

BM75 - Budva

Resolution: Fight for a better BAföG

Sufficient student funding is a key instrument to guarantee access to higher education for anyone regardless of their background and financial situation. If the financial burden connected to taking up higher education is not taken care of by students support, it will not be possible to gradually approach a situation in which structural advantages or disadvantages are not leading to the exclusion of people from higher education. Believing that it is an obligation and a strong necessity to fight for a situation in which the full diversity of a society can also be found in Higher education institutions, ESU supports fzs in their demand on a sufficient BAföG (Federal training assistance act).

The changes currently proposed by the German ministry of education won't help the student in a precarious situation, especially in a city with very high rents. The proposal includes increasing the general amount paid, related to their parents' income or respectively their own income. Unfortunately, this proposal is underachieving at several levels. The ministry acknowledges that there are rising student housing rents, but they miscalculated how high rents actually have gone. Second, the money left, after paying their rent, will not cover life-costs at all. The average expenses on housing for students in Germany are at around 363 € whilst there are big regional differences regarding the expenses. The monthly funding increased by 115€, will not cover the expenses students need to face for paying their rents. As there will be a fixed amount of 325€ dedicated to the students for housing expenses, which is actually p.e. around 300€ lower than the average housing costs in Munich. That shows that there, in fact, is no substantial increase in student funding.

Further issues arise when considering that so few students in Germany receive student funding, which has several reasons. This is hardly changed in the proposal the ministry made, which involve slight changes of the calculation of the claims students have as well as a different regulation on how many savings students are allowed to have. Generally, ESU sees the necessity to perceive students and student's rights as independent from their family background, as this is the only way to guarantee actual independence and emancipation. In that sense, there is a strong demand to provide student funding to everyone regardless of their parents.

Finally, the very necessary changes regarding the division of funding and loan are not touched upon, which we harshly criticize. The proposal extrapolates the concept of student

funding as a loan. The rule that 50 % of the money received has to be played back to the state remains. We have seen for years that this rule is keeping a very particular group from participating in higher education, which namely are young people from a weaker socioeconomic background and without an academic background. Implementing the depths expiring after 20 years doesn't particularly pose a big improvement as the fear of having up

to 10.000 € depth for 20 years is not a very encouraging thought. Also, this grievance is having an impact on the actual choice of study, always keeping in mind that earning a certain amount of money after university is a necessity. But the choice of study should never be primarily lead by strategic and financial considerations but by the interests and perspectives of the individual making a choice.

ESU is supporting fzs in its demands for more accessible higher education through a better BAföG (Federal training assistance act) according to the principles elaborated in this resolution.

Proposed by: fzs

Seconded by: UDU