



BM76 - Sofia

Resolution: Fighting the abolishment of the GA travelcard for students in Switzerland

The European Students' Union (ESU) speaks out against abolishing the GA Travelcard for students and supports VSS-UNES-USU in their demand to keep the discount for students.

On 8th May 2019 plans were brought to light that the *Swiss federal railways (SBB) and CH-Direct*, an association of around 250 transport companies, plan on abolishing the student and the youth discount on the GA Travelcard and take several other measures leading to increased costs for transportation. Students over the age of 25 will be hit hardest. Until now, students under the age of 30 have benefited from a lower-price GA travelcard where they paid 2650 francs per year. The SBB wants to end this by the end of this year. If this happens 26,000 students currently possessing a student's GA travelcard will then have to pay the full price of CHF 3860. This represents a full 45 per cent price increase.

For many students, the reduced GA travelcard is extremely important and irreplaceable. Students who have to attend courses throughout Switzerland and especially those who cannot always live close to the universities because of the high rental costs and low income will be hit the hardest.

The availability of a lower-price student GA travelcard enhances the Swiss-wide exchange and cooperation of young people. Especially youth organisations, including student unions, profit extensively from it. In a very small country, like Switzerland, comprised of diverse cultures, inter-regional exchange and cooperation is of utmost importance.

Additionally, there are many reasons why students in Switzerland are still studying after 25. For example, having children during the studies or doing military service for a longer period of time, may prolong the study time. This may also be the case if students are working besides their studies to make a living. Furthermore, increasing the hurdles of accessibility to public transportation goes also against the principle of sustainability.

For all the above-mentioned reasons ESU supports the position of VSS-UNES-USU and urges the SBB and all other transportation companies to not abolish the students' discount on the GA travelcard.

Proposed by: VSS-UNES-USU

Seconded by: FEF