the negative environmental impacts of the events are reduced  
89 and the community is influenced by showing example of how to organise  
90 sustainable events. Already in the planning phase, it is important to  
91 determine which principle are taken into account when organising an event.

92 Especially with bigger events, TYU aims at reducing their carbon footprint,  
93 and an environmental plan is made for the events in the planning phase.  
94 When organising events, it is assessed how the emissions of the event can be  
95 reduced and carbon footprint is calculated for the big events.

96 **The carbon footprint of events is measured** (cultural sector and  
97 environmental sector)

98 **Environmental plans are made for events** (cultural sector, volunteer,  
99 environmental sector).

- 100 – The carbon footprint of the events is reduced whenever possible.  
101 Responsible sector the event sector, environmental sector helps.

- 102 – **The plans consider the effect of activities on biodiversity.**



103 Voluntary compensations are taken into use in the events (cultural sector,  
104 environmental sector)

105

### 106 2.1.3 Procurement and premises

107 Making ecologically sustainable procurement and **reducing**  
108 **overconsumption** are part of the everyday choices of the Student Union and  
109 organisations. Adjusting consumption habits has significant environmental  
110 effects, and environmental effects should be considered in purchase, use and  
111 maintenance of premises and material.

112 **TYU food purchases are sustainable** (Executive Board).

113 - **TYU primarily serves vegan or waste food taking into account food**  
114 **allergies.**

115 - **TYU prefers Fair Trade certificate products, domestic and locally**  
116 **produced seasonal products and organic food.**

117 - **The amount of food waste will decrease.**

118 - **TYU does not make unnecessary procurement and supports circular**  
119 **economy.**

120 - **Procurements are planned to be as long-term as possible. For**  
121 **example, overall badges are planned as multi-annual, whenever**  
122 **possible.**

123 - **Products whose production chains are transparent and take into**  
124 **account social and ecological responsibility are preferred.**

125 - **No electricity or water is wasted in the premises and events of TYU.**

126

### 127 2.1.4 Travelling

128 When planning the travel manner, the impacts of travelling on the  
129 environment must be considered. Emissions from travelling are reduced by  
130 preferring public transport and travelling by train. In cases where the use of  
131 car or bus is necessary, the vehicle is sought to be filled as effectively as  
132 possible. Flight travelling is aimed to be minimised and the harms of the  
133 emissions cause by flying are reversed.



134

135 **TYU monitors and reduces the emissions caused by its travelling**  
136 (environmental, main and international sector).

137 – Public transport and especially trains are preferred when travelling  
138 to seminars.

139 – As ecological as possible travelling is pursued in foreign seminars,  
140 preferring travelling by land and avoiding non-direct flights.

141 – If it is necessary to fly to an event, the importance of participation  
142 for TYU promotion of student interests is considered and, if possible,  
143 only one representative to the event is sent.

144 – The harmful effects of the emissions caused by flying are reversed.

145

## 146 **2.2 Reversing the impacts of emissions**

147 **Reducing emissions is the primary way of decreasing the carbon footprint.**

148 **Since not all emissions can be reduced,** a part of the way towards carbon  
149 neutrality or positivity is reversing the negative impacts of emissions created.

150 **We use the term "reverse" (kumota) in accordance with the instructions of**  
151 **the Ministry of the Environment.** Reversing is made through different

152 projects related to restoration of the environment, research or carbon  
153 fixation. Projects are available in the open carbon market. When the activities

154 continue, the measures offered to reverse the harm of emissions available in  
155 the open carbon market should be critically assessed. For example, the

156 Ministry of the Environment has listed minimum criteria for the targets to  
157 fulfil. With these criteria, the effectiveness and functionality of alternatives

158 offered by open carbon market can be assessed.

159 **TYU reverses at least part of the negative impacts of its emissions.**

160 - TYU selects the criteria for the reverse of the harm of the emissions

161 - TYU finds the suitable target for reversing the emissions and reverses  
162 part of the impact of its emissions.

163

## 164 **3. TYU as a climate and environmental influencer**

165 Environmental affairs are a cross-cutting theme in the society and thus every  
166 actor in the Student Union and organisations has the possibility to conduct



167 environmental influencing. Active environmental influencing can increase  
168 the participation of students in environmental affairs. The aim of  
169 environmental influencing is to increase awareness of the themes of  
170 sustainable development and environmental crises and to influence TYU  
171 organisations, other cooperation parties and the surrounding society in  
172 favour of concrete environmental actions. **For example, at the local level, we**  
173 **particularly influence the well-being of the Archipelago Sea.**

174 **TYU has an active role in the societal discussion related to the climate and**  
175 **environmental crisis** (Executive Board and the Member responsible for  
176 Environmental Affairs).

- 177 – The political discussion related to the environment is followed and  
178 contributed from the student perspective.
- 179 – During the elections, environmental themes are brought up from  
180 the student perspective.

181 **TYU promotion of environmental student interests is well-planned and**  
182 **purposeful** (Executive Board, environmental sector).

- 183 – The environmental sector monitors the achievement of the  
184 objectives of the Environmental Programme.
- 185 – The sectors discuss the promotion of environmental student  
186 interests at least once a year.

187 **TYU promotion of environmental student interests involves the entire**  
188 **Student Union** (Executive Board).

- 189 – The volunteers of the environmental sector and the organisation  
190 representatives responsible for environmental affairs have the  
191 possibility to be heard in the programme planning of TYU  
192 promotion of environmental student interests.
- 193 – Volunteers are invited to meet cooperation parties on  
194 environmental affairs.

195 **TYU promotion of environmental student interests aims at making**  
196 **sustainability-related information accessible** (environmental and  
197 communication sectors, volunteers).

- 198 – Sustainability-related campaigns and events are organised,  
199 focusing on easy information on concrete climate actions in  
200 cooperation with the university and volunteers.





201 **TYU encourages active citizenship also with environmental values** (Executive  
202 Board, environmental sector).

203 – TYU follows the campaigns and demonstrations demanding  
204 climate actions and whenever possible, participates in them, while  
205 also encouraging organisations to join, for example, the Climate  
206 March.

207 – TYU actively takes a stance in favour of stopping the climate crisis by  
208 participating in or organising at least one campaign or event per  
209 year.

210

### 211 **3.1 Environmental influencing in the promotion of student interests**

212 TYU environmental values guide the different operational sectors in a cross-  
213 cutting manner. This section reviews the environmental influencing  
214 objectives of the largest student interest promotion sectors and the  
215 instructions impacting the activities within the sector.

216 The diversity and pleasantness of the environment is of primary importance  
217 both for students' happiness and student culture. When promotion of  
218 student interests in premises is conducted, sustainable construction, multi-  
219 use premises, pleasantness and biodiversity are always taken into  
220 consideration.

221 **The sector for social affairs brings up the relation between the environment**  
222 **and well-being** Climate and environmental crises cause, especially in young  
223 people, significant psychologically heavy symptoms. Biodiversity is  
224 important for physical well-being and pleasant outdoor areas also encourage  
225 sports. In the equality between generations, the cross-generational impacts  
226 of the environmental crises should be considered.

227 – In the wider social affairs influencing, the ecological sustainability of  
228 the system is taken into account.

229 – The consumption of vegetarian food is aimed to be increased and  
230 the health impacts of vegetable-based diet is emphasised.

231 – When influencing student's eating, ethical and health perspectives  
232 are brought up.

233 – The importance of outdoor sports is brought up to Campussport.





234 – The combining of well-being events with nature is continued, and  
235 the common theme of diversity and well-being is brought up in  
236 events.

237 **The sector for academic affairs influences to make environmental themes**  
238 **visible in education. TYU voice is heard in environmental affairs at the**  
239 **university.** The teaching of environmental sciences increases the  
240 attractiveness of the university and provides employment possibilities. TYU  
241 supports the view that the Union is ready to change its educational  
242 programmes in accordance with societal needs.

243 – TYU is represented in the environment-related groups of the  
244 university. TYU communicates the work made in the group for  
245 organisations and members.

246 – TYU also brings up environmental themes in the meetings of the  
247 Rectors deans and organisations.

248 – All degree should include entities including sustainable  
249 development themes in a manner suitable for the discipline.

250 – The University of Turku should continue to provide studies in  
251 environmental sciences.

252 – Mere awareness of environmental crises or sustainable  
253 development principles is not enough but TYU should support  
254 solution-oriented educational contents.

255 – The university should continue to review its sustainability research  
256 and aim at pioneering in organising sustainable teaching.

257 **Influencing campus cities for a greener everyday life of students.** (Municipal  
258 sector). The Political Agenda promotes pleasant city environment. This  
259 includes especially the use of more sustainable mobility manners but also  
260 the importance of circular economy and zero waste. It is important to  
261 support the City of Turku in its carbon neutrality objective, but also to  
262 influence to promote more ambitious aims in line with TYU values. The  
263 municipal influencing at Satakunta campuses takes into account the special  
264 needs of the cities.

265 – The importance of biodiversity for the cities is brought up.

266 – ~~Long-term perspective is supported in city planning with regard to~~  
267 ~~sustainable construction and public transport, biking and walking.~~



268 City planning supports long-term perspective in sustainable  
269 construction and in planning public transport and bike and walking  
270 routes.

271 – Attention is paid to bike safety and its easiness especially near the  
272 campus and student apartments.

273

### 274 3.2 Increasing environmental awareness and actions in organisations 275 and student community

276 The objectives in this section deal with the activities of TYY organisations and  
277 their guidance. The activities of organisations should be environmentally  
278 aware, influential and sustainable in purchases and events. In addition, TYY  
279 actors should support and instruct organisations in realising objectives.  
280 Under each perspective have been entered related objectives.

281 The activities of the organisations are supported by TYY environmental guide  
282 including more concrete measures and instructions. The organisational  
283 representative responsible for environmental affairs together with the Board  
284 are responsible for the realisation of the environmental part of the  
285 programme. The parties organising the events of organisations are  
286 responsible for the events complying with TYY Environmental Programme,  
287 the objectives of which are also found in the Environmental Guide.

#### 288 **The organisations take ecological responsible for their activities.**

289 – Organisations have a representative for environment trained for the  
290 position.

291 – Organisations have been introduced to TYY Environmental  
292 Programme.

293 – Organisations have their own environmental plans with the help of  
294 which, for example, the sustainability of events is followed.

#### 295 **Organisations' purchases are sustainable.**

296 – Organisations provide primarily vegan food and prefer Fair Trade  
297 certificate products, local or domestic seasonal products and waste  
298 food, taking into account food allergies.

299 – The amount of food waste will decrease.

300 – Organisations do not make unnecessary procurement and supports  
301 circular economy.



302 **Premises and events or organisations are sustainable.**

- 303 – No electricity or water is wasted in the premises and events of
- 304 organisations.
- 305 – Organisations decrease the emissions from travelling.
- 306 – Organisational premises recycle all waste.
- 307 – Waste produced in events is decreased.

308 **Organisations are environmental influencers.**

- 309 – Organisations uphold environmental affairs for their members.
- 310 – Subject and faculty organisations actively promote environmental
- 311 affairs in their subject or faculty.

312 **TYU influences the activities of its organisations so that ecological**  
313 **sustainability is largely realised in the university community** (environmental,  
314 organisation and communication sectors). TYU organisations are  
315 encouraged to act in accordance with the values of the Student Union, **for**  
316 **example**, through the activity support criteria.

- 317 – Environmental objectives are visible in the support criteria.
- 318 – Environmental training is organised in TYU organisational fora.
- 319 – Environmental council is held at least twice a year.
- 320 – TYU training bring up the environmental perspectives related to the
- 321 theme of the training.
- 322 – The organisational part of the Environmental Programme is actively
- 323 implemented.
- 324 – TYU communicates its environmental solutions to organisations
- 325 and members.
- 326 – Organisations are helped to understand better the environmental
- 327 impacts of their activities and concrete advice are given in order to
- 328 reduce negative environmental impacts.
- 329 – Feedback is collected from the organisations on the functionality of
- 330 TYU environmental influencing, instructions and criteria.

331

332 **4. Follow-up, reporting and updating**



333 The meeting of the objectives is followed as part of other continuous  
334 activities and the realisation of the objectives is followed for each sector in  
335 the annual reports. Objectives related to organisations are followed in  
336 accordance with the lines of the organisational section.

337 Executive Board Member for Environmental Affairs and the Secretary  
338 General follow the realisation of the programme on a yearly basis ensuring  
339 that each sector has recorded the progress of environmental objectives in  
340 the annual report. The Executive Board Member for Environmental Affairs  
341 and the employee in the environmental sector enter the actions in the  
342 annual report that are not sector-specific and compile the review on the  
343 progress of the environmental Programme in the mid-year report.

344 TYY's carbon footprint and its reduction is measured biannually with a  
345 footprint measurement. The measurement reviews what TYY carbon  
346 footprint consists of and where it could be reduced. After the measurement  
347 of the footprint, a new emissions reduction plan is made for the next two  
348 years. The realisation of the plan is followed in the annual report by the  
349 environmental sector.

350 The person responsible for environmental affairs schedules annually one  
351 situational review related to sustainability for the office staff and the  
352 Executive Board. The Executive Board Member responsible for  
353 environmental affairs together with the environmental wing reviews the  
354 topicality of the Environmental Programme and the need for updates every  
355 four years or when necessary. The Environmental Guide will be updated at  
356 least the following year after the update of the Programme.