

## European Students' Union calls for the Finnish government to ensure funding for the objectives of its Vision for Higher Education and Research

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Finland has set an ambitious goal to raise the share of young adults aged 25–34 with a higher education degree to 50% by 2030. Achieving this target requires sustainable and predictable funding for both universities and universities of applied sciences—the two pillars of Finland's dual higher education system. The competency needs of the future demand high-quality education of expertise and solution-oriented skills.

Over the past decades, the indexation of higher education funding has been frozen several times, causing study programmes' resources to fall behind the rising costs of teaching. As a result, reduced funding has inevitably impacted the quality of learning and students' competence. Many students report feeling that their working-life skills are insufficient, and generic skills have weakened throughout the education path. To ensure that future generations of students receive the support they need—both for academic and practice based—higher education must be backed by predictable and sustainable funding.

Representation of underrepresented groups in higher education is essential for the continuity of Finnish education's accessibility. In order for the admission paths from upper secondary school education to higher education to function in the future, the funding base needs to be adaptable both for the increase in study places but also to the needs of the diversifying student population. When funding increases alongside enrollment, higher education institutions can support diverse learners, remove barriers to progression and ensure equal chances of completing a degree.

The European students call for Finland's Vision for Higher Education and Research 2040 to include a systematic increase in the basic funding of higher education institutions as a central goal and measure. To ensure sustainable progress toward raising Finland's educational and competence levels, the organisations also demand a cross-parliamentary agreement on higher education funding. Furthermore, when increasing study places both at universities and universities of applied sciences, the basic funding must be raised by at least the same proportion to guarantee the quality and accessibility of education.

A comprehensively funded higher education sector is the most efficient way to attain the objectives of an adaptable society of skills and knowledge.

### Further information:

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