

SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI



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FOREWORD

RECTOR SARI LINDBLOM

Sustainability and responsibility constitute one of the focus areas of the University of Helsinki's strategic plan for 2021–2030. However, several sustainability and responsibility measures have been prepared and carried out already during previous strategy periods. These actions originate in our community, and I wish to thank all members of the University community for their long-term efforts to promote sustainability and responsibility.

The vision for the strategy period that concluded at the end of 2020 was 'Global impact in interaction'. Accordingly, we produced and continue to produce new knowledge and innovations that will help in solving global challenges. Teaching based on research provides experts who graduate from our University with the skills needed to build a society that takes responsibility for our planet as well as our wellbeing.

Among other things, a sustainability course designed collaboratively by more than 160 members of the University community makes it possible for all of our students to grasp the basics of sustainability problems and their solutions. At the end of the previous strategy period, we had divested all of our investments in fossil fuel production, a step towards a carbon-neutral investment portfolio. In addition to research and teaching, our everyday activities and administration are in fact contributing to an increasingly sustainable and responsible future.

We are eliminating structures that create inequality and investing in the ecological sustainability of our campuses. Cooperation is key to promoting



Veikko Somerpuro

sustainability and responsibility. In the strategy period 2017–2020, we supported interdisciplinarity and established, for example, the Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science HELSUS. Outside the University, we have intensified and continued collaboration with various national and international partners.

Here, we have compiled a record of the sustainability and responsibility efforts of the University of Helsinki. This overview sheds light on our University's diverse work for a more sustainable and responsible future. This is work that still continues. For the next steps, we have drawn up a sustainability and responsibility plan that will guide our operations in the coming years.

1 FOR THE WORLD

This is the first comprehensive report on the sustainability and responsibility efforts of the University of Helsinki. At the beginning of the new strategy period 2021–2030, we are taking a look at the past to better plan for the future. This report is a review of our sustainability and responsibility work carried out in the previous strategy period of 2017–2020, and a way of making our efforts increasingly transparent and open.

11

faculties

7

administrative sectors

8 100

employees

4

independent institutes

31 600

degree students

4 638

teaching and research
staff members

FOR THE WORLD

This report includes highlights from the previous strategy period from among research related to the topic and other efforts by our units to promote sustainability and responsibility. It is impossible to cover all relevant efforts carried out at the University in a single document, but this report provides an interim overview on the matter. The promotion of sustainability and responsibility is a continuous journey founded on themes that are brought to the fore also in this report.

In university rankings, we rank on average among the top 100 universities globally. In the Times Higher Education **THE University Impact Rankings**, which are based on the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN, we were placed 80th in the world in 2020. In 2019, our rank was 15.

In the strategic plan for 2017–2020, our vision was ‘Global impact in interaction’. We pledged to contribute to a better, sustainable world by taking an increasingly active role in the resolution of global problems. We carry out this work for the world through our core duties – teaching, research and public engagement – and our everyday practical activities. We produce research-based knowledge for solving global challenges and building a sustainable society. We educate responsible professionals capable of changing the world. A more sustainable future is built in collaboration with others, and the theme of sustainability has been incorporated into our partnerships. As a community of 40,000 individuals, we have the capacity to build an increasingly sustainable world also by developing everyday activities at the University.

The report is divided into five sections. To begin with, we will survey the University’s organisation and operating culture, which create the preconditions for the promotion of sustainability and responsibility. After that, we will present highlights from 2017–2020 related to research and teaching. We will also provide an overview of our diverse public engagement in both Finland and abroad, in addition to which we will describe how we have promoted sustainability and responsibility in the University’s everyday operations.

2 THE PRECONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY LIE IN OUR OPERATING CULTURE

The organisational structure and operating culture of the University create the preconditions for the promotion of sustainability and responsibility. In the strategy period 2017–2020, we established a committee for sustainability and responsibility at the University, which is responsible for the development and monitoring of sustainability and responsibility efforts as well as related reporting. Sustainability-themed research centres, communities and institutes support our sustainability and responsibility efforts.

HELSUS PROMOTES HIGH-QUALITY INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE

The establishment of the **Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science HELSUS**, the first of its kind in Finland, under the auspices of the University of Helsinki in 2018 was a significant initiative in terms of research and education related to sustainability. HELSUS combines research and education in the field into a hub that transcends disciplinary and campus boundaries while providing researchers with a cross-disciplinary environment. By the end of 2020, the following seven faculties were involved in HELSUS: the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, the Faculty of Educational Sciences, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Social Sciences.

500

members in the Helsinki
Institute of Sustainability Science
HELSUS by the end of 2020

11

HELSUS professorships





THE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE IS IN CHARGE OF DEVELOPING, MONITORING AND REPORTING ON THE UNIVERSITY'S SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY EFFORTS

In autumn 2018, the rector established a committee for sustainability and responsibility to organise activities related to sustainable development at the University level. The committee consists of specialists developing the University's sustainability and responsibility efforts, representatives of faculties and administrative sectors, and student members. The committee is chaired by the vice-rector in charge of sustainability and responsibility at the University.

THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE PROMOTES THE ATTAINMENT OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AND MONITORS THE DEVELOPMENT OF EQUALITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

The members of the committee are appointed to include representatives of different University staff groups and students, but also different genders and members of the University community of different ages as well as groups with particular insight or experience regarding equality issues. The committee is chaired by the vice-rector in charge of sustainability and responsibility at the University.

WE INITIATED THE DRAWING UP OF THE FIRST SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMME OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

In the autumn of 2019, the sustainability and responsibility committee established seven temporary working groups tasked with drawing up plans to improve sustainability at the University. The work carried out by the groups laid the groundwork for the sustainability and responsibility programme that was completed in early 2022. The themes of the groups included the carbon footprint of buildings, travel and IT services, the circular economy and responsible procurement in offices and laboratories, and sustainability training and communications.



3 MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON SUSTAINABILITY

At the University of Helsinki, we promote sustainable development in a range of disciplines on all of our campuses. The University has **40,000 students** and researchers and **11 faculties** conducting groundbreaking multidisciplinary research.

MONITORING AND REPORTING ON SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH BY MEANS OF PUBLICATION METRICS

To explore research in sustainability science by means of publication metrics, we have to begin by determining which publications discuss or promote sustainability or are related to the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. As it is a diverse topic, there is no one perfect way of doing so.

The examination can start from a single organisation or unit. We can examine the publications of a unit focused on sustainability research or a specific theme of sustainability, as has been done in this report. Another starting point can be the content of publications. International multidisciplinary databases oriented towards medical and natural sciences offer a range of tools based on search terms, algorithms and citation relations that can be used to group publications relevant to individual Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. However, these tools do not provide us with accurate

information, since the resulting groups of publications always contain irrelevant publications, in addition to which some relevant publications are overlooked. Moreover, databases do not comprehensively encompass publications in all fields of science.

Due to deficiencies in the methods available, the best overview of our sustainability research is gained through the simultaneous use of several approaches. In addition to the number of publications, examining their content and other features expands our understanding of the sustainability research conducted at our University. In cooperation with publication metrics specialists and the University community, our goal is to identify responsible publication metrics tools for reporting on sustainability research.

RESEARCH IN SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE PRODUCES SOLUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

Research and teaching at HELSUS are aimed at increasing our understanding of what sustainability is as well as the processes and conditions needed to carry out the sustainability transition. In addition, research is aimed at producing concrete, sustainable and practical solutions, together with those who use such knowledge and information. In Finland, HELSUS collaborates with, among other parties, the Ministry of the Environment, businesses, the City of Helsinki and Aalto University. In 2020, HELSUS launched international cooperation with other European institutes.

TOWARDS AN INCREASINGLY SUSTAINABLE URBAN FUTURE

Helsinki Institute of Urban and Regional Studies Urbaria

conducts and cultivates internationally significant urban research and promotes the societal impact of experts and research in the field. Four faculties of the University of Helsinki are involved in the institute: the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Social Sciences. Urbaria operates as part of the Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science HELSUS. The research conducted at the institute focuses on three intertwining themes: places, people and politics.

The five research themes of HELSUS are

**CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION**

GLOBAL SOUTH

ARCTIC REGION

URBAN AREAS

**THEORY AND
METHODOLOGY OF
SUSTAINABILITY
SCIENCE**

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ENTITIES AT HELSUS

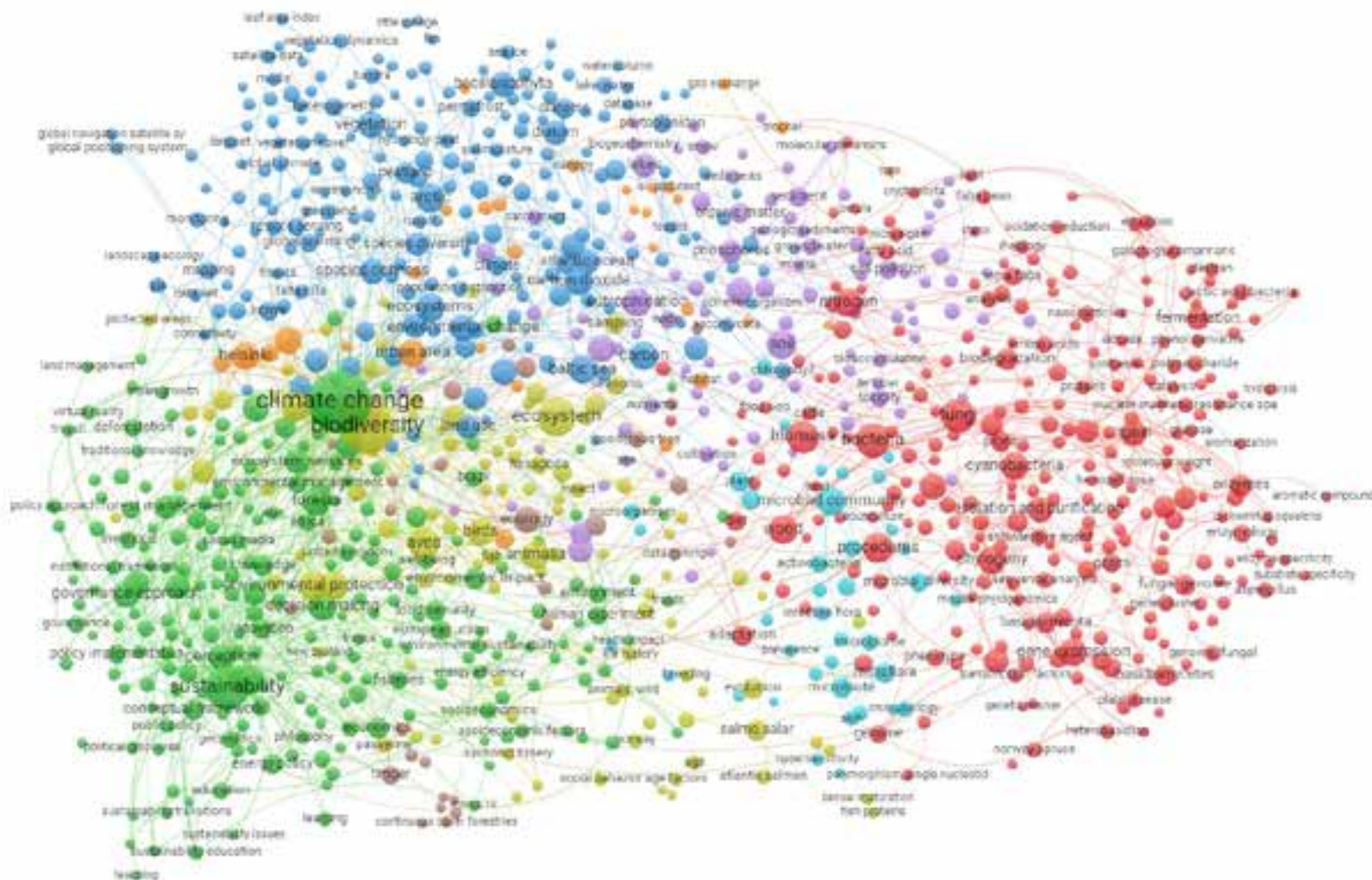


Figure 1. HELSUS publications during 2018–2020, co-word analysis, VOSviewer (data: Scopus)

Co-occurrence of keywords

Co-word analysis can be used to examine the content of the organisation's scholarly publications. It visualises the occurrence and interrelations of keywords describing the content of publications. A circle adjacent to a word describes the number of times the word occurs in the dataset. A link is established between words when they occur in the data pertaining to the same publication. The colours symbolise particularly interlinked groups of words, or clusters. However, the analysis does not provide a comprehensive picture of the object under consideration. Due to differences in the pace of publishing, co-word analysis may emphasise research conducted with quantitative methods and research in the natural sciences.

Table 1. HELSUS publications during 2018–2020 (source: Tuhat database, 14 January 2022)

Publication type	2018	2019	2020
Number of scientific peer-reviewed publications (A, C)	495	610	721
Number of publications focused on public engagement (B, D, E)	204	261	235

SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE is an interdisciplinary, solution-oriented, problem- and phenomenon-based research field that examines interactions between humans and the rest of nature. Its goal is sustainable wellbeing for the environment and humans.

SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS are fundamental changes in societies as they advance towards sustainable environmental and human wellbeing. Novel approaches and methods developed by sustainability science are needed to achieve such transitions.



TOP-LEVEL ATMOSPHERIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

The top-level research conducted at the Institute for **Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR)** strengthens atmospheric and environmental research in Finland and globally, as well as produces research-based knowledge for the benefit of society. INAR conducts research from the molecular level to the global, in particular with regard to climate change, air quality, biogeochemical cycles and ecosystem processes. It maintains and develops a research infrastructure network that provides long-term data on the atmosphere, ecosystems and their interactions.

The Atmosphere and Climate Competence Center (ACCC) increases understanding of climate change and the deterioration of air quality.

RESEARCH ON SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

The Helsinki Inequality Initiative (INEQ), a multidisciplinary research initiative launched in 2019, brings together 270 researchers to explore the causes and consequences of intersectional inequalities.

INEQ's three research themes are

Recognition

How do we perceive and recognise inequalities?

Representation

How do we collect information on inequalities?

Responses

How do policy measures respond to inequalities?

RESEARCH ON THE COMMON HEALTH OF HUMANS AND ANIMALS

The 'One Health' perspective sees humans as part of nature, and human, animal and environmental health as interconnected.

The HOH Helsinki One Health network, established in 2018, is composed of five faculties. The network focuses on the interaction between the health of animal and human populations in a rapidly changing environment. It encourages various fields and professions to work together for the resolution of new health problems that affect the whole of humankind and animal populations.

The concept of One Health values the health of the environment and safeguards the common health of animals and humans. If we do not act sustainably and manage to preserve biodiversity, diseases will spread among species and from animals to humans.

Olli Peltoniemi, director, Helsinki One Health

SCOPE AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF INEQUALITY RESEARCH EVIDENT IN THE CO-WORD ANALYSIS VISUALISATION

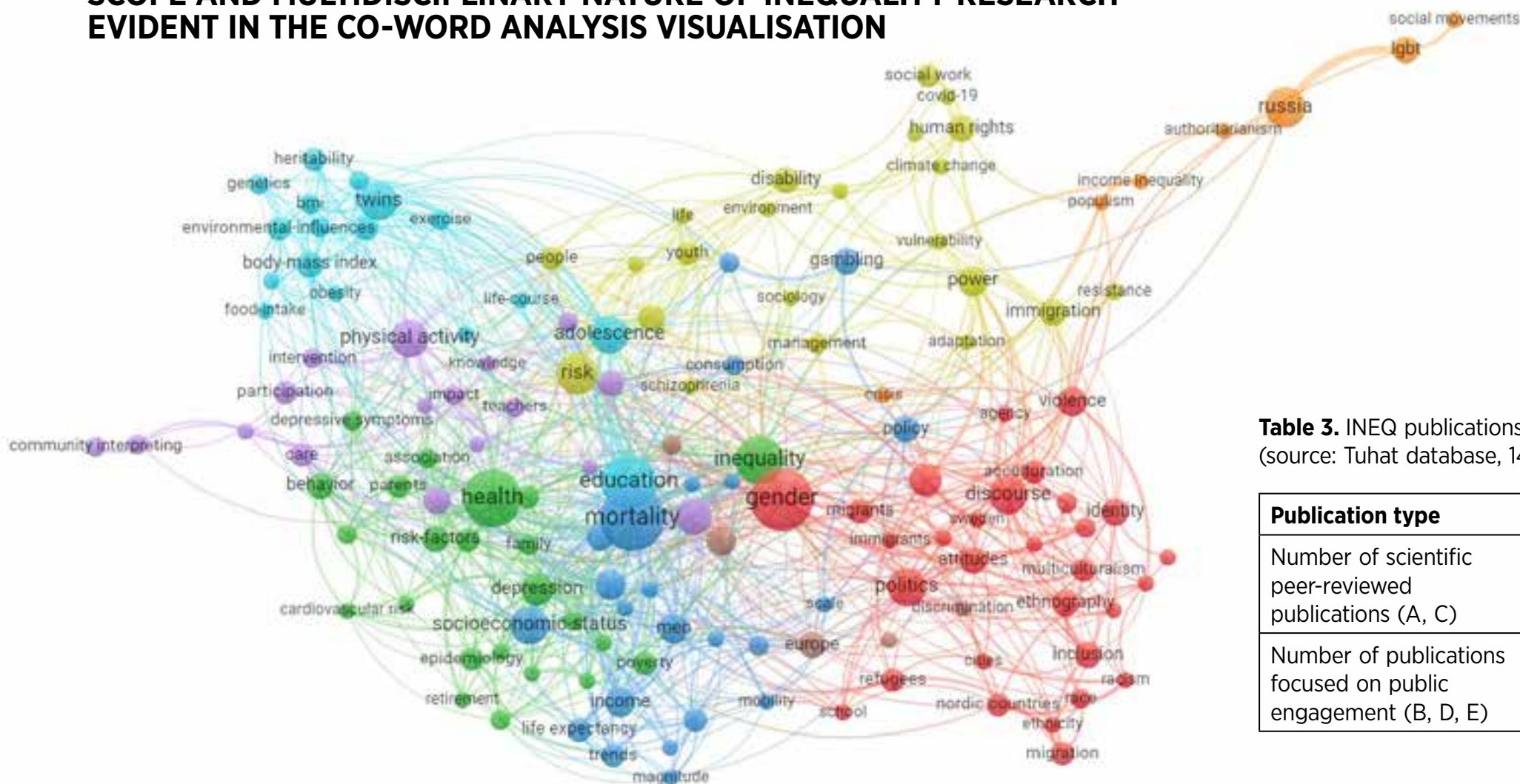


Table 3. INEQ publications during 2019–2020 (source: Tuhat database, 14 January 2022)

Publication type	2019	2020
Number of scientific peer-reviewed publications (A, C)	258	305
Number of publications focused on public engagement (B, D, E)	220	181

Figure 3. INEQ publications during 2019–2020, co-word analysis, VOSviewer (data: Tuhat database)

RESEARCH CONDUCTED WITHIN THE HELSINKI ONE HEALTH NETWORK IS MULTIDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSCENDS SPECIES' BOUNDARIES

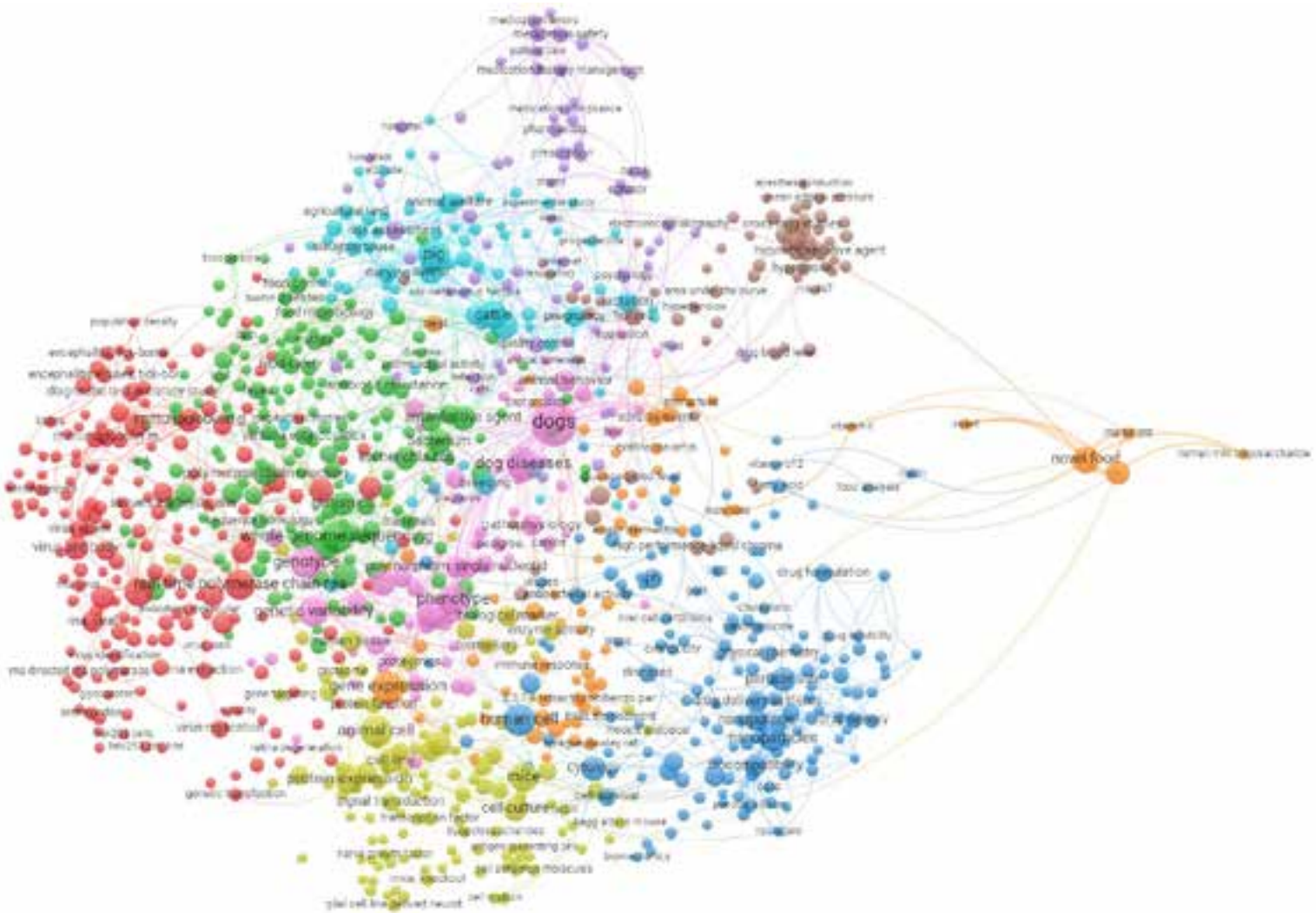


Table 4. HOH publications during 2019–2020 (source: Tuhat database, 14 January 2022)

Publication type	2019	2020
Number of scientific peer-reviewed publications (A, C)	202	248
Number of publications focused on public engagement (B, D, E)	40	43

Figure 4. HOH publications during 2019–2020, co-word analysis, VOSviewer, (data: Scopus)

FINLAND'S LARGEST RESEARCH INFRA-STRUCTURE IN THE BIODIVERSITY FIELD

The Finnish Museum of Natural History LUOMUS

preserves and accrues national collections relating to nature as well as offers them for use as research material and carries out academic outreach and environmental education. Luomus studies biodiversity and environmental change as well as human-nature interaction. It is a hub of basic geological information that enables the study of the evolutionary history of organisms as well as research based on isotope methods. Luomus serves as an expert body particularly in questions pertaining to biodiversity.

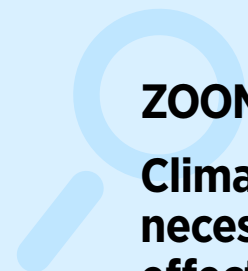
Luomus has established the virtual **Finnish Biodiversity Information Facility**, which collects and combines Finnish species data into a unified whole. Luomus develops the **online learning environment Pinkka** that supports the identification of species and related teaching.





Luomus has established a **seed bank for threatened Finnish plant species** as part of the Ex-Situ Conservation of Finnish Native Plant Species project funded by the EU.

Established in the heart of Helsinki in 1829, the Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden has served as a recreation area for several generations of the city's residents. Ten greenhouses open to the public provide a glimpse of plants that grow in scorching deserts, damp rainforests and tropical wetlands. A key duty of the University of Helsinki's botanic garden is to maintain a scientific collection of living plants that can be utilised in research and teaching at the University.



ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

Climate and habitat change necessitates increasingly effective nature conservation

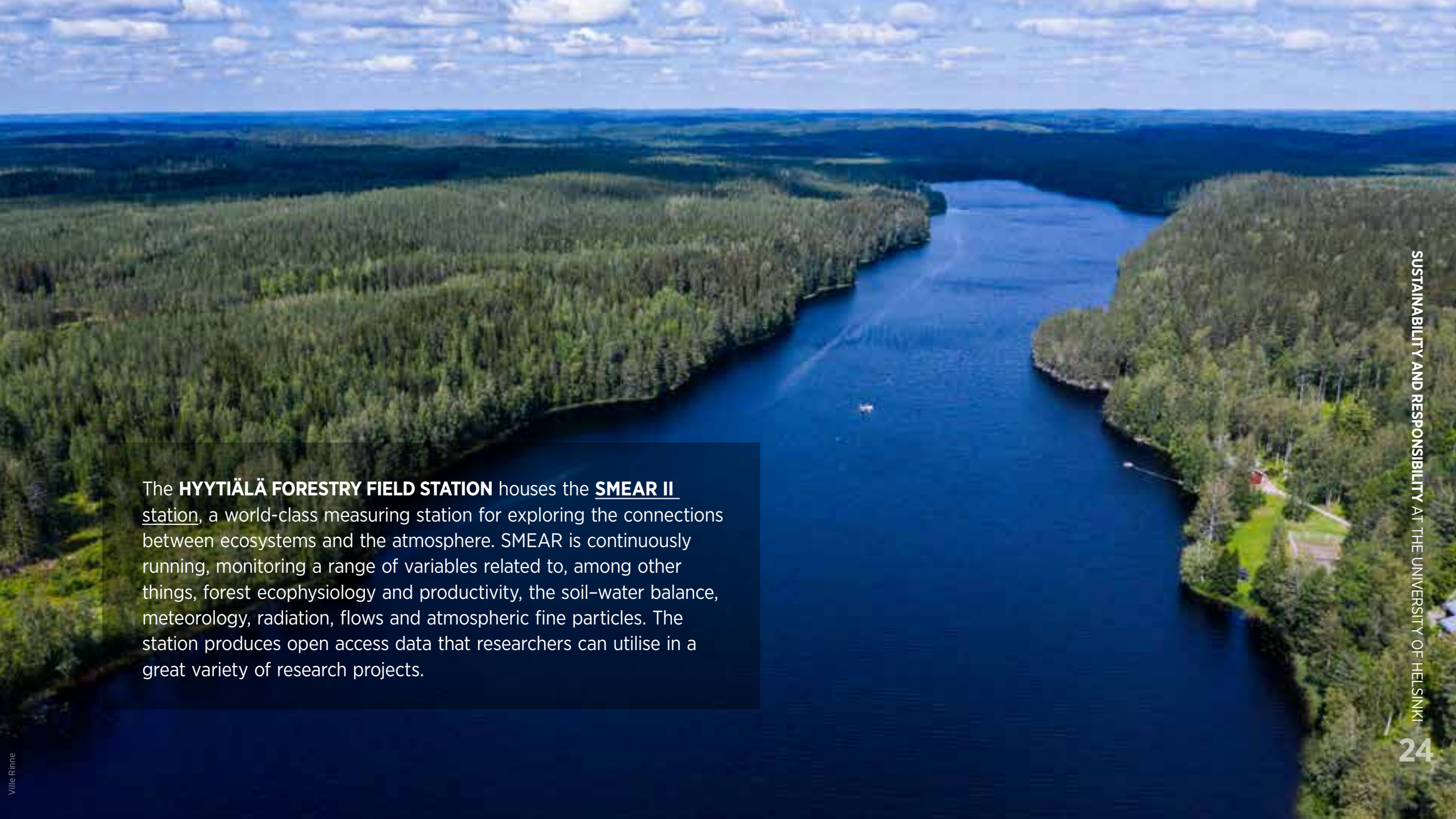
Research on the effect of climate change and changes in the quality of habitats has shown that the situation of almost all Finnish avian communities has worsened. A research group focused on the topic has produced indicators that describe changes in biodiversity in the region, serving as effective tools for measuring the effectiveness of nature conservation. The indicators are available on the national biodiversity.fi website.

[Read more about the research on the Luomus website.](#)



LONG TIME SERIES PRODUCED BY RESEARCH STATIONS PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

The **TVÄRMINNE ZOOLOGICAL STATION** is a marine research station that has been home to high-quality biological research since 1902. The station offers researchers an excellent setting and facilities for research into, for example, coastal ecosystems. Research focuses on the brackish coastal waters of the Gulf of Finland, as well as on evolutionary and population biology.



The **HYYTIALÄ FORESTRY FIELD STATION** houses the **SMEAR II station**, a world-class measuring station for exploring the connections between ecosystems and the atmosphere. SMEAR is continuously running, monitoring a range of variables related to, among other things, forest ecophysiology and productivity, the soil-water balance, meteorology, radiation, flows and atmospheric fine particles. The station produces open access data that researchers can utilise in a great variety of research projects.



Research carried out at the **KILPISJÄRVI BIOLOGICAL STATION** focuses on nature and the environment in the north. Long-term monitoring projects, which survey the state of the environment, lie at the core of research at the station. The longest-standing of these projects, launched in 1946, focuses on fluctuations in vole populations. Various research projects related to climate change form an increasingly important part of the station's activities.



Examples of research topics in focus at the **LAMMI BIOLOGICAL STATION** include the ecosystems of the boreal forest belt, water quality of the surrounding waterways and pathogens in waterways.

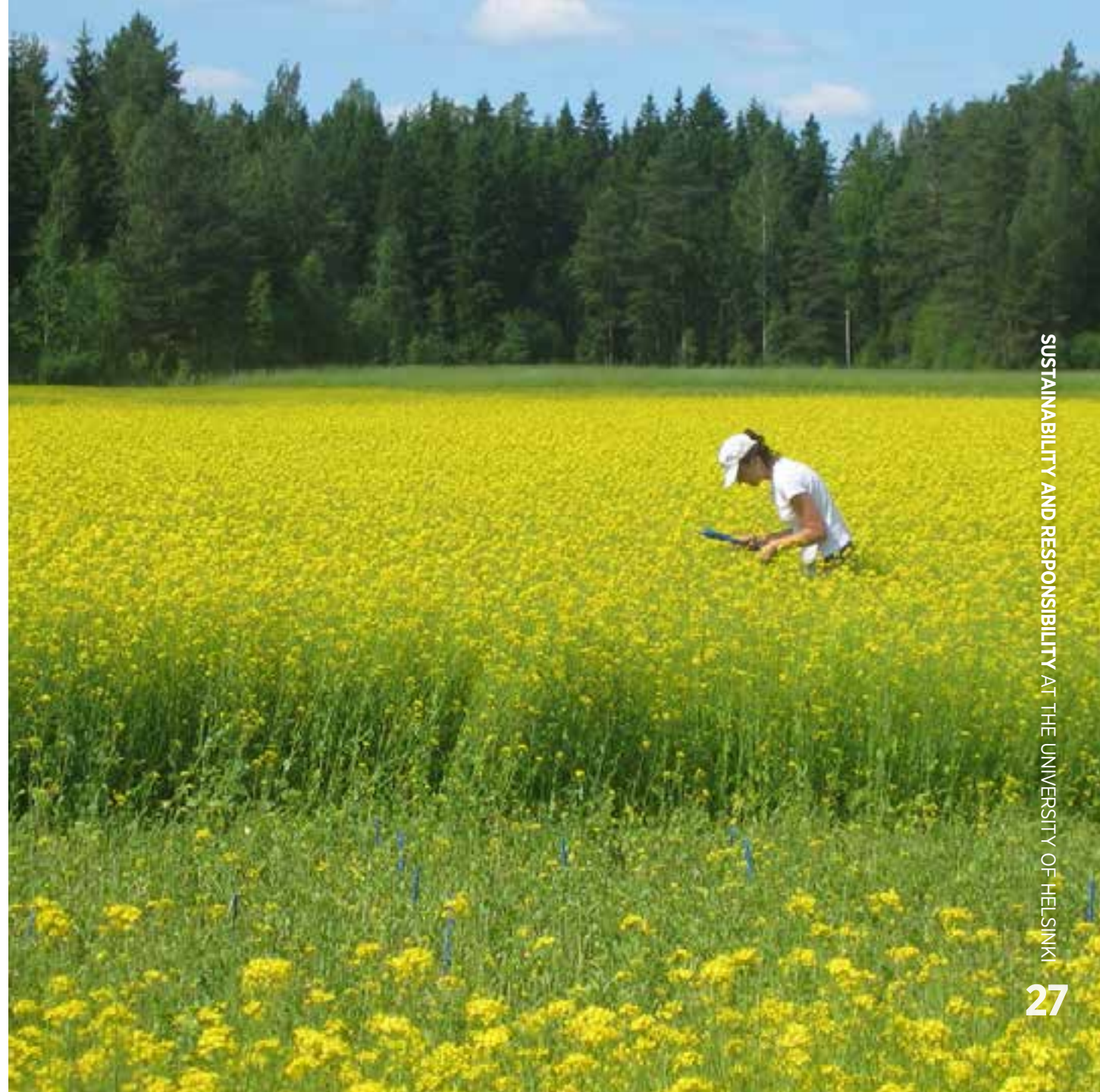
The **VÄRRIÖ SUBARCTIC RESEARCH STATION** is home to research into the atmosphere and northern ecosystems. Most of the research related to Värriö is linked to climate change and is based on data from the SMEAR measuring station. The station collects a long observation series on changes in the northern forest and fell environment, including phenology, berry and cone yields as well as birds and insects.

The **MUDDUSJÄRVI RESEARCH STATION** is one of the world's northernmost locations for agricultural research. Research carried out at the station focuses on the environment and agriculture of northern Lapland. The station offers 13 hectares of fields, 700 hectares of forest land and a thousand-hectare body of water for research use.

The **VIIKKI RESEARCH FARM** may well be Finland's most urban farm environment, seeing as it is centrally located on Viikki Campus in Helsinki. The facilities are mainly used for the research and education needs of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Helsinki. The farm includes 155 hectares of arable land, a cattle shed and 70 dairy cows. Research conducted at the farm supports the promotion of sustainable agriculture. The topics investigated in Viikki include carbon sequestration on agricultural land and the significance of biodiversity to the soil.

Located in Kenya, the **TAITA RESEARCH STATION** is home to multidisciplinary research into the East African environment. Other research topics include the vegetation and biodiversity, waterways, land use, livelihoods and climate change of the Taita Hills and surrounding areas. The station supports research that promotes the goals of sustainable development and helps preserve biodiversity and ecosystems. The Taita Research Station is the southernmost location of the University of Helsinki.

TEACHING AND ACADEMIC OUTREACH ARE PART OF THE RESEARCH STATION OPERATIONS. Field courses are organised at the stations, giving students the opportunity to practise research in the field in the form of sample collection, measuring and analysis of results. In addition, the research-station operations encompass the organisation of school visits and environmental courses as well as other science and environmental communication.





ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

Basic research can help identify ways to boost forestry and protect the environment

Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could be more effectively sequestered as a nutrient and into other commodities by intensifying tree growth in certain areas, while supporting the preservation of natural forests elsewhere.

Read more about related research on the University of Helsinki website.



ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

***Augusta*, a new research catamaran, boosts international top-level marine research**

The University of Helsinki's Tvärminne Zoological Station, located in Hanko, southern Finland, received a new research vessel. The vessel is used for marine research in coastal areas.

Read more about the research vessel on the University of Helsinki website.

OPEN SCIENCE PROMOTES THE INTEGRITY OF RESEARCH

We require that scholarly publications produced at the University are, as a rule, made openly available. In 2020, the University joined the signers of the DORA declaration. By signing the declaration, we wish to demonstrate our commitment to the development of research assessment as well as to responsible metrics and the promotion of open science.

Each year, the University presents the **Open Science Award** in recognition of significant work to promote open science. The aim of this award is to highlight active open science advocates and increase information on good practices at the University.

- In 2020, the Open Science Award was presented to Postdoctoral Researcher **Laura Riuttanen** of the Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR) for her two projects focused on open learning. The Climate University and Climate.now projects have produced multidisciplinary study modules in climate change and sustainable development.
- In 2019, the award was presented to the Finnish Museum of Natural History **Luomus**, which offers significant, independently developed and maintained open science services and databases for both researchers and the general public. In addition, Luomus has a long tradition of organising and developing citizen science.



Linda Tammisto



LIBRARY PROMOTES OPEN SCIENCE

The services provided by Helsinki University Library are available both online and on all four campuses of the University. Everyone has the right to use the library, while anyone over 15 years of age residing permanently in Finland has the right to borrow material from the library.

Helsinki University Library promotes the openness of research-based knowledge and research data through a range of projects and services. The work of researchers is facilitated by open access publishing services and discounts on article processing charges. Scholarly books published by University researchers were made openly accessible in cooperation with the **Finnish Literature Society**. Together with the **Gaudeamus** publishing house owned by the University, the library established **Helsinki University Press (HUP)**, an open access publishing house. The goal is to provide access to important datasets and promote open access publishing in a cost-efficient manner.

In accordance with the FAIR Principles, the library promotes the findability and availability of research data generated through research. The library produces up-to-date data on publications related to sustainability and responsibility published at the University. In the future, this data will also be accessible via the **TUHAT** research database.

Helda, the University's open digital repository, enhances the visibility, use and impact of the University's scholarly publications by offering them openly to all information seekers. Stored in Helda are full-text resources produced at the University, including theses, books, articles and unit publications. **Editori**, provided by Helsinki University Library, is a platform for publishing open access journals and a tool for teachers to provide instruction in publication practices.



ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

Nature has adapted locally to the current climate – adapting to a new climate requires further evolution

Organisms depend on their environment. For them to function appropriately in the right season, they must interpret the tips provided by their habitat. Climate change is rapidly changing the timing of these tips, including the accumulation of warm days. A wide network of researchers demonstrates that the seasonal timing of organismal function, also known as phenology, cannot keep up with the rate of variation of environmental tips.

[Read more about related research on the University of Helsinki website.](#)

4 WE EDUCATE EXPERTS WHO WILL CHANGE THE WORLD

Sustainability issues are linked to all fields of education, and we offer perspectives of sustainable development as part of many degree programmes, courses and study modules. Themes related to sustainable development are taught at almost all faculties, from the Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences to the Faculty of Arts.

At the University, you can study to become a sustainability specialist in multidisciplinary and international degree programmes:

Master's Programme in Environmental Change and Global Sustainability

Master's Programme in Atmospheric Sciences

Master's Programme in Urban Studies and Planning





In autumn 2020, INEQ launched **Helsinki Inequality Studies**, a cross-disciplinary study module that transcends faculty boundaries and is open to all students of the University of Helsinki.

HELSUS AND HYPE ARE DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABILITY COURSE FOR THE UNIVERSITY AS A WHOLE

The planning of a sustainability course for the entire University was initiated in the spring term 2020. The planning was carried out by the rector and vice-rectors, the Centre for University Teaching and Learning HYPE and HELSUS. In addition, some 160 teachers, researchers and students from different faculties and degree programmes contributed to the planning.

The goal was to launch a pilot in spring 2021, on the basis of which the voluntary and optional bachelor's level MOOC-based sustainability course worth three credits is still being developed. In the future, this course will consist of a three-credit component to be completed by all students and a two-credit component specific to each degree programme or faculty.

Read more in the [**Educating Sustainability Experts -blog**](#)

160 members of the University community contribute to designing the sustainability course



Sini Holopainen



HELSUS CO-CREATION LAB

The HELSUS Co-creation Lab is an opportunity for master's students to write their master's theses in collaboration with a partner from the private or public sector in a supervised and scheduled process that is based on six co-creation meetings, or labs.

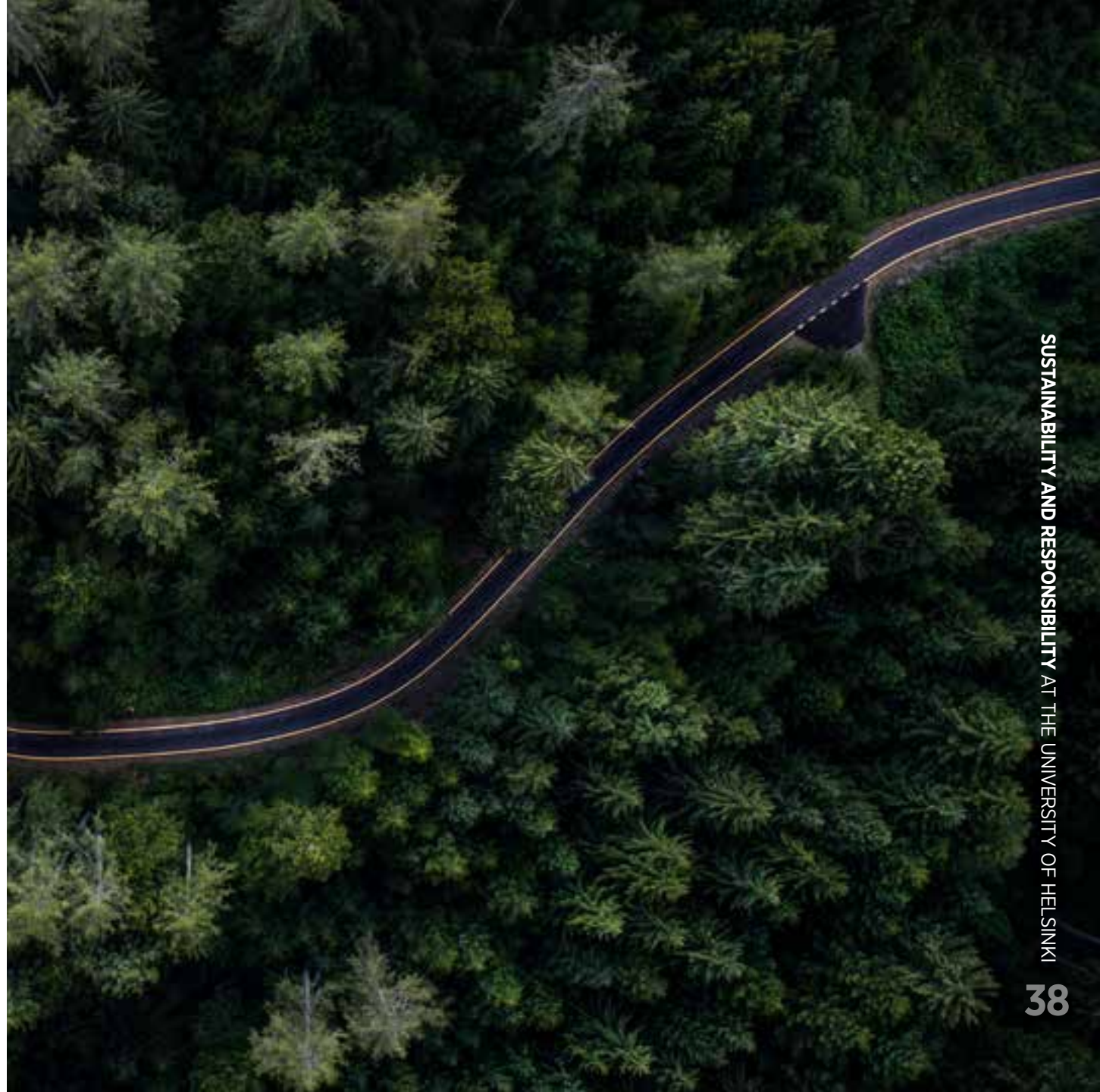
During lab sessions, students respond to a sustainability challenge presented by their partner and write their master's thesis on a topic to be specified during the sessions. Networking and accumulating experience constitute an essential part of the work, over the course of which we bring together genuine sustainability challenges and experts of the future. The Co-Creation Lab was organised for the first time in the academic year 2019–2020. The theme of the inaugural lab was the circular economy, with UPM-Kymmene Oyj, Valio Oy, Outotec Oyj and the Ministry of the Environment as partners.

CLIMATE UNIVERSITY OFFERS FREE ONLINE COURSES TO ANYONE WHO WISHES TO MAKE THE SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION HAPPEN

The Climate University, developed collaboratively by Finnish higher education institutions, is a network of 18 universities and universities of applied sciences led by the Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR). It aims to develop teaching related to the climate and sustainability at Finnish higher education institutions and general upper secondary schools. In 2020, the network published a programme of nine online courses that anyone can complete to develop skills necessary to transform the world.

KEKEPEDA WORKING GROUP DEVELOPS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PEDAGOGY

Active at the University of Helsinki's Faculty of Educational Sciences is **KeKePeda**, a working group composed of teachers and students that focuses on sustainable development pedagogy. The pedagogy of sustainable development is founded on eco-social and planetary thinking, and it educates people in a multidisciplinary and broad-based manner. Key methods of the pedagogy are dialogue, reflection, an investigative and hands-on approach and influencing.





ACADEMIC OUTREACH AND SCIENCE EDUCATION ARE PART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH, TEACHING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Encouraging children and young people to take an interest in science and research is important both in school and beyond. Research on academic outreach and science education lays the groundwork for strengthening and developing scholarly competence. New sensible solutions and pedagogical innovations are needed to further enhance the scholarly competence of children and adolescents – experts of the future – and inspire them to get involved in a range of scholarly fields. During the holidays of comprehensive schools and institutions that provide upper secondary education, we organise science camps and courses that inspire children and young people to study different fields of science.

In 2019, the Science Education Centre of the University of Helsinki and INAR organised the international and participatory Teachers' Climate Change Forum continuing education course for teachers of different educational levels from around the world. Teachers who completed the course have the skills to discuss climate change in a pedagogically meaningful and diverse manner from the perspectives of various fields of science, also taking into consideration different beliefs and attitudes.

The Lahti Junior University scheme, launched in the form of pilots in autumn 2020, offered inspiring learning experiences in science and research to all preschoolers, comprehensive school pupils and general upper secondary school students of the City of Lahti.

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN IMMIGRANTS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

In 2020, the Helsinki Institute of Urban and Regional Studies Urbaria initiated general upper secondary school cooperation in the form of preparatory training for general upper secondary education at the Eira High School for Adults. The preparatory training is targeted at immigrants and students not proficient in Finnish or Swedish whose goal is to complete general upper secondary education and the Finnish matriculation examination. The goal of this collaboration is to build bridges between young immigrants and higher education, as well as between young people and their urban environments.

UNA EUROPA EDUCATION COLLABORATION INCREASES LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSIFIES TEACHING OFFERINGS

In autumn 2019, the University of Helsinki joined the Una Europa alliance, under which education collaboration is carried out in the following five areas: European studies, sustainability science, cultural heritage and One Health as well as data science and artificial intelligence.



Veikko Somerpuro

SUPPORT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION IS PART OF OUR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY EFFORTS

We are Finland's largest community of academic inquiry and continuous learning open to everyone. Sustainability themes are highlighted in our continuous learning offerings. In 2020, the University of Helsinki Centre for Continuing Education HY+ and the Open University organised for the first time the multidisciplinary module '**Sustainability as an organisational resource**' focused on sustainable development and responsibility. The module provides the latest research-based knowledge and concrete tools for applying the principles of sustainable development in individual organisations as well as for leading people and managing strategic planning pertaining to sustainable development in the present.

Aiming to educate

1 %

of Europeans in the basics of artificial intelligence

Elements of AI course launched in spring 2018

740 000

registered participants

170

from more than countries

92 000

participants completed the course

12,4 %

of participants completed the course

40 %

of the participants are women



The OPEN UNIVERSITY has offered its courses free of charge to people who have been unemployed or temporarily laid off during the **coronavirus period**. The University of Helsinki supports employment during these exceptional times and beyond: As of autumn 2020, people who are unemployed or temporarily laid off have had the opportunity to study free of charge at the Open University.

5 WE ARE BUILDING A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE TOGETHER WITH OTHERS



To realise our vision – Global impact in interaction – we intensified and increased collaboration with both new and established partners. Sustainability themes are a key element of our partnerships and societal impact. We collaborate on sustainability themes with cities, businesses and foundations. Another important element is cooperation with other universities and government research institutes, both in Finland and abroad.

ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI IN TACKLING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Our researchers have played an active role in international scientific cooperation aimed at tackling and suppressing the coronavirus pandemic. Similarly, the University is involved in a collaboration network of Finnish experts involved in tackling the pandemic, as well as in providing information and expertise in support of decision-making. Our research facilities and expertise enable the use of innovative approaches to curb the effects of the pandemic.

Our researchers have publicly commented on the pandemic and shared knowledge based on research. Alongside medical researchers, our professors specialising in the One Health concept, among others, have featured widely in Finnish media during the pandemic. Our researchers have also contributed, for example, to the assessment of therapies as well as the development of vaccines and drugs.

ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

Sequencing adapted from research use to monitoring the coronavirus pandemic

As the new, more transmissible coronavirus variants have arrived in Finland, the role of researchers and technology specialists at the University of Helsinki in controlling the pandemic has received increased emphasis. The monitoring of the virus variants was quickly initiated with the help of the University's sequencing hardware and expertise. This rapid response was possible thanks to research projects launched in the beginning of the pandemic, good preparation, and collaboration between a range of operators.

[Read more about sequencing on the University of Helsinki website.](#)



ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

A multilingual educational programme set up by University of Helsinki researchers provides coronavirus information and help in Senegal

The LILIEMA (Language-independent literacies for inclusive education in multilingual areas) programme offers the Senegalese information in their local language about protection against coronavirus.

Read more about the LILIEMA programme on the University of Helsinki website.

BUSINESS COLLABORATION RELATED TO SUSTAINABILITY THEMES

SUSTAINABILITY MASTER CLASS

The SUSTAINABILITY MASTER CLASS is a course collaboratively organised by the University and an alternating partner with an emphasis on solving concrete problems. In spring 2019, students taking the course looked for solutions to problems relating to food waste, consumer choices and the coping of dairy farmers. During the course, which imitated processes employed at start-ups, ideas were exchanged across faculty boundaries as well as with business life. The challenges were based on the business needs of Valio, the University's partner for this particular Master Class.

SCIENCE AND BUSINESS IN DIALOGUE

Science and Business in Dialogue is a series of events and a network hosted by the rector of the University of Helsinki for sharing concrete examples of collaboration between businesses and research, as well as tips on new collaboration opportunities. Topics related to the theme of sustainability have included water as a source of innovation and environmental responsibility in Russia.

ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

A smart 5G technology for air quality monitoring developed by the University of Helsinki and Nokia Bell Labs

The MegaSense project aims to establish a global observation system that provides accurate data on air quality and harmful substances in the air. Such data can be utilised in a range of devices in the car, at home and in offices.

[Read more about the collaboration on the University of Helsinki website.](#)

In 2018, Luomus organised the Sopeudu muutokseen ('Adapt to change') climate change course for businesses.



SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES

HELSINKI THINK COMPANY

Helsinki Think Company, the entrepreneurial community of the University of Helsinki, develops the entrepreneurial skills of students and other members of the academic community. The focus is on influencing urgent social issues and applying entrepreneurship to developing concrete solutions to significant problems.

In the **4UNI** competition, students develop concrete operating models and ideas that revolve around changing themes. In 2020, the theme was the electrification of society. **Mutiny** is an accelerator programme for early-stage teams with socially or ecologically impactful business ideas.



HELSEED ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

HELSEED is an entrepreneurship programme geared to students that inspires them to develop their ideas into start-up's. HELSEED provides students with information and support for entrepreneurial activity, such as writing a business plan. The University of Helsinki Funds will make an initial investment in the most interesting start-ups.

The first HELSEED programme was organised in 2020. More than 20 teams participated in the programme, which also generated a great deal of interest among various stakeholders. So far, the University of Helsinki Funds has invested in two companies, giving €30,000 to each. These companies are **Evergreen Viherseinät Oy** and **Evexia Oy**. You can read more about Evexia and Evergreen in these Finnish-language blog entries by Helsinki Think Company: **Yrittäjyydellä terveydenhuollon alalle** ('Entering the healthcare sector via entrepreneurship') and **Yritysidea löytyi omasta keittiöstä** ('Discovering a business idea in your kitchen').

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a bright yellow dandelion flower. The background is a soft-focus field of similar flowers and green foliage. A semi-transparent dark grey box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text. A magnifying glass icon is positioned to the left of the first line of text.

ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

World's first insect vaccine protects bees from diseases

The orally administered Dalan AH vaccine promotes pollinator health and supports food production around the globe.

[Read more about related research on the University of Helsinki website.](#)

LONG-TERM COLLABORATION WITH THE CITY OF HELSINKI

URBAN TECH HELSINKI -INCUBATOR COLLABORATION

For the first time, the University of Helsinki, the City of Helsinki, Aalto University and the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences joined forces to carry out incubator collaboration. The Urban Tech Helsinki incubator is looking for clean and sustainable urban solutions. Its goal is to attract experts as well as support and boost the establishment and growth of research-based businesses in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.



BALTIC SEA CHALLENGE

The University of Helsinki has been involved in the Baltic Sea Challenge since its inception in 2007. Cooperation between the University and the City to protect the Baltic Sea enables both long-term co-development as well as new experiments and initiatives.

CLIMATE PARTNERS

The University of Helsinki has been involved in the network since it was established in 2012. The network members are contributing to making Helsinki a carbon neutral city.

AN INCREASINGLY SUSTAINABLE WORLD THROUGH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI CONTRIBUTED TO DRAWING UP UNIFI'S THESES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

In 2019, Universities Finland (UNIFI) established a working group on sustainable development and responsibility, chaired by the University of Helsinki in 2019–2020. The group's work culminated in the publication of UNIFI's theses on sustainable development and responsibility in November 2020, which had been developed collaboratively with more than 400 members of the academic community. The theses contain ambitious recommendations for measures related to the teaching, research, administration and societal impact of universities as well as their funding model.

Read the theses on UNIFI's website: Theses on sustainable development and responsibility

In 2020, the University of Helsinki joined the new International Universities Climate Alliance network. This multidisciplinary network will strengthen the University's cooperation with other leading climate research universities throughout the world. The key duties of the network include identifying high-impact methods of distributing research-based knowledge about climate change, as well as increasing cooperation with decision-makers and businesses.

In October 2018, the University of Helsinki was accepted into the Climate Leadership Coalition (CLC) network, which challenges businesses and society to curb climate change.

The University's Africa programme combines global action, sustainability and responsibility. At the end of 2020, the University published its Africa programme for 2021–2030. The new programme is based on the creation and nurturing of long-term partnerships, the promotion of the international activities of students and researchers, and the application of multidisciplinary research.



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI JOINS DECLARATION OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY

"We want to take even bigger steps to help mitigate climate change through research-based knowledge as well as our sustainable and responsible operations. This work can't wait," says Vice-Rector Tom Böhling.

[Read more about the declaration of a climate emergency on the University of Helsinki website.](#)

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a black top, is seen from the back, carrying a young child on her back. The child is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. They are in a lush green field with tall grass and trees in the background. The woman is holding a bundle of green plants in her right hand. The overall scene is a rural agricultural setting.

ZOOM IN ON OUR RESEARCH:

Enhancing the status of women boosts agriculture in Africa

As indicated by a doctoral thesis completed at the University of Helsinki, African small farmers adapting to global challenges requires new competencies and women's empowerment. Climate change, biodiversity loss and population growth pose a threat to Africa's food security.

[Read more about the research on the University of Helsinki website.](#)

UNIVERSITY AS AN OPEN SPACE AND AN ARENA FOR SUSTAINABILITY DISCOURSE

SUSTAINABILITY SCIENCE DAYS (SSD)

This conference in the field of sustainability science, the largest of its kind in Finland, is hosted collaboratively by HELSUS and Aalto University's sustainability group. Every year, SSD brings together Finnish and international top experts in sustainability science. In 2019, the conference attracted more than 500 researchers and experts interested in sustainability science to the University's City Centre Campus and to Aalto University's Otaniemi Campus. The theme of the event was the sustainability of consumption and production methods.

VIIKKI SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH SEMINAR

On a monthly basis, the Finnish Environment Institute, the Natural Resources Institute Finland and HELSUS organise a joint sustainability-themed research seminar that brings together researchers and others interested in the topic to discuss current affairs.

HELSUS BROWN BAG LUNCHES

At these lunchtime events, participants gather to discuss current research topics. The presenter gives a brief speech, after which the topic is discussed informally. The topics are related to the research themes of HELSUS and other topical content in the field of sustainability science.





HELSUS GLOBAL SOUTH ENCOUNTERS

This series of seminars and discussions is aimed at intensifying critical research in sustainability science. The seminars acknowledge the diversity and special characteristics of the Global South, as well as critically address how the importance of the decolonisation of nature, the economy, society and methodology can be identified in sustainability science.

HELSINKI ONE HEALTH RESEARCH SEMINARS

The Helsinki One Health network organises a monthly research seminar. In 2020, the seminars focused on a number of themes related to sustainability, including antibiotic resistance from the perspective of common health, risk management in food safety, as well as common health and the prevention of future diseases.

INEQ RESEARCH SEMINARS

Every other week, the Helsinki Inequality Initiative (INEQ) organises the multidisciplinary research seminar **Intersecting Equalities**. In 2020, the seminars focused on, among other topics, post-pandemic social inequality, school and social inequalities, as well as digital inequality in smart cities. INEQ also organises international lectures by well-known scholars approximately once a month.

OUR RESEARCHERS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SCIENCE PANELS

HELSUS coordinates the **Expert Panel for Sustainable Development** together with the Natural Resources Institute Finland and the Finnish Environment Institute. The panel brings scientific perspectives and ethical considerations to political decision-making and generates public discussion on sustainability transitions so that both environmental and human wellbeing are taken into account in a socially just way.

The University of Helsinki hosts the secretariat of the Finnish Climate Change Panel. The panel promotes dialogue between science and politics on topics relevant to the field. It issues recommendations for the Finnish government for decision-making related to climate policy and strengthens a multidisciplinary approach in climate sciences.

The Finnish Nature Panel compiles research-based knowledge pertaining to biodiversity for the benefit of decision-makers, experts and citizens. The panel is an independent and scientific expert panel that supports the planning and decision-making of nature policy. Researchers from the University of Helsinki participate in all three panels.

Our researchers are also involved in the efforts of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

CLIMATE WHIRL – ART MEETS CLIMATE CHANGE

The Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research (INAR) has an art and science curator who coordinates the multidisciplinary and multi-arts **Climate Whirl project**. Its goal is to arouse interest in and increase knowledge of the interaction between forests, the atmosphere and the climate, especially in terms of the impact of northern boreal forests on changes taking place in the climate. A permanent exhibition will be opened in summer 2023.





THINK CORNER – SUSTAINABLE AND OPEN TO ALL

New solutions that promote sustainability were introduced in the renovation of Think Corner, which opened its doors in the autumn of 2017. From the start, the goal has been to assemble all dimensions of sustainability into a functional whole. The University's former administration building was redesigned as a multipurpose space where presentations and workshops relating to scholarly themes are organised. The facilities support collaborative learning, creative discourse and co-working. The events and facilities are open to all.

In the Hope for Globe series of events held each year at Think Corner, knowledge begets hope. The events are focused on climate change, the environment and sustainable development, with solutions provided by the latest research and top-level researchers to global problems, as well as tools in support of sustainable choices.

CHANGE IN THE AIR EXHIBITION AND GUIDED TOURS AT LUOMUS

The Change in the Air exhibition of the Finnish Museum of Natural History Luomus presents the human narrative in a changing world, from the landscape of mammoths to the present day. The guided tour introduces research related to environmental change and looks for potential solutions to the challenges of our time. In 2017–2020, almost 4,000 adolescents and adults took part in the guided tours of the Change in the Air exhibition, even though not many tours were given in the pandemic year of 2020.

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY THEMES IN OUR ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

Ethical dialogue, the theme of the Alumni Day in 2017, engaged alumni in discussions with members of the University community on ethical choices and sustainable wellbeing. In the Alumni Day organised in spring 2018, the topic of discussion was sustainable choices and wellbeing under the theme ‘Sustainable health – sustainable world’. In 2019, the theme of the Alumni Day was artificial intelligence, while in 2020 it was continuous learning.

Thinkfest 2020 brought together researchers and societal influencers to solve an important question: how to implement the transition to a sustainable society fairly?

The Voices for Sustainability **blog** offers researchers, students and other experts a platform for highlighting their sustainability-related thinking and presenting their work to a wider audience.

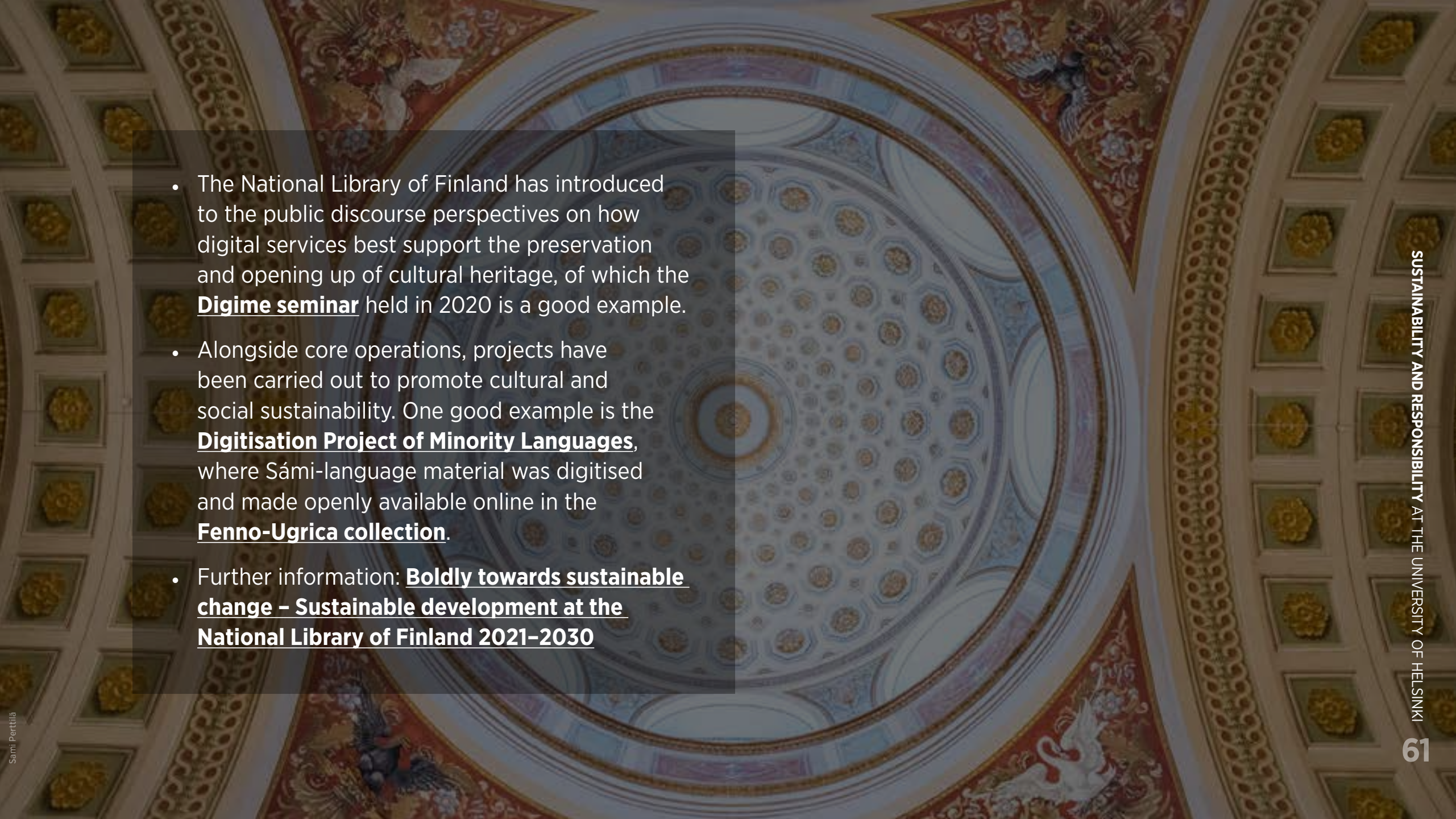
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF FINLAND SUPPORTS THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE FIELD

The National Library of Finland is a cultural heritage organisation that is open to all and provides nationwide services to citizens, scientific communities and other societal operators. The National Library secures the availability of cultural heritage published in Finland or relating to Finland as well as transmits and produces information content and services for research, studies, citizens and society.

The operations of the National Library as such promote cultural sustainability, and another aim is to reduce their ecological footprint and provide services in a responsible manner. The National Library actively participates in the discussion on themes related to the sustainable development of the cultural heritage field, and its operations also support the sustainability and responsibility efforts of its stakeholders.



Eveli Kikkilä

- 
- The National Library of Finland has introduced to the public discourse perspectives on how digital services best support the preservation and opening up of cultural heritage, of which the **Digime seminar** held in 2020 is a good example.
 - Alongside core operations, projects have been carried out to promote cultural and social sustainability. One good example is the **Digitisation Project of Minority Languages**, where Sámi-language material was digitised and made openly available online in the **Fenno-Ugrica collection**.
 - Further information: **Boldly towards sustainable change – Sustainable development at the National Library of Finland 2021–2030**



6 SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN ACADEMIC DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Sustainability and responsibility in academic day-to-day life includes the development of administration, efforts related to equality and diversity, the promotion of a carbon-neutral circular economy and biodiversity, as well as responsible investment.



WE UPDATED THE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY

In connection with the drawing up of the new strategic plan of the University, our values were updated. Truth, Bildung, freedom and inclusivity were chosen as the traditional, yet forward-looking values, which lay the groundwork for all of our operations. The entire University community was invited to contribute to the updating of the values, and inclusivity was picked as one of the four key values at the request of the community.

In 2020, we started implementing the values in the everyday life of all members of the University community by introducing them and holding discussions on values in connection with many events. Once the pandemic has subsided, we will continue to discuss our values at dedicated sessions over coffee and value-based refreshments. As before, these discussions will bring together members of the University community in all roles, faculties and units to reflect on this important issue.

TRUTH
BILDUNG
FREEDOM
INCLUSIVITY

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AS PART OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF A DIVERSE AND MULTILINGUAL COMMUNITY

We actively strive for an increasingly equal and diverse University community by identifying and eliminating practices and structures that produce and maintain inequality. We do not condone any type of inappropriate behaviour, bullying or harassment. Every member of the University community is obliged to address any such behaviour they observe taking place in their work or study community.

The University's Equality and Diversity Plan was updated twice during the strategy period 2017–2020. In the same period, particular attention was paid to strengthening inclusivity. Some units have already established wellbeing or equality and diversity groups. In 2020, the annual theme of the Equality and Diversity Committee was inclusion, with various related events organised for the University community.





TRAINING ON IMPLICIT BIAS

In the autumn of 2018 and in 2019, we piloted **training sessions on implicit bias**. The training is based on the League of European Research Universities' gender group's document Implicit Bias in Academia: A challenge to the meritocratic principle and to women's careers – And what to do about it. The goal of the training is to make the participants aware of their unconscious attitudes. The training is carried out using methods which participants can subsequently utilise in their work or study communities.

WE TAKE PART IN THE HELSINKI PRIDE WEEK

With regard to sexual and gender minorities, one of the most visible activities related to the University's equality and diversity efforts is the programme organised during the annual Helsinki Pride Week. Flags have been traditionally flown for equality on all of the campuses, in addition to which events focused on equality have been held at the University. In the exceptional year of 2020, the topic of a related event held online was 'Courageous icons at the University', while in 2019 the theme was 'Change is Coming – Different Voices'. The same year, the 'Pride – 50 years of movement' book exhibit was held at Kaisa House.

MAIKKI FRIBERG EQUALITY AWARD AND THE WORK COMMUNITY AWARD

The Maikki Friberg Equality Award and the work community award, presented annually, constitute a visible and important feature of equality and wellbeing efforts at the University. The Maikki Friberg award is granted annually for notable work promoting equality and diversity at the University of Helsinki. The work community award is also presented annually to an individual or operator who has distinguished themselves in the promotion of occupational wellbeing. All members of the University community may suggest potential recipients.

STUDENTS OF COLOUR RY (SOCO)

The purpose of the student association is to serve as an empowering community for higher education students who belong to an ethnic or visible minority. The association was founded by students with multicultural backgrounds, and the University of Helsinki supports its activities. The goal of the activities is to provide peer support and expand representation at the University. SOCO organises a range of easily accessible events, including peer support and film nights, panel discussions and workshops.

WE PROMOTE EQUALITY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

We participate and actively influence in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy group of the League of European Research Universities (LERU). Among other things, the group has discussed recruitment, in conjunction with which a pilot project was organised at the University to have observers in appointment committees that make recruitment proposals for various positions at the University.

In 2020, the University of Helsinki began actively working in the Una Europa alliance of eight European universities, in which the University chairs the Diversity Council of the alliance. The activities of the council focus on promoting equal student mobility between universities as well as sharing good practices.



SIMPLY TRILINGUAL

The harmonisation of unit-specific language practices was promoted by establishing 'language troops' at the University of Helsinki, which organised the Simply trilingual campaign. In the campaign, good practices and everyday methods for realising a trilingual (Finnish, Swedish, English) approach were collected. The campaign encouraged members of the University community to not hesitate to use foreign languages.

Officially, the University of Helsinki is the academic flagship of a bilingual (Finnish and Swedish) society. We maintain and develop active and well-functioning bilingualism. Swedish-language education responds to the requirements of bilingual society, professional life and legislation.

PROMOTING THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OF IMMIGRANTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI 2017–2020

In the strategy period 2017–2020, we served as the coordinating university of the SIMHE (Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland) project. Through the cooperation of the parties involved in the development of SIMHE activities, a supervision and guidance support website (maamot.fi) was developed for those working with people from immigrant backgrounds. Also collaboratively established was the AKVA project for training in academic skills.

During the strategy period, we also contributed to the **Deploying Competence in Finland** project of the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences by developing a supervision and guidance ecosystem for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area as well as the qualification training of early childhood education teachers in particular.

Students and employees of the University have the opportunity to visit **quiet rooms** on the campuses to promote their mental or spiritual wellbeing. For further information, visit the **Instructions for Students website**.

The expertise of researchers is utilised in equality and diversity efforts in various contexts and from various perspectives, including those offered by gender and disability studies.

In the **UniBuddy** programme, new employees can ask another University employee to be their friend. UniBuddy facilitates the integration of international employees and their spouses/families at the University and helps them establish new acquaintances.



SUSTAINABLE CAMPUSES

WE HAVE SIGNED THREE COMMITMENTS UNDER 'SOCIETY'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT'

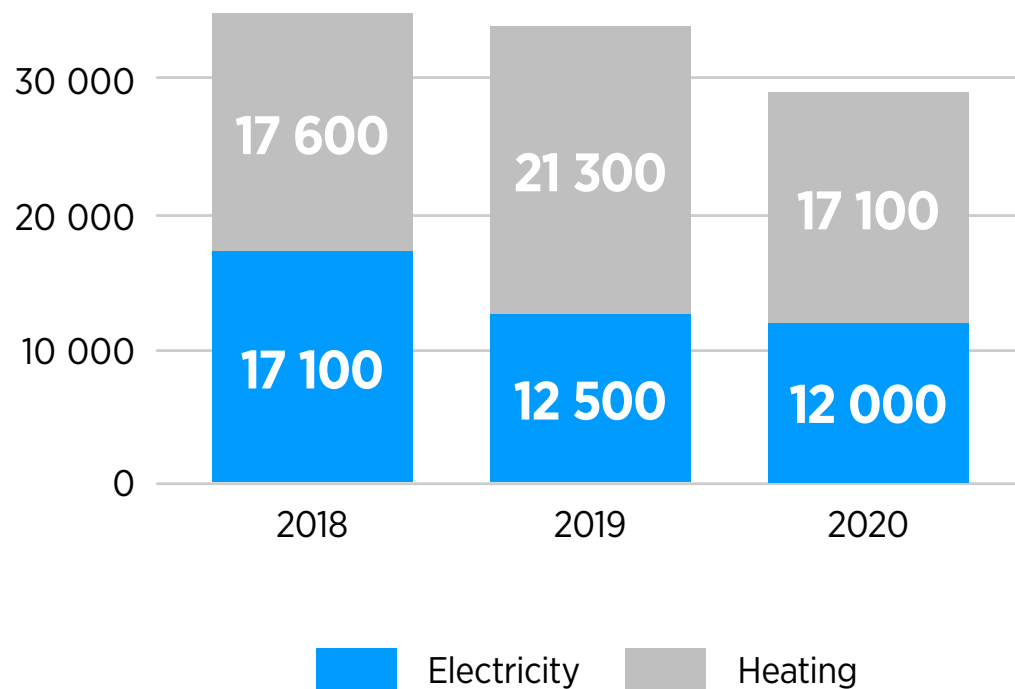
Through **commitments** signed in 2015 under Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, the University has committed to reducing energy and water consumption in its buildings by 10% and producing at least 5% of the energy consumed in a renewable way on site by 2025. In addition, we are committed to promoting low-emission and healthy commuting. Examples of our measures include increased use of solar power at the University, the construction of bicycle parking areas and the introduction of software that facilitates telecommuting.

WE HAVE INCREASED THE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Viikki Campus has a solar power plant that is significant in size on the scale of Finland, in addition to which a smaller power plant was built at Info Centre Korona in 2016. The solar panels are located on the roofs of University buildings. There are roughly 3,500 panels in total with an overall area of approximately 5,600 square metres. The solar power generated by the power plant is fed into a grid owned by the University of Helsinki on Viikki Campus. According to estimates, the output of the expanded power plant covers roughly 4% of the annual energy consumption of the properties on Viikki Campus. In 2020, the construction of a solar power plant on the roof of the Chemicum building on Kumpula Campus was initiated.

In 2020, the student building at the Tvärminne Zoological Station as well as the Lammi Biological Station were heated almost entirely with solar and geothermal heat as well as wood chips.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS GENERATED BY ENERGY CONSUMPTION AT UNIVERSITY PREMISES (t CO₂e)



From 2019 the University's properties have been parties to the national Energy Efficiency Agreement for the Property Sector (2017–2025). The agreement obliges us to implement measures that will reduce energy consumption in the properties and makes it possible to apply for energy aid from Business Finland to carry out savings measures.

The reduction of emissions in 2020 is partly attributable to most of the University community working and studying remotely due to the pandemic-related restrictions, especially in the spring and latter part of the year. Furthermore, the exceptional circumstances restricted the operations of cafeterias and UniSport on the campuses.

RECYCLING RATE AND QUANTITY OF WASTE IN 2020

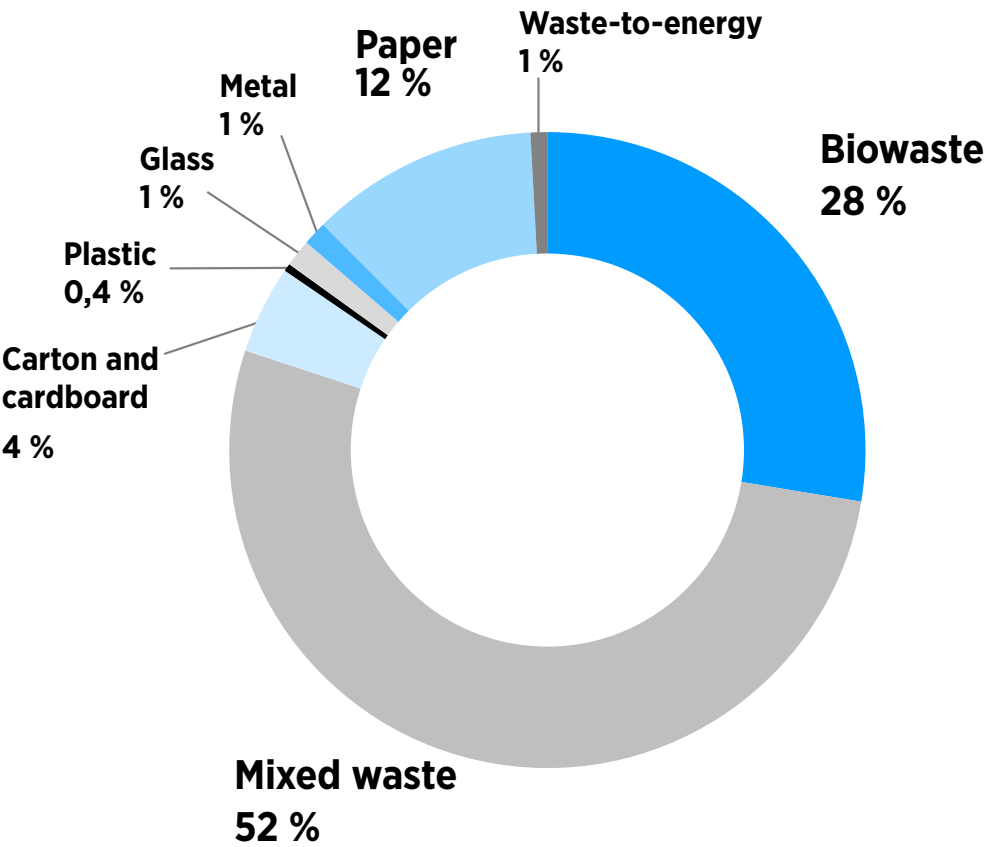
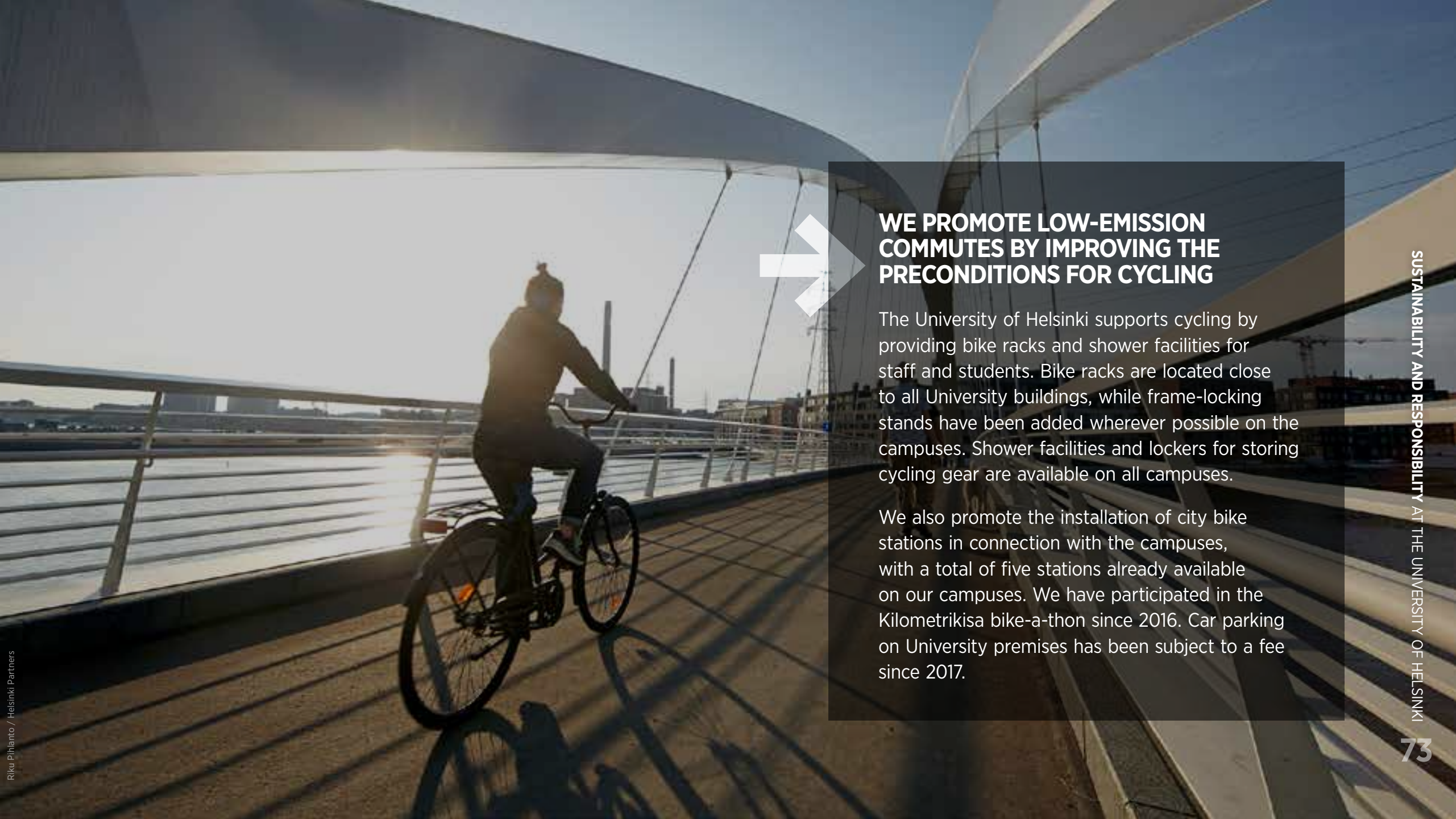


Table 5.

Waste (tonnes)	2020
Biowaste	262
Mixed waste	499
Carton and cardboard	43
Plastic	4
Glass	13
Metal	12
Paper	110
Waste-to-energy	8
Total	950

The amount of waste generated by the University has remained at a stable level. To develop waste sorting further, several projects have been carried out in University buildings. To reduce mixed waste, a preliminary plan was drawn up in 2020 to enhance opportunities for sorting in offices, lobbies and break rooms. Separate sorting stations have been piloted in a few lobbies and break rooms. Waste sorting is being developed and promoted further.

In 2020, University operations generated 53 tonnes of waste from electrical and electronic equipment as well as roughly 250 tonnes of hazardous and special waste. The latter consists of waste generated in laboratories that pose chemical and biological hazards as well as waste as stipulated by the animal by-products regulation of the EU.



WE PROMOTE LOW-EMISSION COMMUTES BY IMPROVING THE PRECONDITIONS FOR CYCLING

The University of Helsinki supports cycling by providing bike racks and shower facilities for staff and students. Bike racks are located close to all University buildings, while frame-locking stands have been added wherever possible on the campuses. Shower facilities and lockers for storing cycling gear are available on all campuses.

We also promote the installation of city bike stations in connection with the campuses, with a total of five stations already available on our campuses. We have participated in the Kilometrikisa bike-a-thon since 2016. Car parking on University premises has been subject to a fee since 2017.



CAMPUS GARDENING IS POSSIBLE ON ALL OF OUR CAMPUSES

The University provides all students and staff with the opportunity to participate in campus gardening. The inspiration for gardening originates in students, and the first grow bags were placed in the courtyards of the Snellmania and Topelia buildings at the City Centre Campus in 2013.

**[Read more about campus gardening
and join in the activity.](#)**

Since 2011, Viikki Campus has held a **GREEN OFFICE** certificate granted by the **World Wildlife Foundation**.

COMPENSATION FOR THE EMISSIONS CAUSED BY AIR TRAVEL IN 2018 HAS BEEN ALLOCATED to a Gold Standard certified project to be carried out in Kenya, close to the University's Taita Research Station. In 2018 the total amount of kilometres flown with tickets purchased from CWT, the University's partner travel agency, was 52.3 million, which generated 4,503 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

The University of Helsinki operates a **RECYCLING SERVICE FOR IT EQUIPMENT** that is intended for the removal and responsible repurposing of all IT equipment and tools purchased by the University. Every year, some 5,000 IT devices leave the University for recycling.

At the conference receptions held in the Main Building of the University, **ONLY VEGETARIAN FOOD HAS BEEN SERVED** since autumn 2018. In addition, UniCafe is reducing food waste by **SELLING SURPLUS FOOD AT INEXPENSIVE RATES** in its facilities located in University buildings.

In a **FREEZER CLEAN-OUT CAMPAIGN** organised by the Faculty of Medicine, roughly a thousand freezers were emptied of samples and specimens that were no longer needed. This saved space, freed up cooling capacity and reduced electricity consumption.

Helsinki University Library has intensified its facility use by remodelling physical library facilities into peaceful reading spaces and comfortable shared work facilities as well as learning environments. The National Library of Finland has also intensified the use of facilities, relinquishing 6,500 square metres of office and collection space in 2017–2020.



OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO BE EUROPE'S LEADING AND MOST RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY INVESTOR

The investment activities of the University of Helsinki are guided by the **Principles for Responsible Investment Activities** approved by the University Board in 2019. They are founded on the principles of responsible investment supported by the United Nations and pertain to matters related to the environment, social responsibility and corporate governance in terms of investments. Our objective is to be Europe's leading and most responsible university investor. On the way towards a carbon-neutral portfolio, divesting investment in fossil fuel production constitutes an important interim goal. Companies that produce fossil fuels and those that hold fossil fuel reserves have been removed from all of the global equity index funds in which we have invested. Neither do the funds include companies that manufacture or provide tobacco products, controversial weapons, adult entertainment and gambling services, or companies that operate in violation of the **Global Compact principles** of the UN.

WE TAKE RESPONSIBILITY EXTENSIVELY INTO CONSIDERATION IN PURCHASES BY THE UNIVERSITY

Our goal is to set an example in responsible procurement. We take the environmental, social and economic aspects related to responsibility into consideration as broadly as possible in competitive tendering and framework agreements. All of our contract suppliers must undertake to comply with the relevant minimum responsibility criteria. In order to develop the responsibility of our procurement processes, we utilise an emissions report to examine the carbon footprint of University purchases.



of investment in
fossil fuel producers
at the end of 2020

A photograph of four young people sitting at a table, each wearing a yellow banana costume with their feet sticking out of the top. They are smiling and looking towards the camera. On the table in front of them are several Fairtrade-certified products, including a box of 'FAIRTRADE' chocolate and a bowl of snacks. The background features a chalkboard with various phrases like 'KUMPILA THIN COMPANY', 'UUSIEN I NEWER'S', 'MAKER'S WORK', and 'TERKKO HEALTH'.

WE ARE A FAIRTRADE UNIVERSITY

As a Fairtrade university, we are committed to promoting the use and availability of Fairtrade-certified products in our procurement, as well as increasing the University community's awareness of Fairtrade and its significance to global production and consumption networks.

READ MORE ABOUT OUR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY EFFORTS:

[University of Helsinki website](#)

[Annual reports](#)

[Equality, diversity and accessibility](#)

[Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science HELSUS](#)

[Principles for Responsible Investment Activities](#)

[Annual report on responsible investment activities 2019](#)

[Annual report on responsible investment activities 2020](#)

[Responsibility report of the properties of the University of Helsinki Group 2020](#)

[HY247 responsibility report 2020](#)

[Theses on sustainable development and responsibility by Universities Finland UNIFI](#)



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI