



Preventing detrimental effects of Covid-19 pandemic for students and their rights in Slovenia

The year 2020 is marked by the global pandemic of Covid-19. In Slovenia the epidemic began on March 16, which led to a complete shutdown of public life, rendering all public institutions not crucial for survival of people closed. Students had to start attending classes online from home, they lost their right to subsidised student housing, a great portion of them lost their jobs (the decrease in student work equalled up to more than 50%). At the same time the access to the right of subsidised food was limited. Many students experienced severe social distress, many of them could not afford to pay rent or buy food. In two months the situation improved and the offer of students jobs was again on the rise. Over the summer many of the students found work again and were able to finish their student obligations.

Despite the summer bringing some optimism for students, in the early September the situation started to decline again. As the number of the confirmed cases grew the preventive measures started to intensify until the epidemic was declared once again. The Higher Education Institutions closed down again, forcing students to once again start following their courses online. The government decided to close down students' dorms, forcing students to move out from their rooms and back home. Some of the students live in unstable conditions and for some the student housing is the only safe space to be; whilst it being a right protected by law, it is unacceptable to force students to leave their homes. At the same time, the amount of student work available is again in decline, rendering the income of an average student the lowest it has ever been. During lockdown, the access to subsidised food is limited which increases the amount of money students use to survive.

ESU firmly believes that COVID-19 pandemic has affected all students across Europe and is not exclusively a problem of individual country, besides students present one of the most vulnerable groups who have been immensely impacted in the last couple of months. Therefore ESU calls all member countries and the European Union to start acting, offer adequate financial help and minimize any harmful consequences which might interfere with the successful study process among all students, who are at higher risk.

Proposed by: SSU

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The European Students' Union (ESU) is the umbrella organisation of 46 National Unions of Students (NUS) from 40 countries. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the interests of students at the European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.