

BM75 - Budva

Resolution: ESU stands against increased debt for students in Norway

ESU supports NSO The National Union of Students in Norway in the fight against grant reduction in Norway, and the suffocating debt inflicted upon students by this change.

In the national budget for 2019 the Norwegian government proposes to change the conversion to grants from being 40 % conversion after completed ECTS to 25 % from ECTS and 15 % converted only when completing a degree, and only for the credits included in the degree. This will save the government 26 million euro per year and punish all students who changes study program or completes extra courses after or during their degree. This change to the grant system could give students up to 1800 euro of extra debt per year.

The reduction will also impact the social mobility effect of education, because of debt aversion particularly from students with lower socio-economic backgrounds. Hence, fewer people will choose to enter into higher education, and the elitist view on higher education will be amplified. By reducing the ability to take shorter education programs (which will not be included as degrees as regarding grant conversion for degree completion) the government is effectively blocking its own goal of lifelong learning and the fact that refilling competence is going to be a key to be able to handle the massive changes that will come to society in the following years.

ESU strongly believes that national budgets should not be balanced on the backs of students. The cuts to grants are even larger than the increase in money allocated for quality in education. ESU encourages governments to increase spending on education but this cannot be financed by cutting student grants and imposing crippling debt on students. Students will not tolerate being a piggy for the government's agenda. Therefore, ESU demands that the changes are reversed, and steps are taken to reduce the loan burden on students.

Proposed by: NSO

Seconded by: fzs, USI, LÍS, ANOSR, SFS, SAMOK, PSRP