EUROPEAN STUDENTS’ UNION PLAN OF WORK FOR YEAR 2014

1. Strategic priority areas

A. Access and support

In the area of access and support, ESU will in 2014 focus on the following priorities and actions:

Social dimension and Lifelong learning Working group of BFUG (SD LLL WG)

- Work actively to ensure that the work in the SD LLL WG is politically relevant and as active as possible. This includes but is not limited to planning and organizing two working group meetings in Austria and Italy and actively engage in the thematic work being done between the meetings;
- Ensure that the Social Dimension is not a debated but a given area at the Ministerial conference in Yerevan;
- Work towards a clear definition and allocation of responsibility for Lifelong Learning, to be included in the Yerevan Communiqué;
- Ensure that quantifiable measurements are agreed by the ministers at the meeting in Yerevan towards promotion of, and progress in the Social Dimension across the EHEA.

Student centred learning

- Make sure that the social dimension perspective is fully integrated in the work on student centred learning policy being done on a EU level. This will include but is not limited to integrating relevant social dimension issues into ESU’s PASCL project and promoting the connection between the social dimension and SCL at relevant external events.

Underrepresented groups

- Apply for a project on students with disabilities so we can build up European best practices based on the work that has already been done in ESU member unions;
- Become a more relevant partner to organisations already working with the concerns of underrepresented groups outside of Higher Education.

Human Rights in Higher Education
• Strengthen ESU’s partnership with organisations and networks working on Human rights in higher education;
• Continue to ameliorate ESU’s referral mechanism among member unions, ESU, partners and external organisations regarding students who are being denied their Human rights.

Equality
• Continue to proactively promote gender mainstreaming in all areas of ESU’s internal and external work, becoming a role model and sectorial leader in gender equality;
• Build a strong network of allies and activists within education to promote and foster the participation of persons of an ethnic minority or migrant background in higher education. Specifically we will become active partners in the SIRIUS network of experts on the education of people with a migrant background;
• Share best practise, train, mobilise and motivate ourselves towards more effectively representing students with disabilities in all areas of higher education and higher education governance.

B. Public responsibility for education

In the area of public responsibility for education, ESU will in 2014 focus on the following priorities and actions:

Public responsibility for higher education and multiple purposes of higher education:
• Continue opening the discussion on education as a public good and public responsibility in the discussion with stakeholders on different processes;
• Build capacity of member unions on the issues of public responsibility for higher education and multiple purposes of HE, with inclusive approach through task forces;
• Build capacity of member unions on the issues of employability and multiple purposes of Higher Education, through the SAGE Handbook, Employability With Student Eyes and the EU2020 Student Review.

Financing of higher education
• Continue working on gathering and improving quality and accessibility of data on the impact of different funding systems on access and quality in higher education;
• Monitoring and evaluating the impact of the financial crisis and austerity measures on education budgets and students’ experience, influencing the debate on the European level on the importance of increasing public funds for higher education.

Governance of higher education and student participation
• Raise awareness of the importance of students as partners and advocate for the equal participation of student representatives in decision-making bodies and Higher Education processes on the national and the European level.

**European Parliament Elections 2014**

• Raise educational problems as a topic for European Parliament elections in 2014;
• Reach out to candidates running for the European Parliament elections and get them to sign ESUs manifesto built around the topic “Higher education as a public good”;
• Raising the awareness of the European Parliament elections to students in all EU countries and to encourage them to vote;
• Support the NUSes in their European Parliament election work to get the best visibility for the goals set by students;
• Create long term cooperation with the new MEPs to get support in ESU policy work and to get the students voice heard in the parliament.

**C. Quality and transparency**

**D. Mobility and internationalisation in Higher education**

In the area of mobility and internationalisation, ESU will in 2014 focus on the following priorities and actions:

• A continued emphasis on the implementation of full portability of loans and grants in all relevant platforms, such as Bologna Follow-up Group, European union processes etc.;
• Push for clear targets on increasing representativity amongst mobile students and bettering access to mobility programmes for underrepresented groups.

**Mobility treaty**

• Continue deliberations on the mobility treaty in an effort to reduce imbalanced mobility flows.

**Global cooperation**

• Define a long term strategy together with other international student organisations of how to maintain a globally organised student movement;
• Continue to build relationships with relevant actors who can provide long term funding opportunities for meetings of the global student movement.
2. Internal development

In 2014, ESU will:

- Aim to improve the working environment for its staff, this is including but not limited to a move to more professional offices;
- Continue with diversification of funding sources and establishing sound management structures for the services that ESU is and will be providing;
- Ensure more capacity for capacity building and support to member unions through the development of the Pool of Trainers;
- Continue to improve its own democratic structures, information sharing and leadership skills. This includes continuing to improve all of ESU’s handovers;
- Continue developing ways of involving the Board in the work of ESU through task forces and other voluntary structures;
- Throughout the coming year will continue to improve how it works when it comes to political strategizing. This includes updating the communication plan and having clearly defined lobby strategies in all areas where this would be beneficial;
- Aim to improve the cultural work being done in relation to the ESU board so as to increase understanding and communication between regions;
- Continue to promote and excel in the field of gender equality in all its internal and external work;
- Improve how we handle deadlines, prioritise tasks, manage stress and the working environment of elected and selected representatives.