

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

Tallinn

October 14th, 2025 no 9

Start of the meeting at 18:00, end of the meeting 19:36

Chaired by Alexander Rein Robas

Minutes secretary: Kristiina Vene

12 out of 15 were present: Arqum Shahid, Maris Kortel, Annemari Riisimäe, Sander Roosimäe, Markus Käpp, Sten Unt, Hanna Savolainen, Iiris Aljes, Ketter Aljes, Ramon Kulp, Ander Mägi, Karolina Perv (*Teamsis*)

Invited: Kadri Jürissaar, Kristin Liias, Emili Järv, Karoliine Orav, Kristina Keerdo, Nora Eensalu, Mark Toomsalu

Absent: Maksim Dolnin, Saara Katarina Merioja, Jan Enriko Viidermets

On the agenda:

1. Approval of the Student Union Action Plan 2025;
2. Interim summary of the 2025 budget;
3. Proposal to abolish the Election Committee;
4. Statute for the Award of the Student Body Thesis Supervisor of the Year;
5. Topics initiated on-site.

The agenda was approved unanimously.

1. Approval of the Student Union Action Plan 2025

At the regular October meeting of the Student Parliament, the 2025 Action Plan was presented for its first reading. Since then, additional revisions have been made, with input also provided by the Audit Committee. The changes are visible in the Action Plan table, showing which information is old and which is new for the upcoming period.

In cooperation with the Audit Committee, it was discussed that the Action Plan should be set for the calendar year instead of the academic year. This issue arises especially during transitions — for a new person, the first task is the Action Plan, but as a newcomer in a new organization, it is difficult to complete. This particularly concerns the work of the Board. The current Action Plan will remain valid until the end of this academic year, that is, until June 2026.

Emili – Conceptually, the Student Parliament does not need to adopt a new change. If the Student Parliament approves this version of the Action Plan, it also confirms agreement with this new approach.

Karoliina – Row 21, whistleblowing line – will anything else be added there? At the moment, the row is empty.

Sass – We have already adopted two opinions this year. We decided that since there is little time, we will include the rows in the 2026 Action Plan and provide a more detailed explanation there.

Audit Committee – Emili comments on whether anything should be changed conceptually. A possible inconsistency could arise from point 10.2.4, which states that the first half-year report must be prepared in January and the second in June. This means that changing the period to a calendar year is not contradictory, since the half-year reports will still follow the same logic.

Hanna – Row 55. Whenever the word “actively” is used, it is a difficult word to apply; it should be defined how we measure activity. In some places, the goals are expressed in numbers (which is a good and measurable approach), but “actively” on its own is too vague and should be made more specific.

Karolina – I looked at the minutes of the Student Life Committee meeting. Not everything was recorded, but the main point is that the whistleblowing line must be added to the Action Plan. Some wording in certain places was also discussed, but these ideas were apparently not written into the protocol.

Hanna – The Mental Health Month section also includes “active participation.” Row 44.

Karoliine – What do you suggest as a solution?

Hanna – I suggest that expected measurable outcomes be written down, such as that each event has 20 participants / 10 participants, so the results are numerically measurable and later reportable. Based on measurable results, statistics can be made and compared to previous years’ events to set goals for future years.

Karoliine – Suggests setting the number of participants at 20 per event and 160 participants in total for all Mental Health Month events.

Kristina – It makes sense to set a number like x participants per event.

Emili – The number of participants depends very much on the type of event; some have higher demand and some fewer participants.

Hanna – It is more important to have a total number; otherwise, it would need to be specified how many times each person attended.

Sass – Does 160 participants in total sound realistic?

Decision – The Student Parliament agreed, and the Action Plan will include 160 participants.

Karolina – If we add numerical indicators there, shouldn’t the same approach be considered, for example, in the row for sports events? If we want to be precise, the same principle should be applied throughout the entire Action Plan.

Hanna – I reviewed everything, and the Mental Health row and the sports-related rows are indeed the two areas where activity should be specified and numerical indicators added.

Mark – For sports events, let’s set 25 or 30 participants per event. This should then be communicated to positions related to the sports field.

Sass – The Action Plan will state that, on average, 30 students participate in each sports event.

Hanna – Row 56. The wording itself is not problematic, but it seems somewhat vague — what does “strongly represented” mean?

Sass – Our goal is to be represented everywhere, but obviously that is not possible in reality. It’s difficult to assign an exact numerical indicator to this row because we always try to do our best.

Hanna – It’s likely that in the reporting, participation statistics per event will be presented. So there could be at least a verbal indicator, for example, that activity increased.

Mark – It’s hard to measure activity, because at such events (e.g., Summer Games, Winter Games, championships, etc.) the number of places is limited, and the budget is also limited.

Hanna – In that case, I would leave it as it is; at the moment, it seems to be the best wording.

There were no votes against the Action Plan, therefore the Student Union Action Plan 2025 is approved.

The changes will also be incorporated into the English version of the Action Plan.

2. Interim summary of the 2025 budget

Kristiina: We will not go through the tables in detail here. I will base this on the explanatory memorandum. I will summarize the situation up to this point (until October). Last year’s surplus is being used this year.

The income for this period is significantly higher than initially projected, as organizations have received additional funds from the Rector’s reserve throughout the year, which are processed through our account and therefore increase total revenue. Also from the sale of symbols, such as student caps. Between the meeting day and the document upload, there have been changes in budget balances due to ongoing invoice and expense report payments. The text of the explanatory memorandum has not been changed; the modifications are included as comments.

There have been many changes in the projects section in the meantime, mostly due to invoices related to the Student Body anniversary. We should still come out on top, maybe slightly over. All detailed explanations are presented in the explanatory memorandum; there was no entirely new or significant information discussed at the meeting that was not already included in the memorandum.

Next, SCV2. After the explanatory memorandum was uploaded, an additional support payment was made to one organization. This source includes regular grants, annual support for Student Councils and organizations, project grants, and the Rector’s reserve. The noticeable increase in the budget is due to allocations made through the Rector’s reserve. So far, seven payments have been made from the Rector’s reserve, and at least one more is expected.

- Annual grants. €54,000 distributed out of €60,000 planned, as several organizations’ applications did not meet requirements; the remaining amount was transferred to the reserve fund.

- Major projects. Both major project competitions were held, in January and May. I spoke with the Chair of the Funding Committee — both competitions were increased using funds from the reserve fund. About one-third has been paid out so far.
- Small projects. The March and August competitions have been completed; the third, October competition, is currently ongoing. By the end of the year, there should be a small surplus (the initial budget for all three competitions combined was €10,000); the exact amount will be known after the results of the October competition are announced.

Hanna: In the SCV2 table, there are reporting deadlines. If a reporting deadline has passed and an organization is late, is the support still paid out? What is the current practice?

Kristiina: According to our rules, reports can still be submitted within one month after the deadline, and such delays do not affect the scoring in the next competition. However, some organizations do not comply with this, but ultimately, it is their own lost funding.

Hanna: If some organizations repeatedly have problems, perhaps solutions could be considered.

Kristiina: We have a “naughty list,” and there are a few problematic organizations to whom we do not make advance payments based on guarantee letters because their reporting has been consistently problematic.

Emili: According to the evaluation guidelines, organizations receive fewer points if they have submitted reports late in the past.

Hanna: To avoid situations where organizations come back a year later to claim funds, that money would already be directed elsewhere.

Kristiina: No, those funds are not redirected elsewhere. If an organization fails to submit a report for funding, that money simply remains on hold, but it is not repurposed for other expenses.

Sander: Was €15,000 allocated to Julius’s Disciples for making a follow-up film? That seems unrealistic.

Kristiina: I can’t say, because that’s an agreement between Julius’s Disciples and the Rector. When an organization receives money from the Rector’s reserve, the Student Union only handles the disbursement of the grant; we do not decide whether the organization receives the money — that decision is made by the Rector.

Sass: Julius’s Disciples receive the Rector’s Cup grant for general event organization — it’s for the overall organization, not just the film.

Kristina: I don’t know the budget details, but our own video certainly didn’t cost €15,000, so that amount is most likely intended to cover general expenses.

Hanna: What is the difference between the Board’s reserve fund and the Rector’s reserve fund?

Sass: The Board’s reserve fund accumulates leftover money from project competitions. The Board decides how to use it — for example, next year we might increase annual support for student organizations from it. The Board’s reserve fund is meant for increasing competition budgets or organizing ad-hoc competitions; it is not used for the Student Union’s internal expenses.

Kristiina: It should not be confused with the Board’s reserve, which is a separate amount (under source 01CV) allocated annually for the Board to use at its discretion, for example, to organize motivation events for the Board.

There are three different reserves: the Rector's reserve (grants allocated to organizations from the Rector's own fund, decided by the Rector, not us), the Board's reserve fund (competition surpluses, distribution decided by the Board, intended only for increasing competition budgets or ad-hoc competitions), and the Board's reserve (funds under the main Student Union source for the Board's discretionary use, e.g., for internal motivation events).

3. Proposal to abolish the Election Committee

Emili presents the topic – We would like to abolish the Student Union Election Committee. The current Election Rules stipulate that a 5–9 member Election Committee must be elected, with various competencies, and it is assumed that the committee performs a wide range of tasks; there must be one member from each school. They are responsible for the legality of the Student Parliament elections, preparing the necessary materials, ensuring that the election process runs properly on the Student Union website, and accepting students' candidacy applications.

Emili – During my time in the Student Union, I have hardly seen it function in practice; in the past, the committee used to count results on paper slips. Now, in reality, the tasks of the Election Committee have been distributed among Student Union staff members (for example, the Audit Committee, the Student Parliament Coordinator, and the Head of Development and Training). At this point, the group no longer has meaningful work, and its existence does not increase the credibility of the elections in any way. The responsibilities are also no longer logically divided.

Each year, about 30 candidacy applications are submitted — this is not a workload that would justify having such a large committee. The review of motivation letters and verification of candidate documents can be handled by the Education member of the Board and the Student Parliament Coordinator. As an additional safeguard, the Audit Committee can be included, as it already oversees all activities of the Student Union. Maintaining a large committee is simply inefficient when the work can be done by a smaller and more competent team. Voting has gone digital, and no one needs to count paper ballots anymore.

A proposal is made to remove the Election Committee from the Statutes.

The goal today – yes, we agree to abolish the Election Committee, and the corresponding working group will amend the documents accordingly.

Hanna – This was discussed in the Academic Committee: at present, we assume the workload remains the same, but is there a risk that it could increase, and if so, who could be called in for assistance?

Emili – Having seen the Student Parliament elections up close, the workload has always been about the same; unless someone comes up with an exceptionally effective marketing campaign and we suddenly get a massive number of candidates, the number of applications will likely remain stable. If needed, someone can always be called in to help.

Hanna – Is it fully guaranteed that the elections will take place digitally? If there is a situation where voting must be conducted on paper ballots, is that possible?

Emili – Yes, that is possible. We will address it the same way as before: the Rules of Procedure state that if the digital system fails, the vote will be conducted on paper. We can also include this information in the document to make it legally correct; that point would go under appendices.

Decision – The Student Parliament had no objections to the proposal; the topic will proceed further.

4. Statute for the Award of the Student Body Thesis Supervisor of the Year

Karoliina – The statute needs to be re-approved because it went through the Academic Affairs Office and the university lawyer. Changes have been made; the statute was not presented earlier not because of us, but because it also had to go through the Senate and the Academic Affairs Committee. The point that was added is number 13 – implementation provisions for the 2024/2025 theses, since at that time the provisions for evaluation had not yet been established. Together with the Academic Affairs Office and the lawyers, we considered how to evaluate this year's theses, and that is the main point we want to approve.

Three criteria that the supervisor must meet:

- ÕIS feedback survey indicator... point 13.2.1
- The supervisor is available throughout the entire process, responds to students' concerns, and is quick to reply
- Communication is clear, supportive, and effective

Hanna – What does the one-point system mean?

Karoliina – A yes or no answer. If the criterion is met, the supervisor gets 1 point; if not, 0 points. The supervisors with the highest total scores will be forwarded to the final committee for evaluation.

Sass – Does the Student Parliament object to the approval? No one objected, therefore the new statute is approved.

5. Topics initiated on-site

Hanna – Student Parliament visibility. Could we feature the Student Parliament meetings more actively on social media?

Sass – The upcoming meetings will be posted on Facebook as events. We'll discuss Instagram promotion with the social media coordinator.

Update – All Student Parliament meetings scheduled until the end of the year are already published and available on the Julius Tipikas Facebook page.

Sass – Plans to attend the Student Council general meetings to share information about the Student Parliament there as well.

Ander – It's difficult with the School of Science (LÜK) general meetings, as they take place at the same time as the Student Parliament meetings.

Sass – We can make an exception and say you have a valid reason if you attend a Student Parliament meeting to promote it at the LÜK meeting.

Hanna – I attend the School of Business (MTÜK) general meetings every month and will start sharing information about Student Parliament meetings there.

Joint discussion – We should prepare a unified message to present at all meetings — an introduction to what the Student Parliament is and where to find, for example, our meeting minutes. At the School Council meetings, we can also share information about project competition reporting requirements, which might help improve adherence to reporting deadlines.

Sass – It's also stated in the Development Plan that we aim to increase awareness of the Student Parliament by publishing our minutes and decisions. Meeting information is already available.

Kristin – Ander can't go to the LÜK meeting because you're the only LÜK representative here.

Ander – Maybe we could include in the weekly newsletter a note that a Student Parliament meeting took place and that the materials are available here?

Sass – Maybe we could post it in Julius's blog? We need to think through where it would make the most sense to share it.

Hanna – Thesis Supervisor of the Year. Now that the statute is approved, we should inform winter and spring graduates that they can nominate their supervisors for recognition.

Annette Vijar
Chair of the meeting

Ingrid Kirp
Secretary of the Meeting