



Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE EUROPEAN STUDENTS UNION (ESU)
AND
EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (EI)
2010-2012

INTRODUCTION

ESU - the European Students' Union is the umbrella organisation of 47 national unions of students from 38 countries and through these members represents over 11 million students. ESU was formerly known as ESIB and it continues to function for legal reasons under ESIB with ESU as a "trademark".

Education International (EI) is the world's largest educators' federation representing 401 member organisations from 172 countries and through these members representing nearly 30 million teachers and other education workers.

In many countries ESU member National Unions of Students work closely with EI member trade unions within the field of education and indeed are seen as natural partners campaigning on many issues of joint concern. As representative of the two main stakeholders within the higher education sphere, namely the students and the staff of the institutions, this link is important to recognise, especially in the light of the work done over the past 5 years, and further build upon. This partnership will also look at ways in which these relationships at the national level can be strengthened through encouraging our members to develop similar partnership agreements. This is especially important at the European level where there has been visible progress in strengthening ESU-EI cooperation, through various common initiatives, mutual support and coordination within the higher education arena. The European wide "Let's Go!" mobility campaign is the perfect example in this regard.

PARTNERS

As partners we agree to:

1. Meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of mutual concern to the relevant representatives of our organizations (e.g. the student and staff situation related to the economic crisis, solidarity calls etc.);
2. Invite representatives and speakers of each others organisations to seminars and meetings as appropriate and according to the thematic orientation of each event;
3. Discuss the development of common policies on issues of joint concern;
4. Mutually inform beforehand on policy positions relevant to high level external representation, as appropriate;
5. Jointly asses situations in various countries, especially with regard to possible support from our organisations to those in need;
6. Promote each others' events and organisations to our members, as appropriate;
7. Work on various common projects on topics such as: student centered learning, mobility, financing, social dimension etc.
8. Investigate ways in which we can work more closely together and issues of joint concern.

JOINT WORK ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREAS

When establishing links between our two organisations, and looking to develop common campaigning strategies, it is important to elaborate our joint areas of agreement in higher education policy.

The areas of common future work will concern, but will not be limited to:

- Campaigning against the threats posed by the increase in trade in educational services and intellectual property rights.
- Governments moving away from public funding of higher education, the impact that this will have on its future including the introduction of tuition fees, which both ESU and EI restate their opposition to, as well as highlighting the benefits that higher education brings to society.
- Working for an alternative future higher education based on the principle of an accessible higher education defending academic freedom.
- Investigating the implications of brain-drain and raising awareness and campaigning against these.
- Joint work between ESU and EI on the issues surrounding employment rights of young researchers, student centred learning and mobility

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CO-OPERATION

This co-operation between our two organisations has been best exemplified over the past few years through joint work within the UNESCO OECD, GATS and the Bologna Process political arenas.

At the UNESCO level, EI and ESU are cooperating through the involvement within the preparation, proceedings and follow-up to the World Conference on Higher Education. ESU and EI are also jointly working in areas such as quality assurance in transnational education, access and an increase in public responsibility in the field of higher education, as members of the Collective Consultation of NGOs in official relations with UNESCO. This joint cooperation at the UNESCO level should be developed and it should be looked at how ESU can work more closely with EI in this framework and within the TUAC.

In the OECD frame, ESU and EI are both members in the AHELO Stakeholders' Consultative Group (SCG) and will continue to cooperate in this frame, together with exploring the possibility for joint work related to the OECD initiatives. ESU and EI will work on the inclusion of the two organizations in the drafting of the OECD's Thematic Reviews of Higher Education.

ESU and EI will continue to fight together against the inclusion of higher education as an item in the GATS negotiations. In this regard, it is desired to call periodical meetings and to establish a communication link between the ESU/ EI responsible for GATS.

ESU and EI have a longstanding cooperation within the Bologna Process arena. The two organisations will have regular meetings on Bologna priorities and will aim at enhancing the strength of the commonly supported arguments on the following topics:

- mobility (while fighting for reaching the 20% by 2020 mobile students benchmark and the significant increase in mobile staff numbers),
- doctoral studies (in the frame of the ESU Working group on doctoral studies and the link between higher education and research)
- student centred learning in the frame of the joint ESU-EI project "Time for a New Paradigm in Education: Student Centered Learning" and possible future initiatives
- social dimension
- quality assurance, by fostering student and staff involvement in quality assurance.

Financial support

EI has indicated a desire to support the work of ESU through a financial contribution and this can be used to fund specific joint areas of work between our two organisations, with a special focus on international student cooperation, but also related to specific content areas of common interest.

This joint work can come on two levels, on the organisation support and also on the content level. The financial support at the content level could include joint projects or being partners in each others projects (e.g. "Let's Go", "Time for a New Paradigm in Education: Student Centered Learning").

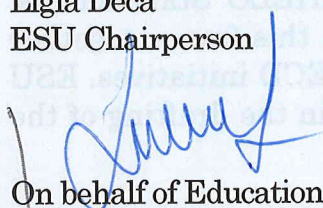
CONCLUSION

There are many ways in which our two organisations can come together to fight for a fairer education system for all and by developing a common strategy we are more likely to build on the strengths of our membership.

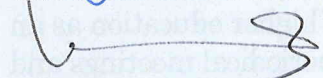
Signed on 9 February 2010 in Brussels.

On behalf of the European Students' Union (ESU),

Ligia Deca
ESU Chairperson



On behalf of Education International (EI),



Fred Van Leeuwen,
General Secretary