

The 18th European Student Convention

Stockholm 16 - 18 October 2009

SFS





*The 18th European Students' Convention is funded by
the Swedish Presidency of the European Union*

Dear participant

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 18th European Students' Convention, provocatively titled "The Social Dimension: the Lost Dimension?", taking place in Stockholm, 16-18th of October 2009. We are delighted to be hosted by SFS, the National Union of Students in Sweden that has put in a lot of time, effort, enthusiasm and resources in organising this event. The conference also enjoys the support of the Swedish EU Presidency, both in financial and political terms, as the issues debated by almost 100 European student participants are also to be found on the Presidency's short policy priorities' list. It is of remarkable relevance that these students' goals seem to overlap the ones of the country with the biggest profile for 6 months in the EU context. We hope that this is just the beginning of a successful joint effort between students and governments for making clear progress in the "complicated" areas of the Bologna Process, such as social dimension, mobility and student centred learning.

The title of the conference sums up both the worrying down prioritisation of social dimension in many of the European Higher Education Area's Member States and the urgency with which we need to address the problems in this area, partially due to the economic crisis. The analysis of the national strategies for social dimension shows that many countries are in denial when it comes to the dire need for working on making their higher education systems equally accessible for all students, regardless of their background. Many of the European states have a political commitment to the equity agenda, but have serious difficulties identifying the best measures to foster it. And this is where the national unions of students' role becomes essential in showing the right path to the goal of the student population reflecting the diversity of our societies. This European Student Convention is aimed at empowering student representatives with expertise and argumentation so that they become drivers for the necessary changes. Experience sharing sessions and practical workshops will also contribute to the much needed exchange of good practice when it comes to this very difficult to pinpoint and national specific topic.

The conference aims at tackling very concrete issues, that are impacting on a daily basis by the ESU members, such as: student support services, student health, gender equality work, but also challenging new emerging topics – lifelong learning and the social challenge, social standards in quality assurance, while looking at the influence of international processes and organisations to the social dimension policy development.

Finally, allow me to thank the organising team of the 18th European Student Convention, formed mostly out of the ESU Social Affairs Committee members and their EC coordinator, while being fully supported by the ESU Secretariat.

I wish everyone a meaningful conference, whose results should help student representatives present to bring more knowledge back to their national unions who will, in turn, successfully defend the right to high quality higher education of the 11 million students that ESU represents and of the many more that haven't been fortunate enough to have the possibility to enter higher education.



Ligia Deca

Chairperson of the European Students' Union

Dear participant

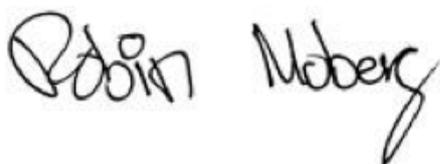
It's a great pleasure for The Swedish National Union of Students, (SFS) and also for me personally to welcome you to Stockholm. This semester's convention will have its focus on the theme "Social Dimension – The Lost Dimension?" The social dimension has been one of the most neglected areas of the Bologna Process and SFS are proud to host the 18th edition of the European Students' Convention (ESC 18) which will give attention to these important issues.

SFS are pleased to welcome a number of speakers and workshop chairs from different locations and professions which all will contribute to the mission of the Conventions– to do a reality check at both a national and European level.

For me as a vice president of the Swedish national union of students, the social dimensions have always been one of the most important questions in higher education. For Swedish students, student housing is an exceedingly important issue since the lack of student housing in some cities is reaching critical levels. Another relevant issue is the study grants and loans. The study grants and loans are close to the Swedish authorities' level of poverty, which makes it hard for many students to make ends meet. A raised study grant and loan, free education and the housing situation for the students are questions SFS are looking forward to discuss with representatives from all over Europe. The right to an acceptable living situation is a crucial question for the student movement to focus on in their future work.

An additional significant issue for SFS is the question of tuition fees for students coming to Europe from outside the EES area. SFS strongly opposes the idea of tuition fees since SFS believe that all forms of education should be free and the fees will have negative effects on a broadened access. It's a matter of justice, democracy and social mobility and everyone's human right to choose to invest in oneself through studies at a university! May the ESC 18th contribute to these and related issues being discussed carefully and without omitting the students' view!

I wish you successful days ahead, filled with useful knowledge sharing inspiring discussions and enriching social events. On behalf of The Swedish National Union of Students and the Swedish ESC 18 Project team, I would like to thank you for taking part in the ESC 18 and I once again to welcome you to the 18th European Student Convention and the city of Stockholm!



Robin Moberg

Vice President of The Swedish National Union of Students (SFS)

Welcome to SöderS - the Student Union of Södertörn University

We want to start to tell you how happy we are to welcome you to SöderS and Södertörn University. Hosting the 18th European Student Convention and being able to welcome 150 committed Student Union representatives from all over Europe is honorable and exciting. The aim of both SöderS and Södertörn University is to be a place for discussion, exchange and commitments. Our hope is that the ESC is going to be just that, and develop ourselves, the participants and the student movement at large.

The theme of this year's convention also makes it even more exciting to be an evident part of the ESC 18. The social dimension is very much present in our organization and something we work with on a daily basis. One of Södertörn University's core missions is broader recruitment and widened participation. In SöderS we believe that all recruitment should be broadened recruitment and work to create an organization where everyone can join and participate regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, functional disability, social background or anything else. Our goal is that everyone should have access to both higher education and our organization.

We have worked on this convention during a long time and hope that your time here will turn out great. If there would be any problems or questions, just catch a functionary or someone else from SöderS. We will do everything to make your stay here as good as possible and help you with all that is needed.

Above all, we hope that together we can create an interesting and exciting convention where we can discuss, share experiences and learn from each other.

Once again, welcome!

Sincerely,

Sabine Pettersson, Chairperson, SöderS

Lina Glans, Vice Chairperson, SöderS

Welcome to Södertörn University

Södertörns högskola (Södertörn University) is located in a culturally diverse, dynamic and expanding area of south Stockholm.

It was founded in 1996 and since then has endeavoured to create an organisation with a high standard of teaching and research, prepared to act in innovative ways. Currently, there are 12 000 students and 750 staff.

Södertörns högskola offers more than 70 study programmes within the Humanities, Social Sciences, Life Sciences and Education. In addition, there are over 400 courses that students may choose to study independently.

The university has the right to confer Bachelors and Masters degrees and hopes to be granted full university status within the near future.

The concepts of diversity, multidisciplinary education and research, and active citizenship are evident in all activities. Students and staff work across subject boundaries and strive for depth and breadth in teaching and research. Many of the courses and programmes deal with issues of ethnicity, migration and nationalism in modern Europe and require understanding and respect for cultural and social diversity.

Students are trained in critical and independent thought processes so that they not only receive a thorough academic education but, on completion of their studies, go on to become active members of society.

There is a strong link between teaching and research. A considerable part of all research focuses on the history and culture of Eastern and Central Europe, particularly the Baltic Sea Region. The university has extensive international ties.

For more information, please visit www.sh.se.

Ingela Josefson

Vice-Chancellor

Södertörn University

Practical information

Welcome

Welcome to Stockholm, capital of Sweden. Stockholm has approximately 1 250 000 inhabitants and is thereby the largest city of Sweden. It hosts the parliament and the royal castle, alongside many great museums and institutes.

In mid October you should expect the weather to be somewhat chilly with temperatures around 10° C (50° F) and with a slight to moderate risk of rain.

For updated forecasts visit the website of the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute. www.smhi.se

Passport matters and Visa requirements

Participants requiring a visa should immediately contact [mika.fogelberg\[at\]sfs.se](mailto:mika.fogelberg@sfs.se) to receive invitation letters. Please note that the visa application procedure can take up to a few weeks.

All visitors must have a valid passport, this includes citizens of other EU countries. You will be asked to present a passport at some point during your travel so make sure you have it.

Rules at Zinkensdamm Hostel

Zinkensdamm Hostel is a big hostel so you need to respect other people staying there. Making noises after 11pm is prohibited, as is running down the hallways and slamming doors. There is no smoking anywhere inside the hostel, or close to doors and windows. If you loose the key to your room you will be charged 50 SEK. STF Zinkensdamm Hostel (www.zinkensdamm.com).

How to get there

STF Zinkensdamm Hostel is located close to metro station Zinkensdamm. You get to the conference venue in Flemingsberg by taking the Pendeltåg from Stockholm Södra. With you 3 day SL-card you can travel with buses, metro and pendeltåg all over Stockholm. More information is available at the Stockholm Lokaltrafik website, www.sl.se.



Transportations

To Stockholm

There will be a Welcome point with ESC hosts at Central Station. To get there follow the instructions below.

Train

Participants arriving at Arlanda can get to Central Station by train or by bus.

The Arlanda Express operates from Arlanda Airport to Stockholm Central Station every 15 minutes, throughout the day. The train ride is 20 minutes and the fare is 240 SEK (120 SEK with valid ISIC-card) (□24/12).

This is what you do:

At the airport, you can buy tickets for the train at the information counters or from the ticket dispenser machines located next to the escalators/lifts leading down to each station. There are escalators/lifts down to the train from all terminals.

Bus

Buses operate from Arlanda Airport to the City Terminal near the Central Station about every 10 minutes throughout the day.

The travel time is 45 minutes and the fare is 110 SEK (79 SEK if you are under 25 years old) (□10/8).

This is what you do:

Airport coaches serve all terminals. Tickets are available at the Arlanda Visitor Center in Terminal 5 or at the airport's other information counters. The airport coaches to and from Stockholm have machines at the stops where you can buy tickets.

If you wish to orientate yourself at Arlanda before arriving please visit the official website of Stockholm Arlanda Airport. <http://www.arlanda.se/en/>

Also from Bromma Airport there are buses. A non-stop ride takes you to the City Terminal and the fare is 79 SEK. You will find the buses right outside the terminal.

From the City Terminal to Central Station it is just a five minutes walk.

It is possible to walk indoors from City Terminal to Central Station using the escalators or lifts, just follow the signs for the subway and trains.

Taxi

If you choose to go by taxi you should know that a number of taxi companies operate in Stockholm and their rates can vary. For transfers to and from Arlanda Airport though there are fixed rates ranging from 395-599 (€40-60) SEK. Make sure to confirm the rate before you leave the airport.

The welcome point

Arriving at Central Station, the ESC Welcome point will be on the ground floor. You will find your hosts close to the centre of the main hall. There you will receive tickets for public transportation and further information on how to get to the ESC venue and to the location of your accommodation.

On Thursday we will set up a registration desk at the hostel, Zinkensdamm, for those arriving early. There you will get all other necessary information. During the conference the registration desk will be at the actual venue at Södertörns Högskola.

In Stockholm

Once in Stockholm you will soon find that the subway is the fastest and easiest way to get around. The stations are marked with a blue T on white background, the T is short for Tunnelbana which is the Swedish word for subway. The subway is part of an extensive network of public transportation in Stockholm, which also includes commuter trains, buses, trams, vintage trams and even a few ferries.

You will be given a 3-day SL-card on Friday morning. If you arrive on Thursday you will be provided with metro tickets for that day. With the 3-day SL-card you can travel all over Stockholm.

The closest station to the ESC venue is Flemingsberg and the closest one to the Zinkensdamm hostel is named Zinkesdamm.

Timetables can be found at www.sl.se.

If you arrive by boat or any other means than mentioned, please contact Mika Fogelberg by mail at mika.fogelberg@sfs.se or by phone +467 05 457 244.

Currency, banks & ATM

The currency in Sweden is kronor, the international currency code is SEK.
10 SEK roughly equals 1 EURO.

For updated currency converter, exchange offices and opening hours at FOREX see <http://www.forex.se/en/>.

Approximate exchange rates as below October 10th :

EUR 1 (€) ~ 10,25 SEK

USD 1 (\$) ~ 6,99 SEK

GBP 1 (£) ~ 11,07 SEK

All major credit cards, such as VISA, Euro/Mastercard and American Express, are accepted in almost all shops and restaurants. Some stores accept Euro but the rate will not be to your advantage. But Stockholm has a vast net of ATMs and bank machines. Currency exchange offices are also easily available in the city centre.

If you need to go to a bank, most banks are open between 10 am – 3 pm, Monday – Friday.

ESCs ecological footprint

SFS is happy to announce that their work with Green Events will be extended to the European Student Convention. There will be measures taken, such as recycling, decreased paper usage et cetera.

ESU and SFS hopes that the participants will help with the efforts to reduce the ecological footprint!

Dining & shopping

Approximate prices for Stockholm:

- Lunch in a restaurant SEK 75,-
- Main course in a restaurant SEK 150,-
- A glass of wine in a pub SEK 50,-
- A bottle of wine at Systembolaget SEK 80,-
- 0,5 l beer at Systembolaget SEK 17,-
- 0,5 l beer in a pub SEK 50,-
- A cup of coffee SEK 25,-
- A soft drink SEK 20,-

Opening hours for shops in Sweden are usually 10 am – 6 pm during weekdays. On Saturdays most shops close at 3 or 4 pm and remain closed on Sundays. Major shopping centres are open longer, usually until 8 pm in weekdays and until 6 pm during Saturdays and Sundays.

Most restaurants stop serving proper dinners at 10 pm, lunch is usually served between 11am and 2pm.

Tobacco can be bought in many convenient stores, but alcohol can only be bought in pubs and restaurants or at Systembolaget. In Sweden you have to be 18 to buy tobacco and 20 purchase alcohol from Systembolaget, although in bars and restaurants the legal age for buying and drinking alcohol is only 18.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in most public indoor places in Sweden, including bars and cafés. Out in the open it is mostly allowed, but pay attention in the railway stations, there smoking is only allowed in marked areas.

No smoking will be tolerated at the venue or in the accommodation facilities. And please don't smoke close to any doors or windows and use ashtrays provided.

Phones & Postal offices

The country code for Sweden is 46 and the lead in "0" of the area code should not be dialled if the call is placed from a point outside of Sweden.

Example: If the international access code in your country is 00, you should dial 00-46-8-123 456 to get the Swedish number 08-123 456.

The normal electric current in Sweden is 220 volts AC in 50 cycles, and plugs and sockets may differ from those in other parts of the world, so travellers should bring adapters or transformers for electrical appliances such as phones, hair dryers and shavers.

Laptop computers that are made to work on both 110 and 220 volts can be used in Sweden with an adapter. For laptop computers working on 110 volts only, transformers are also necessary.

It is not necessary to go the postal office to get stamps in Sweden, they can be bought in Pressbyrå and some other convenient stores. To mail your postcards or letters use the yellow mail boxes.

Health care & emergency

No special vaccinations are needed when travelling to Sweden. It is also safe to enjoy a drink of the tap water in Sweden.

In Sweden you will always receive emergency care no matter where you are from or if you are insured, but we advise you to bring your European healthcare insurance card if you are a citizen of a EU country.

If an emergency or life threatening situation should occur dial the free of charge, universal emergency telephone number 112.

The Swedish pharmacy is called Apoteket and is mostly open 10am-6pm. There is an 24 hour open Apoteket close to the Central station.

If you need to go to a hospital one of Stockholm's biggest hospitals, Huddinge hospital, is located in Flemingsberg where the ESC is held.

Social activities at ESC

Sightseeing

Stockholm, with its 750-year history and rich cultural life offers a wide selection of museums and experiences. Most sights are reachable by foot and by walking you get to experience a lot in a short amount of time.

Starting at the Royal Palace you could see century old gilded carriages and do some really good shopping in just one afternoon. Around one o'clock the change of the Royal Guards takes place in the courtyard of the Royal Palace. If you want to you can go into the palace and visit some of the museums it keeps.

On the right side (seen from the courtyard) of the Royal Palace is the entrance to Livrustkammaren (The Royal Armoury). In this museum, located in cellar vault underneath the Royal Palace, you can learn about Sweden's royal history through magnificent fancy and leisure attire worn by the court; gilded carriages; armour; and weapons. Audio guide in English is available and the entrance fee is SEK 60.

Continue into Stockholm's oldest attraction, Gamla Stan (the Old Town), one of the world's best preserved medieval city centres. Wander through the small winding streets lined with shops filled with crafts, antiques, art galleries and cafés. On your way you pass Storkyrkan (the Great Church) and Stortorget (the Great Square) where the Stockholm Bloodbath also known as the Stockholm Massacre took place in the 16th century.

Leaving the horrid history behind you and aiming for Slussen you exit Gamla Stan by the water, straight into the pulsating present. From Slussen it is just a short walk to Södermalm and some great shopping with many national brands. The area is now known as SoFo, short for South of Folkungagatan, and it is full of hip, modern fashion and fashionistas.

But that is just one of many itineraries you could set out for in Stockholm. The city has many museums and attractions, as well as shopping opportunities. For more information visit <http://beta.stockholmtown.com/en/>

Social activities

Thursday: For early comers is there an organized sighting tour in the old parts of the city between 1 pm and 3 pm. Please let me know if you're interested in participating, send an e-mail to mika.fogelberg@sfs.se

Friday: Ever dreamed of becoming a rock star? We invite you all to compete in our Rock Band competition at Södertörns högskola. (Rock band is a video game that allows up to four players to simulate the performance of popular rock music songs by playing with controllers modeled after musical instruments.)

Saturday: A banquet will be served at Södertörns högskola. We will celebrate ESU:s birthday with a fabulous party.

Sunday: Departure day, free time for those who stays in Stockholm during the evening.

Phonenumbers

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How to organize a green seminar - an ecological framework

SFS is happy to announce that their work with Green Events will be extended to the European Student Convention. There will be measures taken, such as recycling, decreased paper usage etc. during the conference. ESU and SFS hopes that all participants will help with the efforts to reduce the ecological footprint!

The consequences for the environment will be immense if you don't start thinking about which choices you do. When you organize a board meeting, a seminar or even a big conference is it important to include a green perspective in the planning. SFS want to share some thoughts that can help you to contribute to a more substantial environment.

Below is a short check list you can use for your organization or Union in your future work:

Think twice!

The best effort you can do for the environment is to not consume. Everything you buy should be a result of a conscious choice. Do I need this? Can I buy it vintage or second hand? These questions can be good to keep in mind, even in your daily life.

If you have a choice- choose the most environmentally friendly way to travel!

If you can choose between different ways of traveling is train for example a better choice then traveling by car or by airplane.

If you going to order profile clothes- choose the material with effort!

Ecological cotton, hemp or bamboo is all three good example of environmental friendly material you can choose for your profile clothes. Ordinary cotton cloth is one of the most irrigated and contaminated with pesticide crops in the world. In other words, ordinary cotton is no good for the environment.

Think about the trees! Use computers and Internet.

Even if computers needs electricity can you spare lots of energy if you don't print all documents you need for a meeting or a seminar. If you have a laptop, bring it to the conference! If all the participants have computers can we all communicate over the internet and share documents with each other. Then we don't need to print tons of documents. If you still need to print some document, please print on both side of the paper and even two (2) pages on one side. If possible, use recycled paper for your printing.

Food and drinks- Who produces them?

When you go shopping for a conference, choose fair trade coffee and if you're shopping fruit, please buy local produced fruit rather than bananas from overseas. During the conference can you chat with the ambassadors from the organization Fair Trade in Stockholm in order to get more practical shopping tips.

Inclusive events – events for every student

Students are not all alike. There are many variables that affect the everyday life of a student and these may be different for each and every student. It is our responsibility to make sure that every voice is heard and that no right is violated.

As a student organization we have to take into consideration the variety of students that participate in our activities, be that an informal gathering or an important meeting. Aspects of ethnicity, sexual orientation, disabilities, religion, class background, family situation and age have to be at clear focus of our work.

The ways to guarantee that everyone has a place in our organizations are many - some very practical, and some referring more to mental aspects and general awareness.

At the center of a successful inclusive event you find information, with correct information everyone knows the rules of the meeting. Given that information well in advance, the students themselves also have the possibility to inform you, as event coordinators, about possible obstacles.

There to it is important to remember to share informal information. Inside jokes and your organizations particular customs and jargon can all contribute to effectively estrange new members. It is important to keep in mind that your group-mentality will not include the new member until you actively make it so.

This is in many ways an awareness issue. Remember how it was when you first arrived! Tell the story behind the joke! Ask people if there is something they would like to address at the meeting!

But it is also about making practical changes. Consider where you have your meetings. Is the place accessible by wheelchair? Can everyone in the room see each other or are some of the participants placed where it is hard to be heard? When there is food served, is it adapt to the participants personal or religious believes? Is it free from the most common allergens?

With slight changes and by earnest dialogue a lot can be achieved in including all members of your organization into your events. Make yourself a check list to make sure to remember all aspects!

All in all it is about making yourself and your organization aware of the fact that we all come from different conditions and start making the changes needed, practical and mental, to broaden perspectives and fully represent the entire student body.

Master suppression techniques / domination techniques

The first female party leader in Norway; the professor and former minister Berit Ås found out that she during meetings wasn't treated in the same way as men. When she was talking, men acted in another way than if another man was talking and her suggestions weren't taken care of in the same sense as men's. Her analyze resulted in a mapping of five different methods men used in order to gain power over women, and thereby diminishing them. She called them Master suppression techniques, also known as domination techniques. Even though these techniques were a way of showing how men suppressed women, it should also be cleared out that women also uses these techniques in order to suppress other women and men, as well as men also can use them towards other men. It's also obvious that these, in a discriminative way, also can be observed between people of different backgrounds, including for example social status and ethnicity. Before describing the methods, it should also be stated that they're often used unconsciously, since they are ways of expressing prejudices and generalizations (which often are unconscious). Ås' mapping was a way of making them conscious. Through showing they exist, the work on eliminating them can start, in order to create a more including climate where everybody gets respected and listened to.

Following are descriptions of the five techniques: Making invisible, Ridiculing, Withholding of information, Double punishment and Heaping blame and putting to shame.

Making invisible

Among many different ways of making another person invisible, are to whisper, look through papers and similar ways of showing lack of interest while someone is speaking. Other ways of neglecting people are to totally ignore someone's contribution and to repeat what someone just said without referring to that person or showing the suggestion really came from someone else, and then taking all the credit. Another way is when a chairperson at a meeting "forgets" about suggestions, or when a question at a meeting gets left unanswered.

Ridiculing

To make someone look ridicule can both happen behind someone's back as well as in front of a person. To make fun of proposals or to diminishing people by saying "don't you have any humour?" are other ways of ridiculing as well as to reduce someone to being sexual object, or less important because (s)he is "only a student", rather than an intellectual person.

Withholding of Information

To being able to participate in a decision, it's really important that everybody gets access to the same information. Ways of withholding information can be when a group of people already before the actual decision-making have decided together upon what to vote for, as well as not making sure that everybody understands a specific decision or what's going on. Formal and informal pre-meetings, where everybody involved in the decision-making isn't invited, are other examples. People without the right contacts or possibility to join are then left far behind. In Swedish this is referred to as sauna-meetings; a physical place where not everybody's included merely depending upon their sex. As politics are about building alliances, this is a difficult technique to tackle. Though, this shouldn't be an argument in order for the withholding to continue.

Double punishment - damn if you don't and damned if you do

Whatever you do is wrong! For example if you're quiet during a meeting, you're seen as not interested in what's going on, and if you're talkative you're seen as taking over. If women don't grab power they're portrayed as wimps, but when they grab power they're regarded as not feminine. Men can also be accused for not participating in working on increased gender equality, and if they do they're ridiculed as not knowing enough by female members.

Heaping blame and putting to shame

When saying to someone that they have to blame themselves for something that has happened, this person obviously gets diminished. For example telling a rape victim that it was her own fault by wearing provocative clothes or acting in a certain way is an extreme way of explaining the technique. This works in other areas as well; sexual harassments towards a woman can as well be seen as her own fault, since she's so pretty. Not to take someone for serious by judging of the clothes is another way of expressing this technique.

18th European Students' Convention

Stockholm, 16th-18th of October, 2009

THURSDAY 15TH OF OCTOBER

Arrival of participants

16:00-19:00 Access Africa student focus group meeting, ESU and EUA.

(This meeting takes place in SFS' office in Central Stockholm)

FRIDAY 16TH OF OCTOBER

10:00-10:45 Opening Session: Welcome Speeches

- Chair: Andrea Blaettler, ESU's Executive Committee
- Ingela Josefson, Rector of Södertörn University College
- Klas-Herman Lundgren, Chairperson of SFS
- Ligia Deca, Chairperson of ESU

10:45-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-13:00 Panel: Social dimension, a reality check

- Chair: Allan Päll, ESU's Vice-Chairperson
- Michael Cooper, European Access Network
- Martin Unger, Eurostudent
- Inge Gielis, ESU's Social Affairs Committee

As students, we often complain about the social dimension: tuition fees and students debt are increasing, student financing is insufficient or sometimes even inexistent, students need to take on jobs that are hard to combine with studies, students can not find affordable accommodation, etc. For some, the barriers to studying are so high that they have to drop out or don't even access higher education at all. The European ministers of Higher Education have repeatedly made commitments to improve the social dimension. But the actions have not been as visible as the commitments and promises made. In this panel, it is time to get a reality check. What is the situation at the moment? Time to listen to the experts.

13:00-15:00 Lunch

15:00-16:30 Workshop Session

- WS1 – Lifelong learning and the social challenge
- WS2 – Student support services
- WS3 – Social standards in quality assurance
- WS4 – Influence of international processes and organisations on the social dimension
- WS5 – Student health

16:30-17:00 Coffee Break

17:00-18:15 Panel: Gender Equality, do we have a problem?

- Chair: Kristine Bak Nielsen, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- Git Claesson Pipping, President of the Swedish Association of University Teachers
- Andreas Åsander, SFS' Research Officer

In the past years, ESU has given special attention to gender equality, both internally within ESU's structures, and externally, by promoting ESU's policies and expertise on gender equality in higher education. Furthermore, one of the priorities of the Swedish Presidency of the EU is the importance of gender equality for economic growth and employment, and in November the presidency is hosting an event on gender differences in educational achievement. It is clear that gender equality is an issue that is receiving attention from many directions. Why is gender equality in the spotlight? Where, how and why does gender discrimination exist? Swedish experts on gender equality will give an overview of the main challenges in higher education, and society as a whole.

18:15-19:00 Presentation on ESU's policy paper on Lifelong Learning

- Daniela Bartolo, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- Yonatan Green, ESU's Social Affairs Committee

SATURDAY 17TH OF OCTOBER (ESU's 27th Birthday!)

10:00-11:30 Workshop Session

- WS1 – Lifelong learning and the social challenge
- WS2 – Student support services
- WS3 – Social standards in quality assurance
- WS4 – Influence of international processes and organisations on the social dimension
- WS5 – Student health

11:30-12:00 Coffee break

12:00-13:00 Panel: Student Support Services to improve the social conditions of students

- Chair: Yonatan Green, ESU's Social Affairs Committee
- Inge Gielis, ESU's Social Affairs Committee
- Jean-Paul Roumegas, ECSTA - the European Council for Student Affairs

Students do not only have academic needs, they also have basic needs like food, health care, housing, etc. Student support services that are publicly provided free of charge, or against a reasonable fee, are for many students necessary to survive on their small budget. Student support services exist all around Europe, but have different aims, different structures and a different supply. In this panel, we will look at what exists, and we will discuss how these support services can contribute to student welfare.

- 13:00-14:30 Lunch
- 14:30-16:30 Parallel sessions:
- Femnet
-Moderator: Petra Nysten, former member of ESU's Gender Equality Committee
- Male session on gender equality
-Moderator: To be confirmed
- 16:30-17:00 Coffee Break
- 17:00-17:15 Equity project presentation
- Jenny Björk, ESU's Social Affairs Committee
-Alma Joensen, ESU's Executive Committee
- 17:15-17:30 Presentation on ESU's current and future projects
- Allan Päll, ESU's Vice-Chairperson
- 17:30-18:45 National Action Plans for Social Dimension: Presentation and discussions on ESU's strategy to follow up and monitor the implementation
- Alma Joensen, ESU's Executive Committee
-Andrea Blättler, ESU's Executive Committee

SUNDAY 18TH OF OCTOBER

- 10:00-12:00 Panel: Student financing and the effects of the economic crisis
- Chair: Robert Santa, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- Aaron Porter, Vice President NUS UK
- Daniela Bartolo, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee

Insufficient student financing and rising fees have been an important issue for students. The recent crisis has put it even higher on the agenda. The economic crisis is a fact and we haven't seen all of the effects of it yet. Students in several countries have suffered severe budget cuts. What kind of effects has the economic crisis already had on students' life in Europe and what will the long-term effects be for the whole society? And how can we keep fighting for a fair funding system?

- 12:00-12:30 Coffee Break

- 12:30-13:30 Workshop session
- WS1 – Lifelong learning and the social challenge
 - WS2 – Student support services
 - WS3 – Social standards in quality assurance
 - WS4 – Influence of international processes and organisations on the social dimension
 - WS5 – Student health
- 13:30-14:30 Lunch
- 14:30-14:45 Presentation of the draft Stockholm Declaration
- ESU's Social Affairs Committee
- 14:45-15:30 Presentation of Lisbon Strategy II
- Daniela Bartolo, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
 - Robert Santa, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- 15:30-16:30 Knowledge Café - the sessions focus on the following topics:
- Student housing
 - Student financing
 - Student health
 - Gender Equality
 - Equality and Access
- 16:30-17:00 Coffee Break
- 17:00-17:30 Presentation on the main conclusions of the seminar
- Jens Jungblut, General Rapporteur of the ESC18
- 17:30-18:15 Discussions on the Stockholm Declaration
- ESU's Social Affairs Committee
- 18:15-18:30 Closing and evaluation of ESC18

Workshop descriptions

WS 1 – Lifelong Learning and the social challenge

Chairs:

- Daniela Bartolo, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- Yonatan Green, ESU's Social Affairs Committee

Lifelong learning does not only mean academic change. Student financing systems often consider students to be young and supported by the parents. Student support services are often targeted at young people. Lifelong learning requires a shift in mentality, but also structural changes to the social systems.

WS 2 – Student support services

Chairs:

- Inge Gielis, ESU's Social Affairs Committee
- Regina Weber, ESU alumni

Student support services can help break down barriers to education and increase student wellbeing. Across Europe, students have access to some kind of support services. However, the type of services differs. The structures are different. This workshop will look at the needs of students and the various types of provision of student support services.

WS 3 – Social standards in quality assurance

Chairs:

- Kristine Bak Nielsen, ESU's Academic Affairs Committee
- Andreas Kvist Bacher, member of ESU's pool of Quality Assurance experts
- Rahel Imobersteg, member of ESU's pool of Quality Assurance experts

Quality assurance is not only necessary for uphold the quality of education, it is also useful for the social aspects of studying. In some countries, the QA procedures in higher education also include social standards. This workshop will look at how QA can be applied to the social dimension of studying and designing social standards.

WS 4 – Influence of international processes and organisations on the social dimension

Chairs:

- Ligia Deca, ESU's Chairperson
- Andrea Blättler, ESU's Executive Committee

National higher education policy is increasingly influenced by international processes and organisations, like the Bologna Process, the Lisbon Strategy, GATS, EU policy, OECD, Unesco etc. These can have a negative effect on equity, but they can also have a positive impact and serve as a lobby tool for student unions. This workshop will give an overview of some important processes and actors and their influence on the social dimension of higher education.

WS 5 – Student health

Chairs:

Jenny Björk, ESU's Social Affairs Committee

David Troxler, ESU's Committee of Internal Development

Being healthy and feeling healthy is very important in our lives for us to be able to study and work. What kind of support do students need when it comes to their own health? Who has access to health care and who has not? There can exist inequalities on several levels and there is a need for approaching and discussing the question of health from a broad view meaning physical, mental, sexual and social health. Student health and student health care as a relatively new topic in ESU and this workshop is a starting point for discussion. The workshop will find out what the student unions' role in the discussion of students' health and health care are for the moment - what is being done and what could we do. The workshop will also discuss what the ideal system would look like in the eyes of European students.

Speakers

Andreas Åsander, Profession: Research officer at The Swedish national union of students (SFS).

Educational background: Master in political science with focus on gender, bachelor in philosophy and gender studies. Andreas Åsander has been working with equality between men and women for the last eight years. As a student he was a member of the Equal opportunities committee at Södertörn University. On the behalf of the committee he did two researches on to what extent a gender equality perspective is part of the teaching at Södertörn University. As a student he started a students' association with focus on men and equality issues between men and women, together with five fellow male students at Södertörns University. Today Andreas purse equality, and discrimination issues for SFS. He is also a member of the national organization "Men for Gender Equality"

Git Claesson Pipping, Associate professor of Gender studies, General Secretary of the Swedish University Teachers Association (SULF). In the past I have worked as a teacher in several universities and colleges. When I left my teaching career I was dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Studies at Södertörn. My research, though varied, has always in some way related to gender, genres and preconceptions of meanings. My third book, written in collaboration with a historian on the celebrations of Nobel Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf will be published later this year. As a PhD-student and a teacher I have always worked actively for equal opportunities in all aspects of academia.

Martin Unger studied sociology at the University of Vienna and did a postgraduate programme in sociology at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna. Since 1998, he works as a researcher at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, mainly in the field of higher education. He works on the social dimension of students since about 15 years and contributes to EUROSTUDENT since then. From 2005 to 2007, he was Austrian delegate to the Bologna working group on social dimension and mobility of staff and students.

EUROSTUDENT is a joint international project about the social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. Participating countries survey their students based on an international core questionnaire. EUROSTUDENT III report has been published in September 2008 (http://www.eurostudent.eu/download/Eurostudent3_Final) and provides comparative data from 23 countries. About 30 countries participate already in the current round. The next report will be released in 2011.

Jean-Paul Rougemas is Secretary-General of ECStA, the European Council for Student Affairs. ECStA is an independent and autonomous umbrella organization aiming to promote the social infrastructure at all higher education institutions of Europe. ECStA is in particular promoting the cooperation between organizations responsible for this sector within Europe aiming to increase the understanding of the differences regarding the social infrastructure of higher education. Roumegas is also Deputy Director of CNOUS (Centre national des œuvres universitaires et scolaires, the French organisation of student services), in-charge of International Affairs.

www.ecsta.org

Michael Cooper is Executive Director of the European Access Network. The European Access Network encourages wider access to higher education for those who are currently under-represented, whether for reasons of gender, ethnic origin, nationality, age, disability, family background, vocational training, geographic location, or earlier educational disadvantage. The EAN is the only European-wide, non-governmental organisation for widening participation in higher education. Cooper is based in Karlstad, Sweden.

<http://www.ean-edu.org>

Aaron Porter is Vice President of the National Union of Students of the UK, responsible for Higher Education. NUS is a confederation of 600 students' unions, amounting to more than 95 per cent of all higher and further education unions in the UK. Through their member students' unions, they represent the interests of more than seven million students. Recently, NUS has launched a Blueprint for an alternative higher education funding system, as part of its Funding Our Future campaign.

<http://www.nus.org.uk>

Petra Nysten is a former member of ESU's Gender Equality Committee. Before she was elected to ESU she was the chairperson of SAMOK, one of the two national unions of students in Finland. In addition to having her own translation company QRISP, Nysten also works for a consulting company, Ekvalita, specialised on gender equality and diversity issues. Ekvalita has worked with educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, political organisations as well as the public sector. Nysten wrote her Master's thesis on the topic of "The Invisible Majority", a case study on who was seen and heard at formal meetings in ESU.

Social dimension in the Bologna Process

Background

In 1999 several European education ministers decided in Bologna to work together in higher education. Their aim was to create a European higher education area (EHEA) by 2010. The ministers agreed on concrete action lines they would work on in the coming months. They agreed to meet each other every two years. The Bologna Follow-Up Group and the secretariat coordinate the process in between. More info can be found on the website of the secretariat. One of the action lines, that is of major importance for students, is the social dimension. This briefing note will provide you with more information about the social dimension.

Definition

The ministers defined the social dimension as followed:

« the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations. »

This means that the ministers commit themselves to the goal of participative equity. HE should truly reflect society so all target groups participate in HE to the same extent as their share in the population.

Short history

At the start of the process, in Bologna 1999, the social dimension was missing. It is only in Prague 2001, when students got involved and asked ministers to pay attention to the social dimension, that it became part of the process. In Prague, the ministers stressed the importance:

« Ministers affirmed that students should participate in and influence the organization and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions. Ministers also re-affirmed the need, recalled by students, to take account of the social dimension in the Bologna process. »

It was only in Bergen in 2005 that the ministers stated that the social dimension would become an integral part of the Bologna Process. A social dimension working group was set up. They concluded that considerable differences exist in relation to the social dimension of higher education between the countries and that it would not be appropriate to narrowly define the social dimension or to suggest a number of detailed actions for all countries to implement. Every country had to develop its own strategy, including an action plan. To help countries with devising national strategies on the social dimension and to facilitate the necessary national debates, the working group proposed a structure and topics for such a debate.

London 2007

The ministers of education gathered in 2007 in London and there they made the following commitment in the communiqué:

« Higher education should play a strong role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. Policy should

therefore aim to maximise the potential of individuals in terms of their personal development and their contribution to a sustainable and democratic knowledge-based society. We share the societal aspiration that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations. We reaffirm the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background. We therefore continue our efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity. »

In order to reach this aim, they promised:

« Similarly, we will report on our national strategies and policies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to evaluate their effectiveness. We will invite all stakeholders to participate in, and support this work, at the national level. »

And they asked for data:

« We recognise the need to improve the availability of data on both mobility and the social dimension across all the countries participating in the Bologna Process. We therefore ask the European Commission (Eurostat), in conjunction with Eurostudent, to develop comparable and reliable indicators and data to measure progress towards the overall objective for the social dimension and student and staff mobility in all Bologna countries. Data in this field should cover participative equity in higher education as well as employability for graduates. This task should be carried out in conjunction with BFUG and a report should be submitted to our 2009 Ministerial conference. »

And they promised to report on their efforts:

« We ask BFUG to continue the stocktaking process, based on national reports, in time for our 2009 Ministerial conference. We expect further development of the qualitative analysis in stocktaking, particularly in relation to mobility, the Bologna Process in a global context and the social dimension. The fields covered by stocktaking should continue to include the degree system and employability of graduates, recognition of degrees and study periods and implementation of all aspects of quality assurance in line with the ESG. With a view to the development of more student-centred, outcome-based learning, the next exercise should also address in an integrated way national qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credits, lifelong learning, and the recognition of prior learning. »

But what really happened between London and Leuven?

Data collection

In London, the ministers asked for data. Eurostat and Eurostudent wrote a report on the social dimension and mobility. It contains very interesting data and it was be distributed at the ministerial summit. Inge Gielis participated on behalf of ESU in the data collection working group, that gave input to Eurostat and Eurostudent.

Social dimension coordination group

This CG was involved in designing the templates for the reporting on the social dimension, the drafting of the report of the national action plans and the organisation of the seminar. Alma Joensen participated on behalf of ESU in the CG.

Bologna seminar

Originally, two seminars were planned on the topic. After a few months, one was cancelled and so only one seminar took place. It was organised in Budapest (Hungary) in november 2008 and it was titled "Equality in a knowledge based society - How to widen opportunities?". ESU was involved in both all the workshops and in the drafting of the report. It was well organised but the content was rather general.

National reports and strategies

Every country had to write a report on the current situation, and an action plan for the future. These had to be sent to the BFUG by november. A report was drafted, analysing the national strategies. Many countries had rather disappointing strategies, stating that they had no under-represented groups in their country, just listing existing initiatives, or general aims but no plans on how to make it concrete. The big exeption is Ireland, that has an action plan with measurable targets.

Bologna With Student Eyes

In the latest edition of ESU's BWSE, a chapter on the social dimension is included. All ESU members were invited to fill out a survey but not all members filled it in.

Leuven/Louvain-LA-Neuve 2009

In the latest communiqué, under the header 'priorities for the decade to come', we read:

« 9. The student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations. We therefore emphasize the social characteristics of higher education and aim to provide equal opportunities to quality education. Access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies. This involves improving the learning environment, removing all barriers to study, and creating the appropriate economic conditions for students to be able to benefit from the study opportunities at all levels. Each participating country will set measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, to be reached by the end of the next decade. Efforts to achieve equity in higher education should be complemented by actions in other parts of the educational system. »

Important to highlight are the folowing parts:

“This involves improving the learning environment, removing all barriers to study, and creating the appropriate economic conditions for students to be able to benefit from the study opportunities at all levels.”

--> This should be usefull for national level as ministers should stick to this.

Each participating country will set measurable targets for widening overall participation and increasing participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, to be reached by the end of the next decade.

--> This is a clear commitment that looks promising. However, a lot will depend on the discussions in the BFUG. And as stated before, some countries already stated that there are no under-represented groups in their country. Further in the communiqué we read:

« In particular the BFUG is asked: To define the indicators used for measuring and monitoring mobility and the social dimension in conjunction with the data collection; «

Also in other part of the communiqué, we find relevant parts:

Mobility: « Flexible study paths and active information policies, full recognition of study achievements, study support and the full portability of grants and loans are necessary requirements. » and « we aim for an improved participation rate from diverse student groups.

Data collection: « Improved and enhanced data collection will help monitor progress made in the attainment of the objectives set out in the social dimension, employability and mobility agendas, as well as in other policy areas, and will serve as a basis for both stocktaking and benchmarking.» and: « Eurostat together with Eurostudent and in cooperation with Eurydice will be asked to contribute through relevant data collection. »

Funding: « Higher education institutions have gained greater autonomy along with rapidly growing expectations to be responsive to societal needs and to be accountable. Within a framework of public responsibility we confirm that public funding remains the main priority to guarantee equitable access and further sustainable development of autonomous higher education institutions. Greater attention should be paid to seeking new and diversified funding sources and methods. »

ESU policy

During BM 55 in Bulgaria, the ESU members adopted a policy paper on the future of the Bologna Process. This is what was adopted on the social dimension.

Context:

ESU believes the Social Dimension of higher education to be the fundamental cornerstone of the entire reform agenda. ESU promotes the democratisation of higher education, so that everyone will be able to access and succeed regardless of their background. ESU states that all discrimination is equally objectionable. ESU considers education to be the main instrument for emancipation instead of embedding the existing inequalities present in our society.

The overall goal “*that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels should reflect the diversity of our populations*” (London Communiqué of May 2007) must be the guiding element for defining future objectives and must be the indicator for monitoring the effects and the success of the reforms introduced.

Praise:

Through the Bergen and London Communiqués, ministers (as a result of efforts by students and other stakeholders) reaffirmed the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background and promised to continue their efforts to provide adequate student services, create more flexible learning pathways into and within higher education, and to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunities. They would also report on their national strategies and action plans and invite stakeholders to participate fully. Finally, the ministers asked for the development of comparable and reliable indicators and data to measure progress towards the overall objective of the social dimension.

The Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) has asked for National Action Plans on the social dimension, and ESU believes that the mapping of the current situation can now take place. This could move the work of this action line forward, even if there are no common objectives to achieve, but only if ministers don't stop at the planning stage.

ESU supports the definition given to the social dimension in London and believes that governments should strive for participative equity in higher education.

Criticism:

The promises made by the ministers have been violated in many countries. Education funding and financial support for students has become the biggest area of concern for our member unions. Across the EHEA, we see tuition fees being introduced or where they exist already, raised in value. Furthermore there are constant calls for a marketisation of education to substitute for absent public funding for institutions. These moves are contradictory to the ministers' intentions of "*students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background.*" (London Communiqué of May 2007).

The fear of debt and student hardship is a huge deterrent to entering higher education, especially for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Yet despite exactly this group being targeted in the 2005 Bergen Communiqué text on the social dimension, we continue to see little progress towards suitable student financial support systems. Despite the importance being given to the social dimension, their commitments remain vague. Ministers should, for the coming years, commit to lowering study costs and providing adequate support to students through sufficient student financing and student service systems.

There remain many barriers to education, including admission policies based solely on prior academic achievement and extra-curricular activity; inaccessible curricula, materials and estates and a lack of appropriate information available to first generation students. Yet so far the social dimension action line has failed to stimulate a debate on how the EHEA can work to remove these barriers after 2010. Please refer to ESU's policy paper, *A Social Dimension to Higher Education*.¹ The next ministerial communiqués should agree on concrete measures to take progress on the social dimension action line.

Proposals:

A target to increase participation across the EHEA by 2020 should be established in the Bologna Process, but must be implemented in a balanced way that ensures participative equity and fully

accessible higher education, so that the expansion of higher education is accompanied by the real democratisation of HE participation.

This aspiration must be recognised as a benefit to society, not just the individual, and therefore be publicly financed.

Comparable data on support provisions such as living conditions, guidance, counselling, financial support and the socio-economic background of students must be independently collected from all Bologna signatories and used to map the progress of this action line and to spread best practice.

Working towards generous, accessible and parent-independent system of grants that supports the student as a learner, meaning covering all costs of living and learning, should be committed to by ministers.

Tuition fees must be abolished. Where tuition fees exist, they should be debated. Also measures should be taken to compensate for the burden of tuition fees on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, through grants, sliding scales of repayment, bursaries etc. Furthermore, studies on the impact of the introduction of tuition fees should be undertaken.

Bologna events should be a platform to debate initiatives to remove barriers to higher education and ministers must commit to giving the social dimension the same amount of attention as is given to the other action lines.

The United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which states that “Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, [...], in particular by the progressive introduction of free education”, should be respected by all Bologna countries.

Study costs should be monitored regularly and student financing should be based on covering all costs of living and learning. Student financing must be adapted to the outcomes of this.

Student services should be subsidised sufficiently to provide student housing, transportation discounts, healthy food provisions, sport facilities, medical care, discounts for cultural activities, etc. Student services must be accessible to all students, including international students. These services must pay special attention to making studying and student life accessible for disabled students.

Anti-discrimination legislation covering higher education must be set up so that all kinds of discrimination can be fought.

The ministries must deliver on their National Action Plans.

Further reading:

ESU Policy paper: Towards 2020 - A Student-Centred Bologna Process: <http://www.esib.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/462-towards-2020-a-student-centred-bologna-process>

ESU Policy paper: A social dimension to higher education: <http://www.esib.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/296-pp-soc-dim>

Bologna With Student Eyes 2009: http://www.esib.org/documents/publications/official_publications/BWSE2009-final.pdf

Eurostudent: <http://www.eurostudent.eu/>

Conclusions and information about the Budapest seminar on social dimension: <http://www.okm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=2177>

Lisbon strategy and equity

In 2000 the European Union, through the Lisbon strategy, were setting the aims of becoming *'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'*. In the centre of this strategy, is the reformation of the Higher Education area, by encouraging and shaping changes in the legislation in order to give higher education institutions the conditions to fully achieve *'excellence'* in education and attract the most talented students and researchers. This is done by creating change in the access policy to Higher Education Institutions and fostering increased competition between Higher Education Institutions and students. The Lisbon strategy thus focuses on limited amount of economically rewarding aspects of Higher Education instead of overall improving Higher Education. An approach ESU fundamentally opposes. Furthermore, the Lisbon strategy is aiming to reach growth and improvement of the quality through competition. ESU is concerned about these developments and believes that a open knowledge-based society will not be established with this concept of excellence. Therefore ESU reaffirms the core principles that have to be respected in any reform related to the improvement of the quality of Higher Education.

ESU policy paper on Excellence:

<http://esu-online.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/333-policy-paper-qexcellenceq>

Policy on the European level in the Lisbon Strategy

Although the EU has a very comprehensive policy on equality and non-discrimination, the Lisbon Strategy's education agenda grossly defines equality as increasing access to European education and training systems.

The report of the European Commission *»Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training, indicators and benchmarks 2007«* explains the importance of equity in the Lisbon Strategy from the very beginning:

When launching the Lisbon strategy in 2000, the Heads of State agreed that the target that by 2010 the European Union should become *»the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs«* has to be accompanied by *»greater social cohesion«*. In the field of education and training, the Lisbon agenda was put into action in the *»Education and Training 2010«* programme containing three broad strategic objectives, of which the second directly concerned equity in education and training, stressing the need to facilitate access. (European Commission 2007b: 23)

This overarching goal of facilitating access to education and training systems was set by the Stockholm European Council in 2001, and later elaborated in the Detailed Work Programme (European Council 2002). It encompasses objectives of creating an open learning environment, making learning more attractive and supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion.

As stated in the report from the Lisbon mid-term evaluation, *»lifelong learning is not a luxury, it is a necessity.«* (High Level Group 2004: 33) A commission staff working paper of 2005 explains it even more:

“current demographic trends imply that Europe will not be able to rely solely on well-educated younger generations to replace older workers – rather, it is imperative to boost the labour-market participation of older people, women, migrants and minority groups, to raise overall employment levels.” (European Commission 2005b: 67)

The EU acknowledges that education and training systems can have a significant positive impact on the social and economic structure of a society, including sustainable development and social cohesion: Inequities in education cause huge hidden costs, which include tax losses, increased demand for health-care and public assistance, as well as higher rates of crime and delinquency (European Commission 2006c: 3). However, as the quotes from the EU Commission show, social cohesion in the Lisbon Strategy is largely perceived as a means of increasing employment, economic growth and competitiveness. This was even more evident after the Lisbon-relaunch in 2005. The goal of social cohesion was dropped from the main slogan in order to *»re-focus priorities on growth and employment.«* (European Council 2005: 4)

Equity and efficiency

After being confronted with critical voices, who fear that the strive for efficiency in education systems would overrule the idea of equality, the EU published a Communication on *“Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems”* (2006). It attempts to demonstrate how the integration of the principles of equity and efficiency at all levels of the education and training systems will guarantee access for everyone, particularly the most disadvantaged.

»Equity« is interpreted as the *»extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training, in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes«* (European Commission 2006c: 2). Equitable systems should

ensure that the outcomes of education and training systems are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage and that treatment reflects individual’s specific learning needs. (ibid: 2)

The need to improve accessibility of higher education systems for all individuals regardless of their background is perceived as important in order to maximize the positive impact on economic and social outcomes of education. Combining the concepts of equity and efficiency is presented as the answer to economic and social challenges, such as an ageing population and migration flows in Europe, the development of ICT, as well as emerging industrialized and highly competitive economies

Lisbon With Student Eyes publication:

<http://www.esu-online.org/index.php/Publications/official-publications>

Improving the Quality of Higher education

Improving the quality of higher education is a continuing process, which should take place in cooperation between all stakeholders in Higher Education including students. Students experience education on a daily basis and are thus an important source for the improvement of the quality of their education. Quality assurance agencies are showing us if the minimal requirements for higher educations are achieved, but this should be seen as a minimal requirement rather than the desired aim. In addition, a quality assurance system should guarantee the minimal requirements, as they are the basis to improve the quality of all higher education. ESU acknowledges that students partici-

pate in Higher Education for different reasons and thus have different expectations and needs. This should be reflected in a more inter- and multidisciplinary approach to education, and an opportunity for students to obtain skills, competences and knowledge in the fields that fit their own purpose. Every student should have the possibility to follow their own ambition within the HE system.

There is strong evidence that student's educational attainment is strongly influenced by their cultural and socio-economic background. Thus advocating selection procedures which are supposed to concentrate resources on the more talented students is in itself a policy which opposes the principal of social mobility and a decrease of equity in higher education. Moreover, considering that students peers are a major source of learning, and a way to improve equality in higher education, separating different levels of perceived talents must be avoided. School and higher education systems which are separating students with 'supposedly' different level of abilities are, in fact, leading to a lack of flexibility and to students from lower socio-economic background getting in the lower levels courses. Rather, each student should be able to enjoy individual attention, respect and guidance from their teachers in a diversified context. In this light, ESU is against the development of so-called 'elite' programmes and excellence centres, which focus on a small number of individuals and institutions that are considered talents or of high quality.

Core principles:

ESU stresses all Higher Education Institutions have to be of high quality developed through inclusion of all internal stakeholders in a continuing process.

Higher Educations should give students the possibilities to create their own learning path which should match their own needs and purposes

Every student should have the possibility to completely exploit their own intellectual potential without being limited by restrictive learning programs

ESU is against any educational system which separates different levels of perceived talents within Higher Education.

ESU policy paper on Excellence:

<http://esu-online.org/index.php/documents/policy-papers/333-policy-paper-qexcellenceq>

Social Standards in Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Higher education has to be of high quality and accessible for all as higher education without quality is useless and high quality higher education without access is worthless. The social dimension and quality of higher education cannot be separated in the student perspective. ESU has decided to develop a catalogue of social standards in quality assurance and accreditation to direct the focus of the higher education institutions to the quality they offer the individual student regardless of social background.

ESU defines quality assurance as "*(...) an ongoing process that ensures the delivery of agreed standards. These agreed standards should make sure every educational institution, of which the quality is assured, has the potential ability to achieve a high quality of content*".

There is a social aspect of quality in higher education. The quality of teaching and learning is constantly affected by the composition of the student body and the study conditions of the students. The higher education institution therefore has a responsibility to take the social dimension into account when designing study programmes, ensuring student participation in governance of higher education, performing evaluations that involves all aspects and does not limit any students from giving feedback. It is not simple to make generic standards on the social aspects however as the mission of the higher education institutions differs along with the general student conditions in the country or region.

Social standards in quality assurance has to be fit for purpose like all other aspects in quality assurance processes. There is a high degree of diversity within the European Higher Education Area on national as well as institutional level and this must be taken into consideration when deciding on social standards.

Gender Mainstreaming: The Found solution?

Education is identified as the main source of knowledge, skills and self-confidence which empowers people to fully participate in any development process, be it personal or professional. It is the key to investing in yourself and seizing any opportunity that come your way.

Reality shows that equal participation of women and men is still pie in the sky. Whether we like it or not, the distribution of power between men and women is still largely unequal, resulting in an unequal access to the resources and benefits provided by Higher Education. This appears to be a direct result of society's prejudicial behaviour towards the genders and also a result of the old structures of the Higher Education system.

A gender equal environment in Higher Education that guarantees impartial and identical openings for both men and women has long been championed by ESU. ESU strongly appeals to all stakeholders in the Higher Education process to raise awareness about the structural discrimination in society, and for their own selves to open their eyes to their own behaviour, when it is discriminatory.

Closing the gender gap and paving the way to wider access to Higher Education is a development priority on all levels as a force for social and economic development. Tackling the matter at grassroots level requires a change in culture and an overhaul to the way we think. Students themselves have a main role to play by actively responding to their desires and turn a blind eye to outdated gender stereotypes, which may force them into jobs that do not fulfill their dreams.

But what is Gender Mainstreaming all about? Is it yet another misleading concept, or does it really have potential to ameliorate the state of affairs? Gender Mainstreaming has been described as a strategy that ensures that attention to gender perspectives is an integral part of interventions in all areas of societal development, and this equally applies to Higher Education structures. As outlined by the United Nations, gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality must be central to all activities, ranging from policy development and research projects to legislation. In addressing the inequality between men and women, governments and other stakeholders should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective so that an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, before it is too late.

Through its policies, ESU has drawn up a concrete strategy which sheds light on there being a possibility of closing the gap. A comprehensive analysis of the current situation will help identify gender inequalities present in the different aspects of Higher Education, and compiling such results will help monitor progress made in the area as well as diagnose the pitfalls. Specific and well-defined responsibilities for the execution of the Gender Mainstreaming strategy will lead to a desired result, especially if transparent decision making procedures are clearly laid out, ruling out any ambiguities. Undoubtedly, financial measures have to be taken in executing the strategy, assuring that implementation at grassroots level is carried out and a follow-up process by chosen experts will take place. Needless to say, an inclusive, participatory approach (including students) and ensuring a gender-balanced panel of experts while developing and implementing the strategy will only make it a more sound process.

Gender equality is taken for granted by many, even by students themselves. Raising awareness is therefore a crucial underlying factor in any Gender Mainstreaming strategy. Moreover, ensuring ways of achieving gender requirements, successfully identifying differences in gender roles, activities and opportunities in any activities or projects undertaken, will harness the power of marginal-

ized groups to affect change and increased productivity through increased participation. Incorporating the differing roles and needs of women and men will also contribute towards a more inclusive and sustainable environment in Higher Education.

The reality is that whilst gender disparities have the largest impacts on women and girls, gender inequalities affect all people. Sustainable gains in social development in all aspects of living can only be possible when women and men are full and equal participants in society.

Equity Glossary

Adverse (harmful) impact

This signifies a significant difference in patterns of representation or outcomes between groups or individuals, with the difference amounting to a loss for one or more groups or individual.

Affirmative or positive action (sometimes also called positive discrimination)

Affirmative action is a means to achieve equality by a program of proactive measures, addressing a specific inequality experienced by individuals or groups in society, in a particular setting and an enforceable way. Specific actions are taken for the purpose of eliminating the present effects of past discrimination, or to prevent discrimination.

Treating a person less favourably, or more favourably, than others, on grounds that are not justifiable, such as race, gender, disability or other status. See also discrimination and positive action.

Anti-discrimination

Refers to an approach that is taken which challenges unfair treatment of individuals or groups based on a specific characteristic of that group, e.g. colour, age, disability etc.

Autonomy

Autonomy is the right to identify, organise and take ownership of information, decision making and social, political and cultural activity.

Assimilationist approach to gender equity

This relates to the emphasis on attaining the formal access of women to organisations, including higher education institutions. It implies that individual women need to adjust to prevailing conditions and social relations within the academy, which are regarded as fixed and unchanging. This has the effect of maintaining the status quo and the dominance of patriarchal practices.² See also Transformative approach to gender equity.

Disability

A physical or mental impairment which could have a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Discrimination – intentional/unintentional

Discrimination can be defined as treating people differently or less favourably, for any given reason.

Discrimination is every legal or factual, direct or indirect differentiation and unequal conduct (giving privileges, excluding, imposing limitations) based on race, skin colour, social, national and ethnic background, descent, birth, language, class, religious or political beliefs, sex/gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status or any other basis; with the aim of or resulting in deprivation or limitation of human rights and freedoms.

Discrimination is intentional to the extent to which the person doing it consciously or knowingly or deliberately acts in a discriminatory way. What makes a person's or an organization's discrimination intentional is that they decide on the basis of an illegitimate attitude towards a group and is conscious of singling a person out for negative treatment because of his or her membership in a certain group. Discrimination which is not intentional is unintentional.

Discrimination is institutionalized if it is part of the systematic routine of an organization (such as a government, corporation, university, church, or club). Much discrimination in today's society, however, is institutionalized but not intentional, at least not in any obvious way. Discrimination which is not institutionalized is by definition isolated. Examples:

Example 1: A clothing store had two departments, one that served male customers, another that served female customers. Women sales people could not work in the men's department, and vice versa. Women sales people were paid less than male sales people on the ground that the men's clothing was of higher quality and the profit margin was higher. Women were prevented from selling in the men's department because, it was alleged, male customers would rather deal with male salespersons than women salespersons.

Example 2: Another way in which unintentional discrimination occurs is when hiring decisions reflect pre-existing personal contacts. Suppose the boss asks his employees, who happen to be all white, to recommend a young person they know who seems reliable and trustworthy for an entry-level opening in the firm. The employees, without intending to discriminate, may find such a young job candidate among their white neighbours in their mostly white neighbourhoods or among the members of their virtually white churches. [...] Thus the names of the individuals given to the boss as candidates for the entry-level positions turn out to be all white, even if no consciously racist thought crosses anybody's mind.

Discrimination – direct (overt)/indirect (covert)

Direct (overt) discrimination

Direct discrimination is less favourable treatment on grounds of race or ethnic origin, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or religion or belief. For example harassment is a form of direct discrimination.

Indirect (covert) discrimination

This is treatment that appears to be fair and is applied to everybody equally, but has an unjustifiable adverse impact upon a particular group or person, with particular characteristics, attributes or circumstances. Indirect discrimination can also be a provision or practice that everyone has to conform to, but which some groups cannot meet so easily. See for instance example 2 above.

Discriminatory Incident

An incident of discrimination is any incident which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person.

Diversity

Diversity literally means “variety”. Valuing diversity means valuing people and recognizing that everyone is unique/different but of equal worth. Diversity is a desirable characteristic in any community, whether a working environment, classroom, or an organisation. Diversity – whether in terms of ethnicity, political affiliation, religious conviction, etc - allows for a greater variety of approaches to solving common problems. Stakeholders have a responsibility to create the conditions necessary for fostering diverse communities.

Empowerment

Process of gaining control over the self, over ideology and the resources which determine power. The process of gaining access and developing one’s capacities with a view to participating actively in shaping one’s own life and that of one’s community in economic, social and political terms.

Equality (synonyms parity, equal opportunity, fairness, impartiality)

Equality signifies the state of being equal. In an education context, this concept might offer students equal access and rights but might not take into consideration the additional steps required in order to enable better equality of outcome.⁷ Equality can be defined as parity (correspondence) of esteem, and access to opportunity, regardless of individual differences. It is the aspect of social justice that pertains to strict equality with regard to the application of the law and other procedures. In this respect, any differentiation on the grounds of sex, class, creed, etc would be regarded as unjust. See also Equity.

Equality of Opportunity

This means treating people fairly without bias or discrimination. Everyone should be entitled to the same opportunities regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion/belief, disability, age, personal circumstances or any other basis. A descriptive term for an approach intended to give equal access to an environment or benefits or equal treatment for all. For example, access to education, employment, health care or social welfare to members of various social groups, some of which might otherwise suffer from discrimination.

Equity (synonyms fairness, impartiality, justice)

Equity is the quality of being impartial or fair. For treatment to be fair, issues of diversity need to be taken into account so that the different needs and requirements of individuals are met. An equitable approach in education is one that identifies and takes account of difference in fairly distributing time and resources, and impartially assessing outcomes. In equitable terms educational achievement should be an inclusive rather than an exclusive goal.⁹ Equity is an aspect of social justice which pertains to the recognition and redressing of discrimination, for example, through the mechanism of affirmative action. This is based on the principle of recognising that unequal power relations and obstacles to the advancement of marginalized groups embedded in social relations preclude the achievement of social justice. For this reason, the attainment of formal equality before the law is insufficient. Special measures to advance marginalized groups and to transform social practices are therefore preconditions for the attainment of social justice. See also Equality.

Equity of Access

The ultimate goal of attempts to widen access or to utilize affirmative action tools.

Family responsibilities

Family responsibilities cover the care of and support for dependent children and other members of the immediate family who need help. National policies should aim at creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for female and male workers, and for workers without family responsibilities (...) they should be free from restrictions based on family responsibilities when preparing for and entering, participating in or advancing in economic activity.

Gender

Gender as a term refers to socially/culturally constructed (not innate) differences or characteristics and relationship between men and women and the attributes, behaviour and activities each is expected to adhere to. The meaning of 'gender' is distinctly different from the term 'sex', which refers to the biological sex. Gender identity depends on the circumstances in which women and men live and include economic, cultural, historical, ideological, and religious factors.

Gender relations also vary according to the economic and social conditions of the society and differ between social and ethnic groups. See also Sex.

Gender blind

Ignoring/failing to address the gender dimension (as opposed to gender sensitive or gender neutral).

Gender neutral

Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men.

Gender sensitive

Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.

Gender mainstreaming

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels.

Harassment

Unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive working environment. Harassment on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins are usually unlawful. Harassment on other grounds may involve less favourable treatment and may be unlawful direct discrimination.

Heterocentrism

Heterocentrism is the assumption that everyone is heterosexual unless otherwise indicated.

Heterosexism

Heterosexism means the individual, group, or institutional norms and behaviours that result from the assumption that all people are heterosexual. This system of oppression, which assumes that heterosexuality is inherently normal and superior, negates LGBT peoples' lives and relationships.

Heterosexual

A person who is primarily or exclusively emotionally, romantically, sexually, affectionately, and relationally attracted to people of the "opposite" sex.

Homophobia

This is the fear and hatred of or discomfort with people who love and sexually desire members of the same sex.! Homophobic reactions often lead to intolerance, bigotry, and violence against anyone not acting within heterosexual norms.! Because most LGBT people are raised in the same society as heterosexuals, they learn the same beliefs and stereotypes prevalent in the dominant society, leading to a phenomenon known as “internalized homophobia.”

Homosexual

A person who is primarily or exclusively attracted to people of the same sex.

Implied consent

Implied consent involves dangerous assumptions, such as that someone’s body language or clothing is sufficient to sanction a sexual overture or advance. Explicit, unequivocal consent is absolutely necessary. Implied consent is no defence against a charge of sexual assault.

Indirect or covert discrimination

See Discrimination.

Inclusion

The act of including or the state of being included. This has to go beyond physical inclusion to inclusion at social, cultural and institutional levels.

Individual discrimination

Refers to the behaviour of individual members of one race/ethnic/gender or other group that is intended to have a differential and/or harmful effect on the members of another group. See Discrimination.

Institutional Discrimination

A case where discrimination is carried out by the behaviour of individuals who control the institutions and implement policies that are intended to have a differential and/or harmful effect on minority race/ethnic/gender/or other groups. See Discrimination.

LGBT - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

LGBT is used as an acronym for referring collectively to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender.

The acronym is an adaptation of the acronym LGB, also used in ESIB. Also GLBT is extensively used in the United States and commonly in Australia. Some variants to this also exists, like adding a Q for queer, an A for asexual, an I for intersex, or a P for pansexual or polyamorous.

Liberation

Liberation is freedom from discrimination and oppression for all members of society, the right to be different but equal, both in law and social values.

Mainstreaming

Introducing a certain aspect of analysis (gender, minorities, human rights etc) into all possible programming, planning and policy making.

Mainstreaming (Transforming) Equality (EU Context).

This refers to the long term strategy of the European Union to integrate gender equality into systems, structures, institutions, programmes, policies and practices. It is intended to transform higher education by tackling deeply rooted organizational cultures and practices within which inequalities are embedded. It calls for being able to see the ways in which current practices are gendered.

Monitoring

Monitoring is a process that involves collecting, storing, analysing and evaluating information, to measure performance, progress or change. Monitoring racial equality involves collecting, storing, analysing and evaluating information about the racial groups to which people say they belong.

Occupational (job) segregation

The concentration of women and men in different types and levels of activity and employment, with women being confined to a narrower range of occupations (horizontal segregation) than men, and to the lower grades of work (vertical segregation).

Oppression

Oppression is the denial of rights and limiting access and/or opportunity using the projection of power as a means to achieve this.

Positive Action

Refers to special actions to redress disadvantage. The approach is intended to create conditions more likely to result in equality of outcome than equal treatment by equalizing starting positions.¹⁹ See also affirmative action.

Positive Discrimination

Is considered a contradiction in term, see Affirmative action / Positive action.

Prejudice

Literally means “pre-judgment”, forming a view about a person in advance. For example, racial prejudice is having a negative opinion or attitude about an individual or group based solely upon their race or skin colour.

Queer

Queer is historically a negative term used against people who were perceived to be LGBT, but “queer” has more recently been reclaimed by some people as a positive term describing all those who do not conform to rigid notions of gender and sexuality. Queer is often used in a political context and in academic settings to challenge traditional ideas about identity (“queer theory”).

Some use the word queer because they consider it the single most expansive and all encompassing term to mean LGBTQ.

Rainbow

The rainbow and the rainbow colours are the “official” pride symbol for LGBT people; six colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple) represent diversity.

Racism see also Xenophobia

Racism in general terms consists of conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or origin. In its more subtle form, it is as damaging as when in its overt form.

Safe spaces

Safe spaces provide an environment free from all forms of discrimination and can empower people with the same experiences. Safe spaces act as catalysts to reclaim public space, so that in an ideal situation there would be no need for them.

Self Definition

Self definition as the power of individuals to define themselves and amongst others have the possibility to say who they are and what they stand for without being bound by other people's constraints, labels or norms.

Segregation

A segregated society is one in which members of different races or social groups rarely, if ever, come into contact with one another as equals. All aspects of daily life are separated, and contact between the races is regulated so that one race is always in a superior position to the other.

The most infamous examples are Apartheid of South Africa and the Caste system of India.

Sex

Sex refers to the biological characteristics which define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics tend to differentiate humans as males and females. See also Gender.

Sexism

Sexism is a manifestation of stereotypical attitudes towards women. Inappropriate treatment based on sex constitutes sexism. Sexism is a form of discrimination.

Sexuality

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical and religious and spiritual factors.

Sex disaggregated statistics

The collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis, sometime referred to as gender disaggregated statistics.

Sexual harassment

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work including conduct of superiors and colleagues.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are a fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong.

Structural Discrimination

This term refers to policies or practices that are discriminatory. In many cases the policies or practices might even look neutral but because of the different starting points are inherently discriminatory.

Transformative approach to gender equity

This relates to the emphasis on highlighting covert (hidden) as well as overt (obvious) obstacles to the advancement of women and thus changing social relations within organizations and society. This has the effect of challenging the prevailing patriarchal dominance in organizations and of introducing a different way of doing things - different values, practices and knowledge which might not be fully recognised and accommodated in the organization.

Transgender

Refers to those whose gender expression at least sometimes runs contrary to what others in the same culture would normally expect. Transgender is a broad term that includes transsexuals, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings, and people who do not identify as either of the two sexes as currently defined.

Widening Access

An umbrella term for the efforts of higher education institutions, governments and others to increase the participation in higher education, especially for the underrepresented groups. This includes internal and curricular reform, affirmative action, promoting the use of qualifications framework, etc.

Xenophobia see also Racism

An irrational fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers or of their politics or culture.