

# Resolution against the government's policy of reducing funding and discriminating against non-Belgian students

The new government of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles has introduced a draft decree proposing significant cuts to the budget allocated to higher education institutions, while shifting the burden of these cuts onto non-EU students and non-Belgian European students.

The draft decree outlines a reduction of 6.5 million euros in educational funding, coupled with a substantial increase in tuition fees for non-EU students. According to the summary of the decree, the contribution required from these students could rise by as much as 4,175 euros, in addition to the regular tuition fees of 835 euros. In this way, the government intends to offset planned funding cuts by imposing much higher tuition fees on non-EU students, despite the fact that they are already disadvantaged by higher fees. The Fédération des Étudiant.e.s Francophones (FEF) emphasizes that the marginal cost of a non-EU student enrolled in a class of 50 to 100 students remains relatively low and can never justify an increase of 4,175 euros.

Furthermore, the draft decree also proposes an increase in the fees for the recognition of foreign secondary school diplomas, including European ones, required for access to higher education, with the cost rising from 200 to 400 euros.

Beyond the clear discriminatory nature of this proposal, the significant rise in tuition fees for both international and European students will inevitably lead to a decline in their numbers within the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. This, in turn, will result in a substantial reduction in funding for higher education in the French-speaking community of Belgium and harm local economies.

FEF and the European Students' Union (ESU) strongly condemn this discriminatory approach, which shifts the financial responsibility for proper funding—an

obligation of the state—onto international and European students. This sets a dangerous precedent for future increases in tuition fees for Belgian students as well. Simultaneously, it guarantees a substantial and automatic reduction in budgets for higher education in the French-speaking community of Belgium, which is completely unacceptable, particularly given that the affected institutions are already suffering from a severe funding shortfall.

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Proposers: FEF

Seconders: VVS, VSS-UNES-USU, LSVb