

RESOLUTION SAIH

Approved at Student Parliament 2, 19.03.2018

Education is not a commodity, but a right / Norway must contribute to the efforts to strengthen public financing of higher education globally

The higher education sector globally is currently heavily underfinanced. Some places this results in high student fees and unsatisfying loan schemes for students. In turn this contributes to making access to quality higher education limited to the most privileged. Another challenge is that lack of public funding can be a threat to free research. This is because a high degree of temporary positions for researchers promotes self-censorship, in fear of losing their jobs. In addition, inadequate funding may mean that a greater amount of research is used to solve tasks for cooperations, through contractual research. In itself, contractual research is not problematic, but we also need basic research to solve important and long-term societal challenges.

Today, primary education is one of Norway's main priorities within development policy, with a special focus on girls' access to basic schooling. Higher education, on the other hand, is allocated few resources and given little attention. However, we know that higher education and research are important for securing a country's ability to develop. Each and every one of the 17 sustainability goals has an indicator that is dependent on education or research. Not least, educated teachers are required to achieve the goal of primary school for all the children of the world.

We at the Student Parliament at NMBU believe that the Norwegian government must see education in a more holistic perspective and invest more in higher education within Norwegian development policy. This as part of promoting academic freedom and equal access to higher education regardless of socioeconomical background globally.

We believe:

- Education should not be a commodity, but a right
- The government should give increased focus to higher education as a tool for development
- 15% of Norwegian aid should be earmarked education by 2020
- The development initiatives related to higher education where Norway is already involved should be given increased funding. This applies to programs such as NORHED, NORPART and NORGLOBAL II

The Student Parliament at NMBU will also urge the university board of NMBU to contribute to increase focus on higher education in Norwegian development policy.