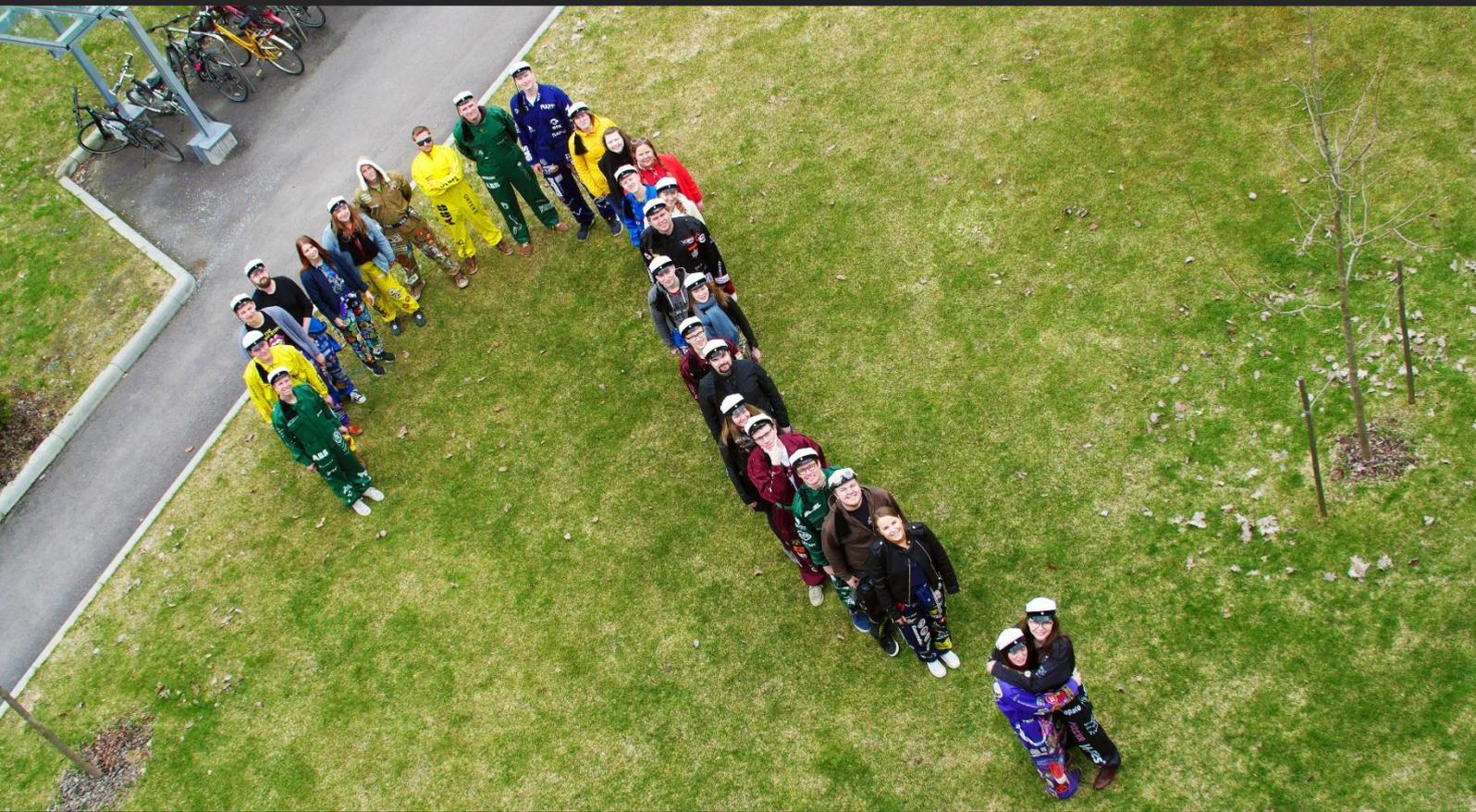


# SUMMARY REPORT

The Student Union of the University of Tampere and the Student Union of Tampere University of Technology



IN THE BEGINNING OF 2019, TAMPERE WILL HAVE A NEW STUDENT UNION AFTER THE MERGER OF THE CURRENT STUDENT UNIONS, TAMY AND TTYU. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PREPARATORY WORK ON NEW STUDENT UNION, AN EXTENSIVE AMOUNT OF DATA WAS COLLECTED ON THE OPINIONS, HOPES AND CONCERNS OF THE STUDENT UNIONS' MEMBERS, ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVES REGARDING THE MERGER AND THE NEW STUDENT UNION.

THIS SUMMARY PRESENTS THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE ANALYSED DATA.

## CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTED DATA .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Collected data.....	2
Summary structure .....	2
More information about the results.....	3
<b>1. IMPRESSIONS ON THE CURRENT STUDENT UNIONS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. GENERAL TARGETS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE STUDENT UNION .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. THE STUDENT UNION MERGER: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Threats.....	7
3.2 Opportunities .....	8
<b>4. ENVISIONING THE NEW STUDENT UNION.....</b>	<b>9</b>

## SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTED DATA

### COLLECTED DATA

In the beginning of 2019, Tampere will receive a new student union after the merger of the current student unions, Tamy and TTY. In the context of the preparatory work on new student union, an extensive amount of data was collected during spring 2018 on the student unions' members, organizations and student union actives' opinions, hopes and concerns regarding the merger and the new student union. The data collection was carried out mainly by the mutual brand team of the student unions.

The opinions of the student unions' members (i.e. university students) were collected in a comprehensive *member survey*. In addition to the survey, the brand team of the student unions went to all three campuses in the centre, Kauppi and Hervanta to ask the students about their opinions on the new student union and the merger. The aim of these *brand stands* was to reach ordinary students and spread information about the upcoming change.

The opinions of the student unions' associations were collected in *focus group interviews* organized by the brand team. In these interviews, representatives from different associations were invited to discuss their hopes and concerns regarding the merger and the future student union.

The current student union actives (representatives, board members and employees) were also consulted during the data collection process. The student unions' councils of representatives were invited to a *vision workshop*, where they had the chance to envision the new student union from different viewpoints. The student unions' offices, employees and board members have also been consulted in *brand training and merger seminar workshops*, for example.

The collected data will be used, among other things, in the new student union's brand and strategy work and in the different sectors of the student union.

This summary presents the key findings of the analysed data introduced above.

### SUMMARY STRUCTURE

This summary explains the key findings of the data collected for the purposes of the preparatory work on the new student union in Tampere. The summary follows this structure:

- 1 IMPRESSIONS ON THE CURRENT STUDENT UNIONS
- 2 GENERAL TARGETS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE STUDENT UNION
- 3 THE STUDENT UNION MERGER: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES
- 4 ENVISIONING THE NEW STUDENT UNION

## MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESULTS

The summary report sums up the key findings of the data collection. If you are interested in hearing more about any of the data collected or a specific topic regarding the data analysis results in English, please do contact the international affairs sector of your student union! They are happy to help you.

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# 1. IMPRESSIONS ON THE CURRENT STUDENT UNIONS

	Tamy	TTY
<p><b>Role in the university community / Characteristics</b></p>	<p>For students, Tamy is primarily an <b>expert organization</b> and a <b>supervisor of students' interests</b> working in the background. Tamy is seen as an organization which actively takes a stand on social issues and advocates student affairs.</p> <p>According to respondents, Tamy is active at the University and also on local and national levels.</p> <p>Being active and professional, concentrating on the supervision of interests and promoting equality are factors that are characteristic to Tamy's work. Some also associate politics and political objectives with Tamy.</p> <p>Tamy organizes several student events during the academic year. However, Tamy's role in creating student culture among the university community is not emphasized.</p>	<p>Students see TTY in two roles. Firstly, TTY acts as a <b>supervisor of students' interests</b> in the field of technology. It acts in its students' interest particularly in matters related to daily life in the campus.</p> <p>Secondly, respondents think that TTY has an important role in <b>promoting teekkari culture and a sense of community</b> among students of technology. Student culture is maintained through different events and traditions and by supporting club activities.</p> <p>TTY is described as an active, open and student-oriented organization that encourages participation and being active. TTY is also considered welcoming and fun: it approaches things with a sense of humour.</p> <p>TTY is understood to have a close relationship with the university, associations and students. For this reason, respondents feel that TTY is able to develop the university.</p>
<p><b>Relationship with students</b></p>	<p>Attitudes to Tamy vary greatly among students. Some appreciate Tamy's role as an active and eager supervisor of students' interests. Tamy is considered to be professional, qualified and important. Others feel that Tamy is too involved in politics, and they question the need for the student union. According to the results of the member survey, only 34% of the respondents feel that Tamy's work is important.</p> <p>For many students, Tamy remains relatively distant. For them, it is not entirely clear what the content of Tamy's activities is and what kinds of participation opportunities it offers. Tamy remains particularly distant to students at the Kauppi campus, where Tamy's activities are not considered to be present.</p>	<p>Students mainly have a positive attitude to TTY: based on the results of the member survey, 76% consider TTY's work important.</p> <p>Promoting the <i>teekkari</i> culture of students of technology, maintaining traditions and advocating matters close to students of technology are seen as the responsibilities of the student union. Having a common identity is considered an asset. Respondents also feel that TTY has a good reputation.</p> <p>Respondents think that the student union listens to its students and associations.</p> <p>For many, TTY's activities still remain distant. Apart from student activities, the scope and content of TTY's activities as well as the ways of participating in the activities remain unclear for many.</p>
<p><b>Responsibilities of the student union</b></p>		
<p>a) Supervision of interests</p>	<p>Tamy is seen as an active supervisor of interests with good resources and expertise. Students' interests are supervised both at the university and in the society.</p>	<p>TTY is considered to be a supervisor of students' interests that promotes well-being and the affairs of students of technology in Tampere. TTY's work in the field of supervision of interests is considered better in comparison to Tamy, although this responsibility is seen less</p>

	<p>The student union publicly expresses its opinions: it makes itself seen and heard. Promoting equality is considered particularly valuable.</p> <p>However, opinions on Tamy's statements and political direction are divided: not everyone feels they agree with the political objectives of the student union.</p> <p>Compared to the students of TUT, the students of the University of Tampere set higher targets for Tamy in terms of supervision of interests. This partly explains why Tamy's performance is considered weaker (based on the member survey).</p>	<p>essential (based on the results of the member survey).</p> <p>TTY is considered to emphasize study-related matters in its supervision of interests. TTY's statements are considered moderate.</p> <p>Some feel that more resources could be allocated to supervision of interests and advocacy work.</p>
b) Services for members	<p>Respondents are relatively content with Tamy's services.</p>	<p>Respondents are relatively content with TTY's services.</p>
c) Promoting student culture	<p>At UTA, student culture is a mix of different subject associations and their cultures. No common student culture that would unite the entire community is identified. Respondents feel that Tamy does not contribute to creating a common student culture.</p> <p>Subject association cultures are considered important: student culture is enjoyable and diverse. However, there is also a need for more cross-disciplinary activities organized for the entire community.</p> <p>During the academic year, Tamy organizes events for all students as well. For many, the Downtown Orienteering is a memorable event. Tamy's events are considered important, but they are sometimes overshadowed by events organized by subject associations.</p> <p>Student culture is often considered to be marked by partying. Many would prefer having other types of events as well.</p>	<p>For TUT; student culture (or <i>teekkari</i> culture) unites the entire student community, and it has a significant role in creating a sense of community.</p> <p>Student culture is based on a common identity and traditions as well as on working together. At TUT, student culture is considered to be diverse, open to everyone and relaxed: things are not taken too seriously.</p> <p>Student culture at TUT is seen as something unique: it is considered an asset and a source of pride. The most important event is <i>teekkariwappu</i>, an event which culminates in the <i>teekkari</i> immersion ritual in May. The student union has an essential role in contributing to <i>teekkari</i> culture and the sense of community.</p> <p>Student culture is mainly criticized for revolving around alcohol.</p>
d) Supporting associations	<p>There are several different kinds of subject associations (=associations for students of the same field), faculty associations and hobby clubs operating within Tamy.</p> <p>Due to the large number of subject associations and their heterogeneity, cooperation between associations is not as strong as it is in TTY. However, Tamy organizes meetings and trainings for all association actives. These events are considered important.</p> <p>In addition to helping association actives to cooperate with each other, Tamy offers the associations financial support, guidance and rooms. Tamy's know-how and support are considered valuable. However, some of the associations consider that Tamy limits their activities.</p>	<p>There are relatively few different guilds (=associations for students of the same field) within TTY. The guilds work in close cooperation with each other. On the other hand, there are several different subject and hobby clubs, so there is something for everyone. TTY's association activities are considered diverse and active.</p> <p>TTY is seen as a "mother figure" for guilds and clubs. It offers support and safety for them, while letting them remain independent. TTY also brings association actives together and provides financial support for the associations.</p> <p>TTY also provides rooms for its associations. Having good common premises (a sauna and club rooms, for example) is considered to strengthen the sense of community among students.</p>

## 2. GENERAL TARGETS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE STUDENT UNION

- **Raising awareness and making the student union's work more concrete.** For many students, the purpose and responsibilities of the student union and the scope of its activities remain unclear. The students might not be aware of what the student union's activities include, why it is necessary to have a student union and how the membership fees are spent. According to Tamy and TTY's member survey, less than half (43%) of the students know what the student union's responsibilities are and in which matters they can contact the student union. The work done by the student union covers a wide range of matters, and its effect on students is often more significant than it might seem on the surface. Students should be informed about the student union and its activities in a clear and concrete manner.
- **Transparency and communication.** In addition to basic information, many students feel they need more detailed information about the student union's permanent activities and the current affairs related to studies. The student union should always keep students up-to-date on the matters it is advocating and the decisions made by the student union. Communication is expected to be interactive, and students' opinions should be taken into consideration. To ensure efficient communication, information should reach the students via the right communication channel. Alongside with communication, the student union should also be physically present in students' lives.
- **Distance between ordinary students and the student union: getting students involved and promoting participation opportunities.** According to the member survey, less than half (42%) of the students feel that it is easy to approach the student union and get involved in its activities. The respondents would like to have low-threshold participation opportunities and concrete information about in which activities they could participate and how. The student union should be presented as an organization that is open to everyone as it is not targeted to a small group.
- **Activating students and increasing interest among them.** For the student union, the permanent challenge is to make the activities seem interesting and attractive. In addition to improving communication about participation opportunities, the student union should also make participation seem more appealing. The student union needs to understand the mindset of the new generation and recognize how it could appear as interesting and relevant as possible to them.
- **Taking specific groups, particularly international students and adult students/students with families, into consideration.** The common challenge for the student union is serving a broad and diverse group of students. Often it is the international students and adult students/students with families who receive the least attention. The student union should, in all its activities, provide bilingual services and also promote participation opportunities to international students. Adult students and students with families should especially be taken into consideration in event organization and available services and by offering networking support for likeminded people.

## 3. THE STUDENT UNION MERGER: THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### 3.1 THREATS

- **Inequality.** Many are concerned about possible inequalities in decision-making in the new student union: they worry about the smaller student communities, associations, campuses and disciplines being overshadowed by the majority.
- **Losing traditions and diversity.** Over time, important traditions and practices have been formed in student communities. One of the fears concerning the merger is that these traditions would disappear or that they would be changed. This threat is especially mentioned in relation to student culture.
- **Increased politics.** Many are afraid of an increase in political activity and agendas. Politics is considered to divide opinions, so many hope that the student union would not be involved in it. Instead, it should concentrate on improving the status of students.
- **Silo mentality and difficulties in coordinating cultures.** The new student union will be a mixture of different student cultures and groups. Many are concerned whether a new, genuinely cooperative community can be built or if the old communities will remain distant from each other.
- **The size of the student union.** The new student union will have approximately 18,000 students and 170 associations at three different campuses. Respondents are concerned whether one student union will be able to answer to everyone's needs and expectations and still remain an approachable organization that listens to the community's opinions.
- **Joining different objectives and practices.** The student union merger results in joining two traditional student unions and their own practices. Finding a path that pleases everyone is seen as a challenge.
- **Uncertainties about the process and the future.** The mergers of the universities and student unions are unclear processes for many. Not many are aware of the results and concrete effects. Uncertainties increase concerns about the process.
- **Contrasts.** Holding onto stereotypes about the current communities (students of technology vs. humanities students) and pitting these communities against each other might result in more friction between them.
- **Negative attitude towards Tampere3.** The merger and the Tampere3 project have sparked disagreements and friction between the communities at the university. Discussion around Tampere3 has mainly been negative. The project and the discussion around it have an effect on what people expect the student union merger and the new student union to be like.
- **Rushed process.** Some are concerned that rushed decisions might be made in the process or that the merger might be forced through. The merger means creating a new community and identity and it takes time, so it is hoped that the merger will be carried out with patience. Negative feelings and fears of letting go of the old are seen as natural reactions.

*Note: only the most frequently mentioned threats are presented here. The most commonly mentioned threats were the first five ones.*

### 3.2 OPPORTUNITIES

- **Diversity.** The new student union will be more diverse compared to the previous ones, offering something to everyone. This diversity can be seen as an advantage in the new student union.
- **Influence.** The new student union will become the second largest student union in Finland. Due to its size, the new student union could become a significant actor both on the local level and in the society, acting in the interest of all university students in Tampere.
- **New community, new encounters.** The new student union will bring together two traditional student unions and their already rich student cultures. The new student union can contribute to a cross-disciplinary student culture and establish a contact between different actors.
- **Renewal and development.** The merger can be seen as an opportunity for renewal and development. The strong points of the current student unions can be combined, and previous issues can be solved by developing entirely new approaches.
- **One student union for all.** The new student union could reflect its students and be a place where everyone feels at home. To get there, the university community's opinions need to be taken into consideration.
- **Moment of truth for students.** The students are now able to demonstrate that the student union merger can be completed more effortlessly than the university merger.
- **New identities.** Over time, the new student union can lead to a new way of identification for students: what is it like to be a university student in Tampere? To cite an example, Aalto University, which was created in 2010 after a merger of three universities, now has a large new community.
- **Ending contrasts.** After the student unions have been merged and they work in closer cooperation, pitting students of humanities and technology against each other will hopefully be a thing of the past.

*Note: only the most frequently mentioned opportunities are presented here. The most commonly mentioned opportunities were the first four ones.*

## 4. ENVISIONING THE NEW STUDENT UNION

	<b>The new student union in Tampere</b>
<b>Role in the university community / Characteristics</b>	<p>The new student union is given two important roles: firstly, the student union is expected to eagerly <b>supervise the university students' interests</b> in Tampere, genuinely making a difference and giving a voice to the students. Secondly, it is hoped that the student union would <b>create sense of community</b> in the new student community in Tampere by bringing students and associations together. The community should have joint activities and a positive atmosphere for discussion.</p> <p>The new student union will be a diverse one, which is seen as an advantage. It is hoped that this diversity would be valued and used. Everyone should be welcomed in the student union's activities. They should be able to feel like they belong to the new community and find their own place within it.</p> <p>Most importantly, respondents hoped that the new student union's activities would be based on equality: everyone should be taken into consideration, so that the student union would belong to everyone. Whether it's students, fields, faculties or campuses, the new student union is expected to treat everyone equally and take everyone's needs into consideration.</p> <p>The new student union is expected to be progressive while still respecting traditions. The new student will remain relevant and keep up with the times.</p> <p>Seeing Tampere as the best city for students in Finland will be an important factor in uniting the members of the community. Tampere will be seen as a warm and student-friendly city where students feel comfortable.</p> <p>The new student union is also expected to be in good terms with the new university to ensure that the voice of students and the student union will be heard.</p>
<b>Relationship with students</b>	<p>The new student union is expected to be genuinely and visibly present in the everyday lives of students, so that it will remain approachable despite its size. The student union will hold onto its relaxed approach and sense of humour. The student union is expected to be interactive and take the feedback and opinions of students and associations into consideration (by conducting surveys and polls, for example). The student union is also expected to provide information about its work and activities in a clear and transparent manner.</p> <p>It is hoped that the new student union will be open and inclusive. It should encourage students to participate in its activities and offer different kinds of participation opportunities.</p>
<b>Student union's responsibilities</b>	
a) Supervision of interests	<p>Supervision of the university students' interests is seen as the key responsibility of the new student union. It will aim to make the voice of students heard and make a difference in a concrete way. The student union is expected to be fearless in its advocacy work and act based on the shared hopes and opinions of students. Different students and their needs will be equally taken into consideration. The student union is expected to provide clear, easily understandable information about the results of its work in the field of supervision of interests.</p> <p>Influencing matters related to students' lives and advocating at campuses are considered essential factors, but the social affairs that affect the community are also thought to be important. Advocacy work at the university level is, in fact, considered more important than advocating at a local or national level. According to the member survey, 88% feel that university-level advocacy work is important, while local-level action is important to 69% of the respondents and national-level action to 54%.</p>
b) Services for members	<p>The new student union is expected to maintain the current level in providing services for its members. It is hoped that the new student union would invest in the accessibility of services</p>

**SUMMARY REPORT**

	<p>for different groups, taking adult students, students with families and international students into account.</p> <p>People also expect clear information on the services targeted to members.</p>
<p>c) Promoting student culture</p>	<p>The new student union is expected to contribute to creating unity and a sense of community as well as to building student culture in Tampere. This can be done through events and new traditions. In addition to organizing events, it was hoped that the student union would encourage the current associations and clubs to have open events and provide more information about the events. The student union is seen as a link between different actors and as an organization that raises awareness.</p> <p>The new student union should still respect and maintain the old traditions and student cultures: not all events need to be open to everyone. Respondents hoped that old traditions and cultures would be valued and not viewed as something to be discarded.</p> <p>The new student community and culture are seen as the new student union's assets. The new community will have a diverse range of events and club activities and a unique mix of different student cultures.</p> <p>In addition to partying, the students will need different kinds of events such as events related to well-being, sports or culture. Respondents hoped that all three campuses would be taken into consideration when organizing events.</p>
<p>d) Supporting associations</p>	<p>The new student union will have a diverse range of associations.</p> <p>The new student union is expected to <b>enable association activities</b>, encourage the associations to be active and offer them financial support, guidance and rooms. The new student union should connect associations and support cross-disciplinary cooperation and learning. However, it is thought that the student union should let the associations work independently as well.</p> <p>The associations think that the new student union should, despite its size, remain approachable, listen to the associations and provide support in the same way as before.</p>