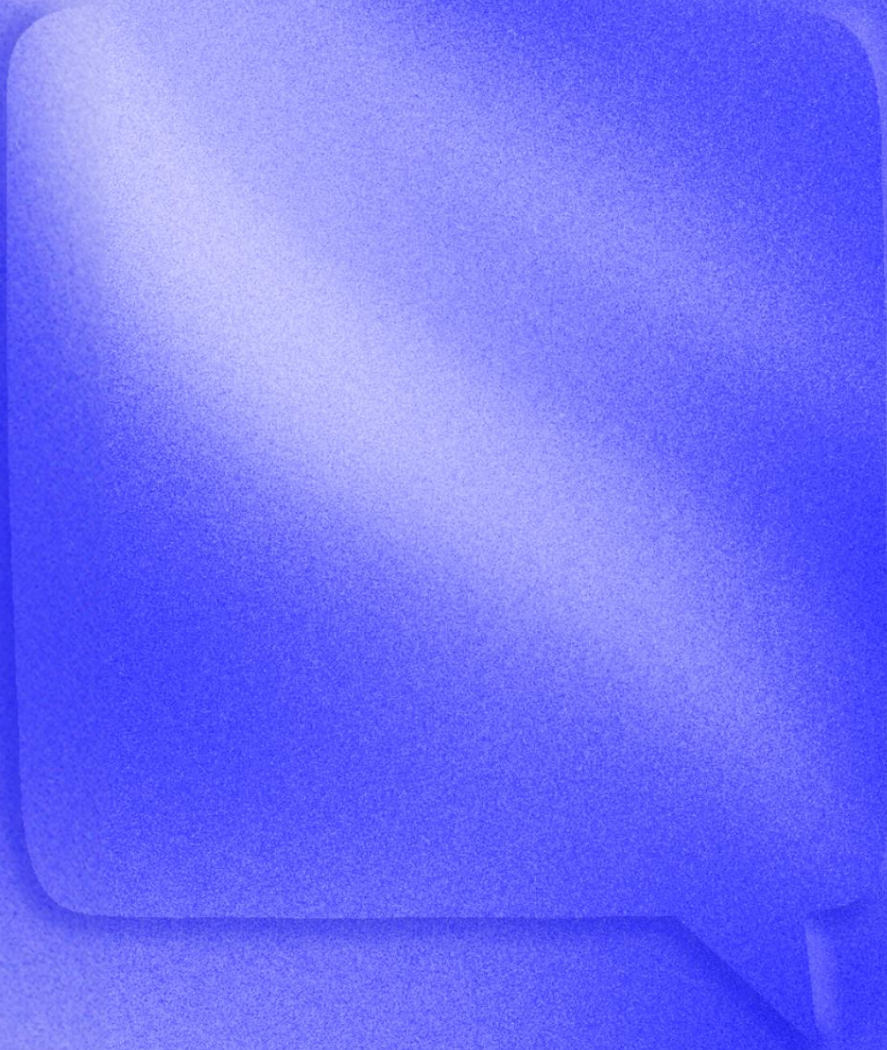


SSCO's political program

Adopted by the SSCO Congress on 2024-05-18



Introduction	1.1	Vision for Student Stockholm	3
Students' conditions		Accommodation	
	2.1.1.	Housing guarantee	5
	2.1.2.	Rent setting for student housing	5
	2.1.3.	Second-hand market	6
	2.1.4.	Access to LADOK	8
	2.1.5.	Ten-month rent	8
	2.1.6.	Buddy contract	8
	2.1.7.	Category housing	9
	2.1.8.	Government support	10
	2.1.9.	Student housing management	
	2.1.10.	Ground instructions	11
	2.1.11.	Parking standard	12
	2.1.12.	Accessibility in housing	12
	2.1.13.	National interests	13
	2.1.14.	Noise regulations	13
	2.1.15.	Municipal property tax	14
	2.1.16.	Sustainability in construction	15 15
		Economy	
	2.2.1.	The study tool	16
	2.2.2.	Public transport	17
	2.2.3.	The deductible amount	18
	2.2.4.	Leave	19
	2.2.5.	Lifelong learning	19
	2.2.6.	Housing allowance	19
		Health	
	2.3.1.	Sick leave	21
	2.3.2.	Waiting period for sick leave with student loans	21
	2.3.3.	Rehabilitation	22
Student life conditions	3.1.	Serving permit	22
	3.2.	Accessibility on campus	23
	3.3.	Culture	23
Training requirements	4.1.	The state union support	23
	4.2.	Educational quality	24
	4.3.	Study environment	24
	4.4.	Union status	25
	4.5.	Special educational support	26
	4.6.	International students	26
	4.7.	Broadened recruitment and participation	27
	4.8.	Universities must pay for accommodation when studies are placed elsewhere	27
	4.9.	Course literature and hidden fees	28
	4.10.	Academic House	28
	4.11.	Rents for student organizations	29
	4.12.	Sustainability in education	29
	4.13.	Scheduling of examination sessions	29
	4.14.	Teaching hours	29 29

1. Introduction

1.1. Vision for Student Stockholm

Stockholm should be Sweden's most attractive student city. The obvious choice of study location for today's students and an international knowledge center that attracts tomorrow's students. For this to become a reality, we must work long-term for high-quality education, good access to affordable housing and attractive economic conditions for living and residing in the region.

Stockholm is Sweden's most expensive city to live in. The generally higher price level means that students have higher living costs, as everything from food to leisure and public transport have higher prices than the rest of the country. No one should be financially hindered from choosing Stockholm as a place to study.

SSCO believes that the financial conditions for students need to be improved. Measures need to be developed both at national and regional level to strengthen students' financial situation. Stockholm students should have a rich study period full of learning, personal development, study-social contexts and the opportunity to make contacts for the future. Together we can make Stockholm a world-class knowledge region.

For many of those who nevertheless seek out the city, their time as students is also marred by insecure housing solutions, high rents and long waiting times. Today's housing policy is inadequate. A major overhaul is needed by both the government and municipalities in the Stockholm region to catch up with the housing shortage that prevails in the region. With long waiting times and high thresholds for entering the owned market, many students are relegated to the second- or third-hand market for several years before they can get their hands on student housing. Oseriö landlords, high second-hand rents, insecure contract forms and fraudsters are the everyday life of a student looking for housing.

A student should be studying, not spending time worrying about their housing situation or how they will make ends meet. Safe housing, at a reasonable cost, is a basic requirement for being able to pursue their studies successfully. Everyone deserves safe housing – throughout their entire study period.

Stockholm's higher education institutions should be attractive to both national and international students.

The education must maintain world-class quality, student influence and participation must be fully integrated into the operations, and students must be given the best possible conditions to benefit from their studies on equal terms. The student unions must be resourceful and there must be a safe safety net for those who need support or become disabled.

Life as a student often provides many positive experiences, but it also often means an insecure life situation with a substandard safety net. Students are feeling increasingly unwell and there is much evidence that their well-being is affected by shortcomings in the study situation. The fact that students are feeling unwell has negative consequences for both the individual, the education system and, by extension, society as a whole. To make Stockholm the most attractive knowledge region, both students and higher education institutions must be given the right conditions. An education for all is about everything from physical conditions in the lecture halls to good pedagogy as well as organizational conditions for being able to be sick and receive the right type of support

2. Students' conditions

2.1. Housing

SSCO believes that when student housing is built, the local community should be consulted for placement.

Students should have access to good infrastructural connections and centers. Students should be an integrated part of the cityscape and not separated from the rest of society.

2.1.1. Housing guarantee

Access to housing within reasonable commuting distance is a basic requirement for being able to participate in a place-specific education, which most education programs are. To achieve the goal of being a world-class knowledge region, students from all over the country and the world must be able to apply for education in Stockholm. They cannot do this if they are unable to arrange housing.

A housing guarantee for students would mean that the region has an obligation to offer secure and long-term housing solutions within a reasonable time from the time the student begins their studies. To achieve the goal of being a world-class knowledge region, students from all over the world and the whole country must have the opportunity to apply to Stockholm. They do not have that today.

SSCO therefore believes that Stockholm County municipalities should establish a housing guarantee for students, similar to those in other student cities around the country. This would contribute to a more diversified student population and would mean that no one has to turn down their dream education because of the housing situation.

2.1.2. Rent setting for student housing

SSCO believes that the current rent-setting system, with utility value or presumed rents, is not without its flaws. However, this does not mean that market rents are a better alternative.

Under the utility value system, rents are set by agreement between the property owner and the tenants' association. Rents are set according to the utility value principle, which means that factors such as size, floor plan, standard, equipment, location, local environment, access to services and public transport, etc. must be taken into account.

Similar apartments in similar locations should have similar rents. This means that today's newly built student housing, which is of a high standard and often centrally located, already has very high rents. Far too high for the average student.

The second alternative available today is presumed rents. Here too, rents are set by agreement between the property owner and the tenants' association, but the rent is instead based on the production cost of the apartments. The presumed rents are then valid for 15 years, after which the apartments will be phased into the use value system.

If market rents were introduced in the city of Stockholm, the average rent would increase by 52% according to a report from the Tenants' Association in 2021. The highest expected rent increase, in the inner city, would be 87%. The report has mainly analyzed two- and three-bedroom apartments, so the effect on student housing, which is often smaller one-bedroom apartments, is somewhat more difficult to map, but we can assume that rents in the student housing stock would also increase. An increase in rents in the regular stock would certainly mean that competition for, and thus the willingness to pay for, student housing would also increase.

It is already impossible for many students to request a rental apartment on the regular first-hand market, which in turn leads to them being forced to pay exorbitant rents on the second- or third-hand market. Introducing market rents would result in many students not only being excluded from the regular first- and second-hand market but also from the student housing market. This would in turn increase the skewed recruitment to the region's universities that we already see today and it would become even more difficult for students from the rest of the country and the world to study in Stockholm.

Market rents within the rental stock would hit students hard, in more ways than one. SSCO is therefore against such a development – and instead calls for changes that can contribute to more student housing with rents that match student wallets.

2.1.3. The secondary market

For a student who wants to move to Stockholm, the first-hand market is almost inaccessible and is often a reason for choosing Stockholm as a place to study. Many students therefore have no other choice but to look to the second-hand market, as they often lack both waiting time and resources.

A sublease contract is fundamentally an insecure form of housing because it is difficult for the tenant to claim their rights against the landlord. When subletting a rental property, the tenant does in practice have some protection against overrenting, as the legislation regulates the sublease rent to a maximum of the own rent including operating costs plus a 10–15 percent surcharge if the home is furnished. However, many people still pay overrent, as they may not dare or have the strength to dispute the rent – it is difficult to find new housing and the Stockholm Housing Board has a processing time of almost 18 months.

In order for tenants to use the tools available to protect them in the secondary market, it is important to actively work to shorten the processing times at the Rent Board. According to the government, three out of four cases at the Rent Board should be decided within four months. In reality, it often takes several years.

SSCO therefore believes that the government must allocate more resources so that the Rent Board can work in a legally secure manner and shorten processing times.

Since 2013, subletting of owned housing has been regulated by the Act (2012) on the Rental of Owned Housing. According to this regulation, the landlord and the tenant must agree on the subletting themselves, but it must be cost-based. This means in theory that the rent should be based on the value of the home and operating costs – excluding mortgage costs – and that the tenant can apply for the Rent Board to review the rent level if there is suspicion of overrenting. In the event that it is determined that the tenant has paid overrent, the landlord cannot be retroactively liable for repayment. In practice, however, this means that the landlord can set whatever rent they want, especially in the Stockholm region where it is generally possible to request significantly higher rents than in the rest of the country.

The secondary market plays an important role, especially in large cities. It is good that parts of the housing stock that would otherwise be empty can be used by secondary tenants. However, for the individual, it is an uncertain, expensive and unsafe housing situation and secondary housing is neither a long-term nor sustainable solution to the student housing shortage.

SSCO believes that the rules for subletting one's own home should be adjusted so that the conditions are similar to those for renting out rental properties. The secondary market should not be a platform through which landlords can make big money through unreasonable rents, but a tool to enable quick moves between different cities and to be able to fully renew the housing stock.

2.1.4. Access to LADOK

Student housing is for students; a form of housing that is intended to enable studies. However, due to the current state of the housing market, it is not uncommon for those who have completed their studies to remain in their student housing. This is completely understandable, but still constitutes a major problem as it means that students who are actually studying do not have access to student housing.

One way to check that the tenant is actively pursuing studies is to check against Ladok, the system for reporting study registration and results. However, only a few of the country's student housing actors have access to Ladok, as the Ladok Regulation limits which actors can be granted access to the register.

SSCO believes that all student housing stakeholders should be given access to Ladok in order to be able to check, without intermediaries, that the tenant is actively pursuing studies. This would contribute to a more legally secure and efficient control process, shorten queue times and contribute to the student housing truly fulfilling its purpose.

2.1.5. Ten-month rent

Student rooms (corridor rooms) often have a so-called ten-month rent, which means that the summer period (July-August) is rent-free. The annual rent is the same as if the tenant had paid rent for twelve months, but the monthly rent is adjusted upwards and the payment dates are arranged so that students with this type of accommodation do not have to pay rent during the summer.

SSCO believes that ten-month rent should be the norm when renting student rooms, as it suits many students and for many is an important reason for choosing student rooms as a form of accommodation.

2.1.6. Buddy Contract

So-called buddy contracts are an opportunity for several people to live together on equal terms and conditions under rental law. This is achieved by entering into several rental agreements for the same home. Each tenant receives a separate rental agreement for the shared home and is thus neither responsible for anyone else's living space nor dependent on the primary tenant.

SSCO believes that buddy contracts would create more security in the housing market.

Contact with friends is made more difficult or prevented today by, among other things, building technical requirements, especially fire safety regulations and rules regarding what is classified as an apartment.

If different people rent different parts of one and the same apartment, that apartment becomes, according to the law, several different apartments. By dividing it so that each person rents a room, each room is therefore its own apartment. This means that each room needs to meet the building technical requirements that apply to an apartment and needs to constitute its own fire cell. Due to the practical and economic disadvantages this entails, landlords and property owners are reluctant to introduce this type of contractual solution – and instead rely on what SSCO would call a cohabitation contract (several tenants on one rental agreement)

SSCO believes that the building regulations must be adapted so that the concept of an apartment when renting shared accommodation can be fulfilled by the total common area. Each contract should therefore not mean that the area (room) to which the contract refers is classified as a separate apartment and thus must meet the same building technical requirements and fire protection regulations as these.

Buddy contact is a safe housing solution for people who want to live together, regardless of age or employment status. They should therefore be available for all housing that is mediated with a rental contract.

2.1.7. Category housing

Student housing is a transitional housing option that is appreciated by many students. It offers a chance to get your own first-hand contract for a rental property in an often central and close-to-campus location, with a fairly reasonable rent, without having to wait in the housing queue for 30 years.

Currently, there are some exceptions for student housing in terms of the regulations on housing construction, but most of these are applicable on the basis that the student housing is less than 35 m². They are therefore not necessarily about the student housing being a student housing, but rather that it is a small apartment.

If student housing were instead a pure category of housing, special rules and exceptions could be applied to the type of housing regardless of size. Then construction companies that specialize in student housing would be able to achieve more efficient use of resources in their projects, which would contribute to more student housing.

Student housing as a category of housing is not about degrading the quality of housing by building it more cheaply, but about better adapting the housing to the target group for which it is intended. SSCO believes that it is possible to build innovatively and variedly for more types of housing, without compromising on quality or standards. Examples of this are how rules regarding noise levels, parking standards, management, land allocations and municipal property fees could be adapted for student housing projects, to contribute to more and more affordable student housing.

2.1.8. State aid

The previous government investment support for rental apartments and student housing, which was introduced in 2017, is fundamentally a good tool. The support has contributed to lower rents in new construction for housing up to 70 m² and, above all, apartments under 35 m².

However, the design of the support has not been optimal and the desired effect has been relatively small in Stockholm and other large cities. However, the support worked somewhat better after the adjustments made when it was reintroduced in 2019, which has led to just over 1,000 student housing units completed in the Stockholm region receiving a lower rent with the help of the investment support.

In addition to the design issues, there is also political disagreement over the investment support. This has led to it being introduced, removed, reintroduced and removed again, all depending on which party constellation has managed to push through its budget. These fluctuations in the conditions of construction companies create great uncertainty that can have negative effects on housing construction. SSCO therefore believes that the investment support should be permanent

In connection with this, however, the design of the support needs to be reviewed and further strengthened, so that it can truly become the pragmatic, stimulating tool it is intended to be. When Sweden's largest student housing company, Stockholms studentbostäder, cannot use the investment support because they cannot make the calculations add up, it is not possible to argue that it has been a success for student housing construction.

Among other things, predictability needs to be strengthened and user-friendliness increased, for example with regard to the extension bonus. Furthermore, it needs to be adapted more to local conditions, for example with regard to the rent ceiling. Student housing operators should not have to make a loss in order to apply for investment support.

SSCO therefore believes that it is of great importance that student housing is assigned category housing status, so that target group-specific, pragmatic rules can be developed that contribute to a cheaper and more efficient construction process.

2.1.9. Management of student housing

It is not unusual, with today's system, for a construction project to take 10–12 years to complete (from idea to move in). The fact that it takes so long depends on several different factors, such as the number of agencies involved, long processing times at each agency, and extensive appeal options.

The right to appeal a decision is a central part of a democratic process. In construction cases, however, those who appeal (the interested parties) are often local residents who are concerned about the value or a presumed impact on their own housing. Compared to the social benefit of the planned housing – not least in view of the current student housing shortage – and the cost-increasing effect of these lengthy appeal processes, it is not reasonable that joint construction projects can be appealed again and again by the same interested parties.

SSCO believes that there are several solutions for a more efficient student housing construction process. Firstly, projects that include student housing should be given priority in processing. This would in many cases drastically shorten the construction process, which would help to speed up the reduction of today's large student housing shortage.

Furthermore, the process itself should be streamlined through fewer instances and requirements for short processing times. This would improve the situation for all residential construction.

Finally, municipalities should work more actively at the detailed planning stage to include both local residents and future residents in the process. This would open up the way for proactive handling of potential complaints from stakeholders and could thus help reduce the number of appeal applications – and thus shorten the construction process.

The appeal of student housing construction projects should always be put in relation to the difficulties students have in gaining access to safe housing with reasonable conditions. It is unacceptable that housing projects that are started today will not be completed for just over ten years.

2.1.10. Ground instructions

Land allocations can be allocated in different ways, for example through direct allocation, price tender or competition. When land allocations are allocated based on price, this can have an increasing effect, leading to the end consumer – the tenant – having to pay more for their accommodation. When land allocations are instead allocated based on other factors, opportunities are created for different types of urban development.

A good example of such land allocations is the so-called Örebro model. Örebro Municipality has fixed land prices and does not work with tender procedures. When the municipality and the construction company have agreed on a proposal for the land, a reservation agreement for sale is signed and when the building permit has been approved, the land is sold. This also counteracts unused building rights.

SSCO believes that more municipalities must be more flexible in how they allocate land allocations. The possibility of basing a land allocation solely on price bids should be abolished and the social benefit of the housing should be taken into account.

However, SSCO believes that it is important that municipalities receive assistance in developing such processes in order to achieve greater harmonization between municipalities, and therefore believes that the state should clarify the municipalities' housing supply responsibilities with such guidelines.

2.1.11. Parking standard

The parking norm, p-norm, is the number of parking spaces that must be built in connection with housing construction. It is up to the municipalities to decide on the p-norm. It is often flexible, which means that it varies from project to project.

SSCO believes that the p-norm for student housing should always be set to zero. Partly, it is an environmental and sustainability issue, where the focus should rather be on developing and improving the conditions for public transport and cycling, and partly it is about adopting a reality perspective.

Most students in Stockholm do not own and use a car in such a way that parking lot construction in connection with student housing construction is justifiable. It affects the costs of the construction projects, and by extension the rent, far too much in relation to the benefit it brings to the average student.

2.1.12. Accessibility in housing

The accessibility rules aim to ensure that housing is designed in a way that makes it possible for as many people as possible to both use and live in it. Both people with full mobility and people with reduced orientation or who, for example, use a wheelchair should be able to use the living environment.

The rules are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The convention means that society must ensure that people, regardless of their functional ability, can participate in social life on as equal terms as possible. People with disabilities should therefore not be excluded from the housing that is being built, either in the form of not being able to live in it themselves, or in the form of visiting others, such as a partner, friend

SSCO believes that the freedom to participate in society on equal terms is fundamental. Many of the homes built before accessibility regulations were introduced are not accessible, which means that there are already significant restrictions on who can live or visit today's housing environments.

Today, there are those who believe that student housing should be exempt from accessibility regulations. Instead, it is proposed that only a smaller proportion of the stock should be accessible, which people with special needs can apply to live in.

SSCO does not believe that student housing should be exempt from accessibility regulations. To ignore accessibility adaptations would mean that restrictions were built into the housing stock from the start, which would have a negative impact on future tenants over the many years that the housing will last.

Student housing should be designed in modern and innovative ways that suit today's and tomorrow's students. There are many ways to do this without compromising rights legislation.

2.1.13. National interests

National interests are places, areas or objects in Sweden that are considered important from a national perspective and therefore need to be preserved and protected against exploitation. These can include, for example, natural resources or cultural-historical environments, but also infrastructure and areas that belong to or are used by the Armed Forces.

The housing shortage in the Stockholm region is extensive and part of the solution is to build more – and as needed. The national interest system is often cited as an obstacle to housing construction due to complicated criteria, too many agencies involved, unclear decision-making processes and an ever-growing list of areas. This leads to new construction being prevented, delayed and made more expensive – if it even starts at all.

In September 2021, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning submitted its final report on the government's assignment to coordinate a review of the national interest claim. This review had the stated goal of reducing the total claim. The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning put forward several good proposals in its interim report to achieve this. SSCO believes that it is important that community planning is sustainable in the long term, which includes taking into account, and preserving, areas of national interest. However, it is not reasonable that the process for this is so complicated and unclear that developers refrain from even trying to submit detailed plans for areas where national interest claims can affect the process.

SSCO believes that a number of changes are required in the national interest system. The selection of national interests must be relevant and take into account the current social situation, of which regular relevance tests and a system for national planning need to be introduced.

The application rules must be clarified to avoid unnecessary hassle and to harmonize application across municipal borders.

Furthermore, decisions on new national interest claims should be preceded by an assessment of whether it is really necessary, or whether other regulations can be used instead. In addition, the possibility of appealing a national interest should also be introduced. A well-regulated appeals process combined with regular topicality tests would ensure that outdated national interest areas do not create unnecessary obstacles to housing construction.

A reduced national interest claim in combination with these measures could have a major positive effect on housing construction in the country.

2.1.14. Noise regulations

According to current regulations, noise levels in newly built homes must be measured at the facade, which makes it difficult to build new homes in central locations, often close to campus. Locations where many student housing operators want and need to build. The reason for this measurement method is considered to be that the resident should be able to ventilate (i.e. have an open window) without exceeding the maximum approved noise level.

Changing the system for measuring noise levels is not the same as abandoning the standard for new construction. SSCO believes that noise regulations must be adapted to a greater extent to the conditions that apply to student housing construction today.

2.1.15. Municipal property tax

With the current system for municipal property taxes, all homes are taxed at the same level. The ceiling amount is indexed up each income year according to changes in the income base amount.

The current system hits small apartments and student housing disproportionately hard, especially student rooms, as most student housing developments consist almost exclusively of apartments. The fact that these are taxed at the same level as a (larger) apartment is a clear economic disadvantage for the property owner, who has to pay property tax for many more apartments than a typical rental property project.

SSCO believes that student housing should be exempt from the rules on municipal property fees. If this exception is not introduced, the system must be changed so that the fee takes into account the size and standard of the apartments.

2.1.16. Sustainability in the building

To achieve the goal of a housing guarantee, more construction is required, and the construction of more housing naturally has an ecological impact. It is therefore important to take ecological sustainability into account in every step of the construction process. This means choosing the right materials, upgrading existing buildings instead of building completely new ones, and the like.

Sustainability and circularity in construction are also a way to lower the costs of housing construction. If society invests in an infrastructure where the use of recycled materials is central, the cost of the material will also decrease. This means that construction with recycled materials will be lower than if you produce completely new ones. This benefits both the wallet and the climate.

2.2. Economy

2.2.1. The study tool

The study grant plays an important role in making it possible to study in Sweden. It has both a recruiting and a leveling effect, since a person's background and financial circumstances should not otherwise constitute an obstacle to starting to study. However, a prerequisite for the study grant to achieve its purpose is that it is actually possible to live on it.

In Stockholm, the majority of students work extra hours alongside their studies to make ends meet. Many experience that finances are a stress factor that affects both their academic performance and their health. Some "solve" the situation by asking for financial support from family and relatives, something that not everyone has the opportunity to do. Many also adapt their life situation by living as cheaply as possible. The risk of being forced into such an approach is missing out on many of the important things that studying offers.

Being a student is obviously about learning and academic achievement, but it is also about making contacts for future working life.

Having a positive study time, being able to afford leisure activities and meeting friends is also health-promoting and provides resilience against adversity and more difficult periods in life.

The risk of too narrow a student grant is that potential students give up their studies for financial reasons, and that existing students become more vulnerable and feel unwell from financial pressure and stress. The increases in student grants that have been made previously have not been sufficient. The student grant is still not enough to cover the expenses that students have. SSCO believes that the student grant needs to be increased. Currently, there are far too many students who do not have a secure existence as a result of their financial situation. Working extra is in many places the norm rather than a voluntary choice.

Students should not need to have more than one full-time job to survive financially. Since students are a group with great variation in terms of age, life situation and other conditions, the study funding also needs to be reviewed in the form of special extra grants and loans for certain groups. Expenses are higher for students in metropolitan regions in general, and Stockholm in particular. It therefore needs to be investigated whether students in certain geographical areas should have the opportunity to apply for special extra grants and loans, similar to those for studies abroad. Although such solutions cannot individually solve the financial situation for students in

Stockholm can be a piece of the puzzle to enable and facilitate studies in Stockholm. The study allowance and the supplementary grants and loans that special groups have the opportunity to apply for through CSN also need to be reviewed. In particular, older students and students with child responsibilities have particular difficulty coping with the financial situation, which is directly counterproductive to stimulating lifelong learning.

A special group SSCO has identified is student guardians. Currently, there is a supplementary grant from the Central Student Support Board (CSN). The supplementary grant per 4 weeks for full-time students is too low. We believe this is a grant that should be increased. The financial situation is already difficult for students, where a student often lives around the subsistence minimum, and when responsibility for a child is added, the situation becomes particularly precarious for both the student and the child. Sweden has adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child as law and should therefore make higher study funds available for students with responsibility for children. Article 26 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child SSCO therefore believes that this should be complied with.

SSCO believes that repayment of student loans should only occur when the student is not studying more than 50%. Today, you can in practice study full-time but without taking out student loans and thus having to start repaying the student loan.

SSCO believes that additional cost loans should be able to be paid for all types of study materials that the education requires.

2.2.2. Public transport

Stockholm's public transport is expensive and represents a large expense for students in relation to their study budget. The size and layout of the city means that most people are dependent on regular use of public transport. Public transport is therefore an expense that is included in the average student's budget.

SSCO believes that public transport prices must be adapted to students' financial circumstances. The student discount needs to be made more affordable. Instead of constantly raising prices, SL needs to rethink and start from students' ability to pay, meaning that students should not pay a higher percentage of their income through student loans than an average gainful employee. Thus, the direction for student prices for Stockholm's public transport should correspond to approximately three percent of student loans.

Stockholm has a severe housing shortage, which also applies to student housing. This means that many people need to live far from campus and commute long distances every day. When the region develops public transport, it is important that the city is connected in a way that simplifies commuting both to the city centre and between its outer edges. This also includes boat traffic, which needs to be developed to a greater extent and made accessible to be used with SL tickets.

2.2.3. Exemption amount

For those studying with student loans, there is a limit to how much they are allowed to earn on the side, which is called the exemption amount. A student who earns more than the exemption amount limit will be liable to repay any grants and loans they have taken out.

The exemption amount is currently calculated semi-annually, from the first of January to the last of June and from the first of July to the last of December. The exemption amount follows the months of the calendar year, even though regular semesters do not include the summer months (June, July and August) when the vast majority of students do not study. Since students never receive study funds when they are not actively pursuing their studies, most students must work during the summer. Many extra jobs or temporary employment pay salaries in arrears. Those who work full-time in June will therefore receive their salary in July, in which case it will count towards the exemption amount limit for the second calendar half of the year. This means that many people risk receiving three full-time salaries during the second calendar half of the year, which means that it is possible to quickly reach the exemption amount limit. Similarly, those who worked full-time before starting their studies risk that their previous income will affect the exemption amount in a way that does not correspond to the

SSCO believes that the exemption should only cover the months that students are actually studying, that is, the regular semesters. It is during the semesters that it is important for students to focus on their studies, not what students do during the time they are not studying.

Summer income is often important to be able to set aside a buffer for unforeseen expenses or for the time immediately after graduation, when it can be difficult to find work before completing your studies. Tying the allowance to the regular semesters would better achieve the desired effect. In addition, it would make it easier for students to have an overview and control over their income in relation to the allowance, and reduce concerns about repayment obligations.

2.2.4. Leave

In Sweden, it is a legal requirement that everyone who works has the right to paid vacation every year. It is unreasonable that students do not have the same right to recovery and rest as employees. Students live on limited financial resources, and many need to work extra in addition to their full-time employment to make ends meet. Many of these do not have the opportunity to set aside money to take time off. During the summer months, students generally need to work to make ends meet. For those who have managed to save money during the year and those who manage to get a summer job right away, and earn enough to save, it may be possible to take a period of time off during the summer. For others, however, summer can mean enormous financial stress and some cannot take time off at all because their income is not enough to cover more than basic expenses. SSCO believes that students should have the right to one month of leave per year with student funds, to have the opportunity to recover and rest.

2.2.5. Lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is an important principle in the higher education sector. Lifelong learning is about, among other things, enabling studies regardless of age and making it possible for people to retrain, both to match the needs of society and to develop skills within their profession.

For this to be practically possible, however, there must be reasonable economic conditions.

In line with the development of society, it is clear that the maximum number of weeks for which study funding is granted, 240 weeks, is too narrow. The number of weeks corresponds to six years of study, or a combined bachelor's and master's degree. Previously, there were basically only one-year postgraduate courses at advanced level, while most of them now cover three years. This means that there is very little scope for students to, for example, change their education or take broadening courses, without affecting their ability to then study for a degree at advanced level. SSCO therefore believes that it is high time to increase the number of weeks eligible for study funding to 300.

2.2.6. Housing allowance

Currently, only students under the age of 29 and those with child responsibilities can apply for housing allowance.

However, many students who would be entitled to housing allowance today refrain from applying at all, as the system is complicated and many are required to repay, with the risk of becoming indebted to the Swedish Enforcement Authority as a result. The allowance is also poorly adapted to the housing solutions that many students and young people have. For example, students without children cannot receive housing allowance when they rent a room as boarders.

Students' incomes can vary greatly over a year, and with the current rules, a student who needs support in November can be denied support because their income was too high during the spring or summer. SSCO believes that the housing allowance should be available to all students regardless of age, family or housing situation. SSCO also believes that the assessment model needs to be changed to suit the varying and often unpredictable financial situation that students often have in a year. A separate system is needed for students that is based on shorter time periods that students have the opportunity to review. The housing allowance needs to be continuously increased to follow price developments in the housing market. Therefore, the housing allowance should be increased in relation to the price base amount.

2.3. Health

Higher education institutions are obliged to offer students health care and preventive health care. This work is important for promoting students' health, mental health, study environment and transition to working life. Each higher education institution is responsible for how they organize their work with student health. Many choose to join a student health clinic where a number of services are selected for students to access. The universities are responsible for the student health clinics.

This could include supportive conversations, group activities such as learning to speak in front of a group, or support in managing one's drinking. Universities may also have other activities to ensure student health care.

SSCO believes that there should be room for variations in how higher education institutions organize student health work so that it is as well adapted as possible to the higher education institution's target group. However, the mission of providing student health care and preventive care needs to be clarified so that it becomes more equal what type of support students are entitled to, regardless of which higher education institution they belong to. Student health clinics testify that there are many good initiatives to develop the activities, but that the resources are not enough. Students should not feel bad as a result of a lack of resources and SSCO therefore believes that the resources to the higher education institutions Student health work needs to increase.

Today, there are major shortcomings in the communication towards students about the type of student healthcare and preventive healthcare that the higher education institution offers. This leads to students missing out on support that could have prevented or treated ill health. Higher education institutions therefore need to develop their communication to students about access to student healthcare so that all students know where they can turn if needed, regardless of when during their education the need arises. SSCO believes that all higher education institutions should develop a

information packages or similar that must be communicated to students both in writing and orally at least once per semester, regardless of what level or how far into their education the students are

2.3.1. Sick leave

For a student who is on sick leave, different rules apply than for an employee. Students can only be on sick leave full or half-time, unlike employees who can also be sick in quarter-day increments. The possibility of being on sick leave in quarter-day increments is important in order to have the opportunity to be sick and receive rehabilitation to the extent that the sick person needs. It is also important in order to be able to increase the employment rate at a reasonable pace after a sick leave. SSCO therefore believes that students should have the same right to part-time sick leave as employees.

One problem for a student who is on part-time sick leave is that the higher education institution often lacks the ability to adjust the pace of study to a different one than the one the student is admitted to. This leads to students often missing more than the time or extent for which they are actually on sick leave. For example, if a student is on sick leave half-time for one semester, they are often forced to study the coming semester at half-speed. This creates a lot of stress that means that students have to find their own creative solutions to make ends meet, keep their student accommodation and otherwise create a secure existence.

SSCO believes that higher education institutions should do their utmost to enable a study pace in line with the student's sick leave. From a long-term perspective, according to SSCO, students should have the same right to study part-time as employees. It is therefore necessary to investigate how higher education institutions should organize their operations in the long term to make this

2.3.2. Waiting period for sick leave with student loans

Being on sick leave as a student with student aid often works differently than for an employee. A student who is sick for a few days or up to a couple of weeks can, depending on the nature of the course, often make up for missed parts without having to retake the entire course. The student aid will not be affected by the absence as long as the student is taking their credits. The waiting period for having their student loan written off from their student debt due to sick leave is currently 30 days. This means that a student who is on sick leave for 60 days will only have their student aid written off for the last 30 days.

SSCO believes that 30 days is far too long a waiting period. Most students will have missed too much to make up for it after two weeks, and sometimes even sooner. SSCO therefore believes that the waiting period for student loan forgiveness should be reduced to 14 days.

2.3.3. Rehabilitation

For employees, the responsibility for rehabilitation to return to work lies with the employer. For students, the responsibility instead lies with the Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the Central Student Support Board (CSN). Since neither of these authorities has insight into the student's study situation, the current regulations mean that the student often receives inadequate support when returning. It is likely that many students drop out of their studies as a result of the shortcomings in the sick leave and rehabilitation process. However, the reason for students dropping out is rarely known to the higher education institution, which is why measures to strengthen the study situation are not taken. A changed regulatory framework could reduce human suffering for individuals, as well as increase the proportion who complete their studies, which is important for society at large.

According to SSCO, the responsibility for rehabilitation should be transferred to the education provider, that is, the student's higher education institution. The higher education institutions should be supported in developing guidelines for how the rehabilitation responsibility should be specifically designed so that it is equal, legally secure and appropriate.

3. Conditions for student life

3.1 Serving permit

Stockholm is Sweden's largest student city and has without a doubt the most students, student unions and student associations. Stockholm has a strong community life and the opportunities to socialize outside of studies are great. All associations must be given the conditions to develop and be available to the students. Unlike other student cities, however, student life in Stockholm is spread out. This means that the experience of Stockholm as a student city is often not self-evident. It is currently difficult to implement activities for all of Stockholm's students. One reason for this is restrictions on catering permits that make it difficult for groups of students to socialize.

It is difficult for a student at, for example, Sophiahemmet to take part in student life at Stockholm University, precisely because of the limited catering permits. It is important that Stockholm students have access to everything Stockholm has to offer and therefore it is of

It is of utmost importance that municipalities that have universities review the processes for catering permits to enable a more cross-university student life.

3.2. Accessibility on campus

In order for everyone to be able to take part in education and student life, all campuses must be accessible. This means that there must be access to everything from elevators and handrails to clear signage and the possibility of privacy. This means that both the university's own premises and the premises of student organizations must be accessible to everyone. The universities also have a responsibility to make it easier for student organizations to have accessible premises.

3.3. Culture

Stockholm is Sweden's leading cultural city. There are national stages, state museums and an incredible breadth of different forms of culture. Currently, a large part of the culture that exists in Stockholm is expensive and not accessible to students. Students partly live at different times of the day than the rest of the population and it is therefore also important that culture is available at varied times and places. If students are to be able to take part in a varied range of culture, it is necessary that there is culture in many different places in society. It is of great importance that there are theaters, cinemas, museums and the like also in areas close to campus with student disc

4. Training requirements

4.1. State support for student unions

Since the abolition of the compulsory student union, the resources for student unions at state universities have decreased. This has also had a negative impact on the opportunities to conduct independent student influence. Many universities have chosen to support student unions financially through supplementary operating support. Although the supplement in itself is good and necessary for many unions, the effect is that the unions end up in a position of dependence on the universities. Student influence is thus conducted with different basic prerequisites at

SSCO believes that resources for the work of student unions should be paid directly from the state and be at least 310 kronor per full-time student, which is a recommendation from the University Chancellor's Office. There should be no obstacles for higher education institutions to financially

support the student unions, but this should only be a complement to the state support rather than a prerequisite for the student union's activities. The basic financial conditions must be the same for all student unions.

The state should be the guarantor for these.

4.2. Educational quality

Higher education institutions are obliged to continuously work on quality assurance and development of the content of their programmes. Student participation and influence are crucial for quality, relevance and connection to working life. Although there are positive trends and exciting methodological developments to increase student influence and student participation in quality development, surveys show year after year that the procedures are lacking in too many programmes. Deficiencies occur primarily in follow-up and feedback, which creates a vicious circle where students do not see the point in being active by, for example, completing evaluations, or participating as student representatives in subject and programme councils. It also becomes unclear to both existing and prospective students what quality the programme maintains.

There is a need to ensure that higher education institutions have well-functioning routines for quality assurance and student participation in course and quality development. Openly reporting course reports is a good way to create transparency for both existing and prospective students who can take part in the work with quality assurance and quality development in a programme. SSCO believes that course reports should always be reported publicly on the websites of higher education institutions. The course reports should contain a summary of the students' views, the reflections of the education provider and an account of any changes that are planned as a result of the students' views.

4.3. Study environment

The mission of higher education institutions to promote student health includes ensuring that students have a good work/study environment. Deficiencies in the study environment can lead to problems with stress and other ill health. To prevent ill health, higher education institutions need to have a holistic perspective and well-functioning routines in their work environment work. Promoting a good study environment needs to happen at all different levels at an educational institution. Everything from students having influence over their education through local program or subject councils to influence over the strategic work of the educational institutions, both academic and administrative issues.

The Work Environment Act equates students to certain extent with employees, which means that a large part of the work environment legislation applies to the relationship between the higher education institution and the student.

The Work Environment Act states that the higher education institution must take all necessary measures to prevent ill health and accidents. Students must be given the opportunity to participate in work environment work. However, students are exempt from the Swedish Work Environment Authority's regulations on organizational and social work environment, which are a clarification of the rules in the Work Environment Act. SSCO believes that the Swedish Work Environment Authority should be tasked with developing regulations for students' work environment equivalent to those that apply to work environment in workplaces. It should be clear who is responsible, what the responsibility entails and who should be held accountable for shortcomings in work environment work.

Students should always be included in the work on the student work environment. However, it is also important that higher education institutions have well-functioning routines to utilize the knowledge about student health that staff at student health clinics and similar functions have.

4.4. Union status

Student unions are the democratic safety net for students. They guarantee students' influence over their education and study situation. Student unions are granted union status for three years at a time, and it is the higher education institution that makes the decision. In the sense in which the Higher Education Act refers to student unions, they only refer to higher education institutions under state authority and do not include folk high schools and polytechnics.

The process is known as the student union status process. The rules governing the student union status process are somewhat unclear and leave some fundamentally important questions unanswered. One question concerns the extent to which universities may set requirements when granting student union status. Another question concerns the possibilities for student unions to exclude members for various reasons, for example after a member has behaved inappropriately or offensively towards another member.

Student unions are independent organizations whose primary task is to conduct student influence and lobbying work towards higher education institutions. In order to ensure the independence of student unions, SSCO believes that decisions on union status should be made by an independent national body. This should be guided by clear requirements on what is required to be granted student union status. The higher education institutions should not decide for themselves which student organizations should influence them. The student union status process must be clearly designed to guarantee legal certainty, predictability and independent student influence

4.5. Special educational support

Students with documented disabilities can, if necessary, be granted a certificate of special educational support. This is important so that education is provided on equal terms, so that individuals have the opportunity to benefit from the education and so that society does not lose out on valuable skills. In recent years, the number and proportion of students who have sought educational support has increased, while resources have remained at the same levels. Even though processes have been developed and streamlined, there are consequences when resources do not increase to meet development requires. Students too often testify to long waiting times and processes that are not legally secure. In addition, students too often encounter resistance from examiners who fail to provide students with the support they are entitled to, either due to ignorance, lack of resources or sheer unwillingness.

Students with special educational support granted should feel secure in having their needs met. The process should be legally secure, respectful and safe. SSCO believes that the resources for special educational support need to increase to match the increase in students who apply for and use special educational support. Higher education institutions also need to ensure that teachers have sufficient knowledge and resources to meet the efforts students are granted. Studies show that pedagogy that is good for students with disabilities is also often good for all students. This can mean everything from making clear presentations, providing materials in advance so that students can prepare, to always using a microphone. A conscious accessibility perspective in teaching can mean that students with special educational support do not always need individual solutions, which makes it more efficient for individual students, teachers and the entire student group.

However, overall accessible pedagogy can never completely replace individual solutions when needed. Teaching accessibly requires knowledge. Therefore, SSCO believes that resources for higher education pedagogical development need to be increased to develop accessibility perspectives in basic higher education pedagogical courses for college and university teachers.

4.6. International students

To increase the attractiveness of Sweden in general and Stockholm in particular, better conditions are needed for our incoming students. In order for them to be able to focus on the goal of the exchange – studies and cultural exchanges – coordination between authorities must be strengthened. SSCO believes that a residence permit for studies in Sweden should be valid for the entire period of study and

that the Swedish Migration Board should have the right to apply automated processing of international students' study achievements. In this way, the excessively long processing times will be shortened, while the administrative burden for both authorities and students will be reduced. Such an arrangement would also mean that students can let go of the worry about whether they will be able to complete the education they have been admitted to. The situation of incoming students must become more secure, otherwise we risk losing our international attractiveness.

4.7. Broadened recruitment and participation

Since 2001, all higher education institutions have been tasked with working to broaden recruitment to higher education. More specifically, this means recruiting prospective students from homes with no study habits who traditionally do not seek higher education. The aim is to capture talents in individuals, and for society to take advantage of the skills that can be developed through higher education. Broadening recruitment is important for both individuals, for the quality of higher education institutions and for society. In order for students with different backgrounds and conditions to have the same chance to complete their studies on equal terms, higher education institutions also need to work with broadened participation.

Many higher education institutions work with broadened participation, but this is too often done by individual enthusiasts rather than through systematic work with evaluation, follow-up and student influence. Through increased systematic work, good examples could become more established and spread to more higher education institutions. This could, for example, mean arranging preparatory summer courses, study circles, pedagogical inclusive initiatives or language courses for academic Swedish. SSCO believes that higher education institutions need to be given a clearer mandate to work with broadening participation. Unspoken knowledge should not be required to have the prerequisites to pass the studies.

4.8. Higher education institutions shall pay for accommodation when studies are placed elsewhere

Students should be able to feel secure that the costs that may come with their studies are clearly reported in advance. Today, however, it happens that students are forced to incur greater costs as a result of temporarily needing to move to another location to complete their education. This especially occurs for students on programs where practical work experience (VFU) is included as a mandatory component and where the higher education institution is unable to find a VFU place at the regular study location. In order for the student to complete the education, they are then involuntarily placed at another study location. This means that students may temporarily have to pay double accommodation costs and extra expenses for travel costs.

SSCO believes that it is not acceptable that students should have to pay double accommodation costs and extra travel costs when compulsory education is held in a location other than the regular place of study, without the student having the opportunity to choose another alternative.

According to SSCO, higher education institutions must cover any additional costs for housing and travel when students are involuntarily placed in a location other than their place of study.

4.9. Course literature and hidden fees

For many students, course literature is a burden on the student's wallet. The university library often provides so few copies of course literature that students have to find other solutions, and in many cases are forced to buy the literature at full price. It also happens that course elements are added that require additional costs for students, such as excursions or special computer programs. SSCO believes that fees during the education period should be predictable and clearly communicated in advance. Educational elements that are associated with costs should not be mandatory or decisive for grading.

SSCO believes that the costs of course literature should not affect students' ability to study. The universities therefore need to work long-term, actively and creatively to ensure that education becomes free of charge, also with regard to mandatory course literature. This can be done in several ways, for example through more copies of course literature in libraries, literature in digital form, the introduction of a maximum ceiling for how much literature should cost and other good examples that are being done locally around different universities.

4.10. Academic House

Many higher education institutions are short of space. The higher education institutions are the students' workplace and home, but today there is often no possibility of getting access to a table and chair to conduct their studies. Many higher education institutions rent their premises from Akademiska Hus and in many cases that is where the problem lies.

Akademiska Hus has high return targets, which means that resources that could be spent on, for example, improvements to properties and a better study environment and study places are now going to high rental costs for the universities. SSCO therefore believes that the government should adjust the return requirement downwards through a revision of the Ownership Directive.

4.11. Rents for student organizations

Many student organizations rent their premises directly from the universities. Since the universities often have their own expensive rents, the rents for both student unions and associations often become a negligible part of the turnover. This means that the student organizations cannot conduct their activities in the most appropriate way. Many student unions are also saying that they will not be able to conduct their activities at all if the rents continue to increase at the current rate.

SSCO believes that universities should facilitate student organizations by subsidizing the costs of premises. It is of utmost importance that student organizations have a place to be for both the students and the university.

An important part of the flow at universities is that students feel a sense of belonging and a sense of context - in this, student organizations are invaluable, and the fact that they risk not surviving due to sky-high rents is a major problem.

4.12. Sustainability in education

Higher education institutions have a responsibility to promote sustainable development in all their activities. Sustainability is a constantly relevant topic for the university and college sector and for students. It is of utmost importance that higher education institutions collaborate with student unions for a sustainable society.

This could involve everything from public transport to and from campus to increasing the use of digital meeting places.

A sustainable climate is an important issue for the whole of society and therefore also for students. It is important that sustainability is taken into account in all parts of society: in the construction of student housing, road standards in the municipality and region, and reasonable bicycle connections in the county.

4.13. Scheduling of examination sessions

SSCO believes that higher education institutions should avoid scheduling examination sessions outside of the course's regular teaching hours, for example evenings and weekends if the course is given during the day.

4.14. Teaching hours

SSCO believes that all students should be offered a high number of teacher-led hours of high pedagogical quality at the location where the education takes place.