

Action plan 2026

Introduction

The National Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences – SAMOK is the national advocate for every student in Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS). In 2026, SAMOK's work will focus especially on the union's 30th anniversary year and preparations for the 2027 Parliamentary Elections.

The union will actively advance its advocacy goals by meeting decision-makers to ensure they have accurate and up-to-date information about the needs of UAS students and student unions.

In 2026, SAMOK will continue to develop its services, events and communications to better serve the student union field. To be able to serve all student union actors, the union will purposefully use Finnish, Swedish and English in its operations.

In its financial development, the union will focus on balancing the economy on the basis of a medium-term financial plan and a fundraising plan. The primary target in balancing the economy is to broaden the funding base, for example through partnership agreements, acquiring supporting members and utilising a fundraising permit.

Advocacy

Description of ongoing activities

SAMOK lays a strong foundation for advocacy through studies, background materials, and by training and supporting student unions. Smooth interaction with the UAS field ensures a more impactful community that advances the interests of UAS students. Decisions on SAMOK's initiatives and advocacy targets are always made by representatives elected by UAS students. Decisions are based on observations and needs raised by students as well as on researched knowledge.

Advocacy work utilises both existing and new relationships with decision-makers in Finland and at the European level. SAMOK will develop its alumni activities and networks to strengthen advocacy. At the European level, the union participates actively in decision-making and influences the EU independently, in cooperation with stakeholders and through its umbrella organisation, the European Students' Union (ESU), in line with the long-term EU advocacy plan.

The new Political Programme guides SAMOK's advocacy. The organisational restructuring will affect the number of key advocacy measures in 2026. In 2026, SAMOK will continue its advocacy especially on students' livelihood and housing as well as on highlighting the Finnish Student Health Service

(FSHS) as a centre of expertise. SAMOK will also continue advocacy to improve the funding situation of student unions and of the union itself. SAMOK participates in the development of national quality assurance in Finnish higher education and emphasises the importance of educational quality. SAMOK defends free and accessible higher education and the status of international students in Finland.

Key actions in 2026

- Create a long-term advocacy plan.
- Prepare the parliamentary election campaign for the 2027 Parliamentary Elections.
- Influence the election programmes of parliamentary parties.
- Develop activities to build and strengthen long-term relationships with decision-makers.
- Organise the 89th Nordiskt Ordförande Møte in Helsinki in cooperation with SYL.

Services

Description of ongoing activities

SAMOK provides student unions with accessible services and events that support their operations, membership and fundraising, wellbeing, and advocacy impact. SAMOK's services include, for example, communication materials, consulting and advice for different sectors, and training events. In addition to Finnish- and Swedish-speaking actors, English-speaking participants are also taken into account. SAMOK's patron-student-union model creates continuity and strengthens cooperation between the union and student unions. Patron activities will be continued and developed according to the wishes of student unions.

Through events, services and internal channels such as Slack and Drive, SAMOK creates opportunities for student unions to engage in open discussion and share good practices. In building the community of UAS student unions, digital environments are utilised without forgetting in-person encounters. SAMOK will also offer remote participation options for as many events as possible. The planning of services and events is informed by the results of the member survey, the needs and wishes of the student union field, and feedback from individual events.

Key actions in 2026

- Implement the communications campaign for SAMOK's 30th anniversary year.
- Organise SAMOK's 30th anniversary celebration.
- Update and develop SAMOK's image bank.
- Map the current state of SAMOK's website and create a plan for updating it.
- Make SAMOK's support and services for student unions in advocacy and organisational activities more visible.

Organisational Operations

Description of ongoing activities

SAMOK contributes to making the UAS student community an attractive and accessible environment where everyone feels welcome. Together with student unions, SAMOK maintains and develops an open and equal operating environment. Participation is promoted by encouraging actors from diverse backgrounds to get involved in the union's activities.

In 2026, organisational work will focus on broadening the funding base and stabilising operations after the organisational reform. The union will interact actively with the student union field and stakeholders. SAMOK will showcase the impact and results of its activities actively and in diverse ways across different channels.

Key actions in 2026

- Focus fundraising especially on applying for project funding.
- Leverage the 30th anniversary year in fundraising.
- Seek to strengthen cooperation between UAS and student unions in student identification matters.
- Develop the collection of operational data of the union and its member organisations to improve reporting related to government grants. Support member organisations in data collection.
- Explore updating the union's membership fee model.
- Clarify the importance of ESU membership as part of SAMOK's activities and reorganise work related to international organisational relations.