



# FOR SCIENCE, ART AND EDUCATION ACTION PLAN FOR 2024



PROFESSORILIITTO  
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FINNISH UNION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

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# Finnish Union of University Professors

## FOCAL AREAS OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR 2024

### 1. In favour of education and the freedom of research and teaching

We will defend the freedom of research and higher education. We will emphasise the importance of science, art and education in society. Knowledge is not a matter of opinion.

Science and education are the cornerstones of mental and economic well-being in society, improved productivity development and international competitiveness. A vision of a science policy that extends beyond Government terms must quickly be drawn up for Finland. We will advocate for the drafting of a science policy vision. We will advocate for the realisation of the goals of the Act on Research and Development Funding.

We will continue our advocacy work to strengthen the autonomy of the university community and advance collegial decision making. The Universities Act should be amended and university regulations developed.

### 2. In favour of good work

We will demand that the salaries and working conditions of professors are internationally and nationally competitive with consideration for the job requirements of professors. The salary development of professors should be secured. The employment relationship security of professors should be improved. The possibility for professors to focus on their core tasks should be promoted.

We will strengthen local activities by supporting the local supervision of interest and improving communality. Our aim is to ensure that every university has a chief shop steward for professors.

We are an active participant in the overall reform of the Copyright Act. We will safeguard professors' rights to their materials and creative work.

Finnish Union of University Professors

# OPERATIONAL OUTLINES FOR 2024

## 1. IN FAVOUR OF EDUCATION AND THE FREEDOM OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING

**The Finnish Union of University Professors fosters the freedom of science, art and higher education and advances the rights that safeguard them**

We will defend the freedom of research and higher education, as it will lead to the best form of science, education and society. The freedom of research includes the freedom to choose research topics, procedures and publication methods. The freedom of education includes the right to teach as one wishes both in terms of content and method.

Science, art and education are prerequisites for free and participatory democracy as well as for the foundations of well-being, Finland's attractiveness and international competitiveness. We will emphasise the importance of science, art and education in society.

We will promote the generation of an atmosphere in Finland that is supportive of science and that values competence.

We will work in close co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and other ministries, the Academy of Finland, Universities Finland UNIFI, Tulanet, National Union of University Students in Finland SYL, Finnish Education Employers (FEE), Innovation Funding Centre Business Finland, international organisations, central employee organisations and political decision-makers.

**The Finnish Union of University Professors pursues the strengthening of resources for universities and research**

We will exert influence by drafting science policy objectives, by issuing opinions and statements, and by organising stakeholder meetings to promote investing in research and higher education in Finland.

A science policy vision that extends beyond Government terms should be created for Finland. We will advocate for the drafting of this policy. The role of parliamentary preparation in science policy should be strengthened.

The share appropriated to research, development and innovation (RDI) should be increased to 4 per cent of the GDP in accordance with the Act on Research and Development Funding. We will demand that the costs of additional intakes of students at universities be fully resourced in a way that ensures the research-based quality of education. The form of the RDI tax deduction model should be expanded.

We will demand that academic universities and universities of applied sciences be developed in accordance with the current legislation. Universities and universities of applied sciences can only increase their productivity through specialisation, so that universities specialise in university tasks and



universities of applied sciences in their own tasks. Scientific research, scientific and artistic researcher education as well as professors' titles belong to universities. They do not belong to the scope of universities of applied sciences. The higher education system cannot function efficiently and meet the multiple challenges placed on it by society without the specialisation afforded to it by the dual model.

University teaching is based on research, and as the level of research increases, so does the level of education. The competition between universities is international, and the Universities Act requires universities to ensure a high international standard. The standard of the universities is reflected in innovations and the development of the national economy. The level of university funding should be raised to that of competitor countries and focus should be shifted from funding based on the number of degrees awarded and project-specific research funding to free research funding. The amount of research funding for research institutions should also be increased.

The level and duration of the funding for the Academy of Finland, the Strategic Research Council and Business Finland should be guaranteed and long-term in nature. We will monitor how the funding based on university profiling distributed by the Academy of Finland, and the strategic funding granted by the Ministry of Education and Culture affect different universities. We will also monitor the implementation of the so-called Flagship Programme.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors strengthens the connection between research, teaching and social impact**

We will emphasise research, teaching and social impact as factors of success for Finland. A competent and educated society remains functional, even under exceptional circumstances, because it is able to be flexible and find new thinking models and solutions.

We will emphasise the importance of research-based knowledge in decision-making. The supervision carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture must respect the autonomy of universities and be based on researched information. Professors should have stronger representation on the Research and Innovation Council and in the preparatory groups.

We will draw on the expertise of our membership to produce alternatives and new ideas to serve as the groundwork for decision-making.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors endeavours to strengthen the autonomy of the university community and to advance possibilities for professors to have influence within university and scientific communities**

We will emphasise the autonomy of the university community and collegial decision making. University autonomy refers to the self-government of the university community. The academic freedom safeguarded by law requires both the freedom of research and higher education and the right of the university community to have power of decision at universities. Successful universities are autonomous everywhere in the world.

We will utilise the survey we conducted to examine university regulations and their impacts on university autonomy, the activities of professors and the possibilities of professors to have influence. We will demand that the Universities Act be amended so that the duties of the university collegiate body at a public university and the joint multi-member administrative body of a foundation university

include the approval of the university regulations, university strategy and the budget as well as the operational and financial plans prepared by the board. Furthermore, we propose that the Universities Act should be amended and supplemented to allow the university collegiate body and joint multi-member administrative body to release the university board or its member from their positions, the latter even without a proposal from the board. We demand that the position of the joint multi-member administrative body be reinforced within the Universities Act to enable the administrative body at a public university to select a chair and vice-chair from its members, and to decide independently on procedures related to the selection of the university board.

The autonomy of universities must be strengthened by changing the university funding model. We demand that the focus of the university funding be shifted from the number of completed degrees to free research. We will demand that the focus of funding be shifted from the short-term performance-based funding and discretionary funding to the long-term core funding as presumed by the University Act, which would provide universities with the opportunity to decide on the allocation of funding in accordance with their own strategic choices. Universities can specialise, increase their qualitative productivity and succeed in international competition better when the excessive indicator steering of the funding model and the over-regulation by the Ministry of Education and Culture has been toned down.

We will call for the professors to be heard in strategic decision-making and matters of structural development at universities and research institutes.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors defends the copyrights of its members to the outcomes and materials of their own work**

There is no free society without the freedom of research and higher education. The copyrights of researchers safeguard the freedom of science, facilitate innovations and contribute to the assurance of Finland's competitiveness. The future overall reform of the Copyright Act should safeguard the rights of professors to their materials and creative work.

We will take an active part in developing intellectual property rights at universities, especially in matters related to inventions and copyrights.

We will defend domestic scholarly publishers. Domestic scholarly publishers play a significant role in the scientific world in Finland as well as being a notable publishing channel for Finnish researchers.

We will encourage the utilisation of the Union's recommendations for good copyright agreement practices.

As per established practice, the rights to works created by individuals engaged in teaching and research work at universities are not transferred to the employer, and researchers retain control over the results of their research. We will demand that this practice remain unchanged.

## 2. IN FAVOUR OF GOOD WORK

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors brings together professors working in different fields and various positions**

We are a Union for all professors and future professors. Different fields, universities and research institutes are represented in our Union.

Our activities take into consideration the different career phases of our members, including tenure-track professors, members from abroad and emerita/emeritus members.

We will advance the sense of community among professors.

We will monitor the development of the Union membership on a monthly basis. We will collect information concerning new members' expectations for the Union. We will clarify the reasons why those who are eligible as members have not joined the Union.

We guarantee our members the opportunity to affect the decision-making of the Union. The General Meeting open to all Union members will be held in autumn 2024. The Union has 14 chapters that are not registered as separate associations but serve as Union representatives on the local level.

We will provide our members with consultation on matters related to employment and service relationships and retirement.

We will update the membership benefits we offer as appropriate. Our members will receive, for example, the Acatiimi and Tiede magazines. The Union has taken leisure-time travel and accident insurances for our members. Our members have the possibility to receive a Union calendar and an e-mail address at professori.fi.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors safeguards the position of professors in change situations**

Only the Finnish Union of University Professors pursues the interests of professors.

We will demand that the employment relationship security of professors be strengthened.

We will demand that the employment relationships of professors be valid until further notice. Unjustified fixed-term employments should be changed to permanent employment relationships.

We will demand that professors must not be dismissed for financial and production-related grounds. We will offer outplacement services for Union members dismissed from permanent employment on financial and production-related grounds.

We will help our members navigate change situations within working life. Members will also be assisted by the Union chapters and professors serving as shop stewards.

We will offer our members the benefit of unemployment insurance through the Unemployment Fund for Education and Research.



The maximum insurance compensation for professional legal protection will be kept at 25,000 euro and the maximum insurance compensation for liability at 100,000 euro.

We will offer our members telephone consultation on personal legal issues.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors endeavours to advance equal and non-discriminating working conditions for its members**

We will promote the possibilities for professors to focus on their core tasks.

We will use our influence to ensure adequate prerequisites for professors to conduct free research, teaching and artistic activities.

We will demand a genuine increase in core funding to safeguard free research. Professors are currently being forced to spend too much working time on the acquisition of external funding. Centralised, project-specific and tendered research funding does not effectively ensure funding for the best projects. It has created a bottleneck that decelerates or deters research, hinders co-operation and weakens Finland's competitiveness.

We will prepare for the negotiations concerning the General Collective Agreement for Universities as well as for the negotiations concerning the Collective Agreement for State Civil Servants and Employees under Contract, both set to initiate at the beginning of 2025. We will demand improvements in the working conditions of professors. Professors should regularly have the possibility to take a General Collective Agreement-based research period without teaching or administrative duties. Professors should have the possibility for a research term after serving in an academic management position.

We will regularly meet with university rectors and management personnel from universities and research institutes. In addition to discussing current affairs in these meetings, we will raise issues related to the recruitment of professors and their salaries, research possibilities, copyrights and other matters related to the prerequisites for good work, such as the importance of competent support personnel.

We will demand that the total working hours system be applied to professors working at a university. We will emphasise that those working/falling within the scope of the total working hours system for teaching and research personnel in accordance with the collective agreement are themselves responsible for their own working hours and the use of those hours to perform the tasks included in their work plan. The maximum number of contact teaching hours (141 hours) for professors must not be increased.

We will advocate the increase of the proportional share of professors within teaching and research personnel, as well as an assurance that the tenure track system will not result in a decrease in the number of professors.

We will take our recommendations for a fair tenure track career path for professors into account in our activities. We have drafted a table to illustrate the tenure track for professors at universities. We will provide guidance for our members on a tenure track and will take a stand on university-specific guidelines, when necessary.

We will provide guidelines and advise on the use of titles for professors.

We will participate in international activities. We will contribute as members to, among others, the following organisations: Education International (EI) and European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE). Within ETUCE, we will participate, in particular, in the activities of the Higher Education and Research Standing Committee (HERSC). We will also develop the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) within the scope of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) and we will participate in the preparations for the Ministerial Conference in Tirana, Albania, to be held in 2024. In addition, we will participate in Nordic co-operation. The annual meeting will be held in Oslo, Norway next summer.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors pursues proper salary development for professors**

We demanded that the pay for professors correspond to the demands of the work. In the 2025 negotiations for the General Collective Agreement, we will demand that the working conditions of our membership should be internationally and nationally competitive and that their salary development should be appropriate.

The salary systems should be improved so as to better take into consideration job requirements and personal achievements as well as the entire job description of professors. The base requirement level for a starting full professor should be a minimum of nine (9), the requirement level for an experienced full professor a minimum of ten (10), and the requirement level 12 should be taken into use. The salary for professors on a tenure track should correspond to the job requirements and personal achievements and should develop along with career advancement. The base requirement level for an associate professor on a tenure track should be eight (8).

We will conduct a salary survey to monitor the salary development of (full) professors, associate professors and assistant professors within the scope of the university salary system, as well as for Aalto University professors and state research institute professors. We will also monitor the number of professors and the payment of compensation for academic management assignments, management compensation for supplementary funding projects as well as compensation for expert assignments and statements. We will aim to achieve salary equality for all professors.

We will encourage our members to participate in university evaluation groups.

We will head up the Negotiation Organisation for Public Sector Professionals JUKO's advisory committee for the university sector. We will participate in the main negotiation group on the central organisation level as well as in other joint negotiation and working groups of the employer and employee unions. We will supervise the interests of employees at research institutes, including developing the salary system of professors, in co-operation with JUKO and Vakava.

We will work in close collaboration with other central unions in the university and government sector. We will act as a supervisor of interests for professors within the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Managerial Staff in Finland – Akava, and the co-operative body of Akava affiliates, Vakava.



We will exert influence, particularly through Akava, to drive the lightening of income tax and the relinquishment of the solidarity tax and the tax increase concerning emeritus and emerita professors.

We will prepare for the negotiations carried out for the purpose of renewing the General Collective Agreement for Universities.

We will prepare for the negotiations being held to renew the Collective Agreement for State Civil Servants and Employees under Contract. The wages of professors at research institutes should develop from the current level.

Together with other unions in the university and government sector, we will prepare for possible organisational actions to be taken in connection with the collective agreement negotiations.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors supports the positive professional image of professors and their sense of community**

We will highlight professors' expertise in science, higher education, university and research institute management, and social engagement.

We will offer our members the possibility to keep in contact and interact with their colleagues through the local activities of the Union.

We will monitor the use of the titles of professors and any titles derived from or including the word professor. When necessary, the Union Board updates its guidelines concerning the use of the title of professor.

We will arrange the Communicatio Academica event on the Kuopio campus of the University of Eastern Finland. In connection with the event, we will announce the name of the person chosen as Professor of the Year 2024.

We will publish the Directory of Professors in digital and printed format.

We will offer our members webinars on topical issues. We will hold an open spring seminar for our members.

In our member newsletters, we will inform about current matters concerning professors.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors advances professors' possibilities and capabilities to serve in management positions within scientific communities**

We also represent those in management positions. A large percentage of the Union members work in supervisory or other management positions.

In accordance with the Union Council's policy, a university dean, rector and vice-rector should all be professors. University regulations must be changed so that the faculty council or corresponding multi-member organ elects the dean or the election is made by the university rector or board based on the proposal of the faculty council.

We will organise an academic leadership seminar and other training for those in supervisory and management positions.

### **The Finnish Union of University Professors builds up its local activities**

We will encourage our chapters to contact their regional Members of Parliament and other societal decision-makers as a means of realising our science policy objectives.

We will encourage Union chapters to have regular discussions with the senior management of their organisations.

We will financially support the activities of the chapters representing the individual universities and the professors at research institutes, we will organise a seminar for chapter representatives on the development of local activities as well as a seminar for chapter chairs, we will participate in chapter meetings and we will work in close co-operation with the chapters.

We will train and support professors serving as shop stewards. We will also organise shop steward training in English together with other organisers. Our aim is to ensure that every university has a Union member serving as chief shop steward for professors.

## **3. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNION**

### **Proactive communication as support for operations**

We will communicate our views through media releases, statements, the Union website, social media, electronic member newsletters and the Acatiimi magazine.

We will continue our advocacy work concerning the Union's objectives for the Government Programme 2023–2027. We will prepare for possible targeting and shaming aimed at our membership through, for example, various communication methods.

We will take the Union's new website into use.

We will publish the Acatiimi magazine together with the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers and the Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland (YLL). The Acatiimi circulation is about 12,000, and the magazine also has its own website. We will be assessing Acatiimi's development needs during 2024.

### **A balanced administration is the foundation for our operations**

We will ensure the balance of the Union's finances by means of membership fees and returns from our investment activities.

The Union Board makes decisions on the Union's investments in accordance with the investment strategy. The Board is assisted by the Investment Committee.

We will provide flexible and rapid assistance to all Union members.