

European Students' Union (ESU)

Fighting for students' rights since 1982

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PRESS RELEASE

STUDENTS NEED TO BE AT THE CENTRE OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS

Today Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, addressed the State of the European Union (SOTEU) 2022. During her speech, she announced 2023 to be the European year of skills. As student participation is a fundamental value of higher education at the European level, the European Students' Union calls upon the European Commission to involve students at all levels in the planning and implementation of European education policy in a meaningful way.

Matteo Vespa (President of ESU): *“As the younger generation who are in education and training, we expect to be included as equal partners in the development of the education policy of the European Union. The European Year of Skills needs to learn from the shortcomings of the European Year of Youth: we demand concrete action, especially the overdue anchoring of student rights in a Student Rights Charter”.*

Education is the key to mastering current and future crises on the European and global levels. At the same time, students are in the midst of a mental health crisis and facing a financial and housing crisis, which negatively impacts not only their well-being but also their success in completing higher education. This has an impact on the quality of their education.

Emily MacPherson (ESU Executive Committee): *“Through the pandemic, the long-known but ignored mental health crisis of young people became more visible than ever before. Students need affordable, appropriate and accessible support. But more importantly, we need to focus on the underlying causes that have led to our generation’s mental health crisis and change the structures in the spirit of prevention.”*

Further Information:

[Student Rights Charter](#)

[A Comparative Analysis of Mental Health among Higher Education Students](#)

[Mental Health Charter](#)

[Statement on Housing and Transport](#)



The European Students' Union, the umbrella organisation of 45 national students' unions from 40 European countries, represents and promotes the interests of students at the European level since 1982. Through its members, ESU represents 20 million students Europe-wide

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The European Students' Union (ESU) is the umbrella organisation of 45 National Unions of Students (NUS) from 40 countries. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the interests of students at the European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.