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## **ESU Strategic policy framework 2013 – 2015**

This strategic policy framework outlines the four prioritised areas for European Students' Union (ESU) that our operations will be based on for the next three years (2013-15).

### **Access and support**

Wide access to education and research is a fundamental goal for ESU. The student population in higher education must reflect the society at large, and it is necessary to set indicators and targets for achieving these goals. Barriers to access need to be eliminated so that we can reach our full potential as a society. It is therefore of the highest importance to work with the social dimension to widen access and to better include underrepresented groups in higher education.

Extensive and accessible student support systems are crucial in order to reach our goals of having a diverse educational community where lifelong learning is a reality.

### **Education as a Public Responsibility**

We will strive to strengthen education as a public responsibility and increase public funding. Furthermore funding is a national competence and ESU will work to broadening our alliances in the educational policy community to reduce the pressure for commodification. Funding and governance models in higher education should aim at reaching multiple purposes, instead of jeopardising those for the sake of the labour market needs. Education must cater for the broad needs of society through the creation of opportunity and the advancement of knowledge.

### **Quality and transparency**

A fundamental objective for ESU is to empower students towards meaningful participation with the aim of improving quality of higher education provisions. Student-centred learning must be a central part of ESUs efforts to change education. ESU should define a student concept of quality that contributes to the implementation of a model of student centred learning in higher education.

This concept should be reflected in main documents, structures and activities regarding quality assurance and making them more relevant for students. Furthermore, transparency-tools should be aligned with students' information needs.

### **Mobility and Internationalisation**

A central goal for ESU is to ensure sustainable funding, quality and accessibility for European mobility programs within higher education. Furthermore, geographical barriers to mobility need to be removed, and access to mobility must be increased with a focus on solidarity and sustainability.

On the global arena ESU will strengthen their involvement in Global Students' Cooperation, focusing on quality in and access to higher education and the empowerment of students.

### **Specific policy targets 2013 – 2015**

#### **Access and support:**

- Setting national targets on participation of underrepresented groups in HE, monitoring and fostering their implementation
- Monitoring barriers to access and completion of higher education in Europe
- Improving quality and comparability of data on access, support and completion rates for underrepresented groups and the overall student population across the EHEA with a particular focus on students with migrant background
- Bringing up to the European policy-making level provisions regarding quality of student support services
- Mainstreaming social dimension indicators in quality assurance and transparency tools
- Developing an approach to tackle recognition of prior learning on the European level, towards RPL network
- Developing an approach to tackle implementation of national lifelong learning strategies, where they exist and setting up of those, where there are none

#### **Education as a Public Responsibility:**

- Enabling NUS to advocate for raising the level of public funding for higher education to fulfil its multiple purposes
- Improving quality and accessibility of data on the impact of different funding systems on access and quality in higher education
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of the financial crisis and austerity measures on education budgets and students' experience, influencing the public debate on the importance of investing in higher education
- Making sure, that students (and student representatives) are recognised and treated as equal partners in higher education on all levels of its decision-making

#### **Quality and transparency:**

- Revising European Standards and Guidelines in order to fulfil their purpose of supporting, enhancing and assuring quality of higher education from a students' point of view
- Strengthening student participation in quality assurance across European higher education area
- Empowering European quality assurance register (EQAR) to become more relevant and useful for students
- Advocating for student-centred learning approach towards higher education learning outcomes and its measurement
- Integrating quality assurance with other Bologna tools
- Exploring the possibility to introduce student-driven transparency tools for information provision

- Exploring the possibility to introduce student-led peer-reviews for better learning experience

**Mobility and Internationalisation:**

- Improving conditions for funding mobility under EU mobility programmes according ESU policy, ensuring sustainable funding for European mobility programmes
- Exploring feasibility of an automatic recognition procedure
- Developing a proposal for compensation model across member states to support degree mobility in EU (Mobility treaty)
- Strengthening ESU involvement in Global Students' Cooperation