

OBESSU and ESU call for actions in support of the Italian Student movement

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OBESSU, the Organising Bureau of European School Students Unions, and ESU (the European Student Union) would like to express their strong support to the current students' movement in Italy which sees our Italian Member Organisations *Unione Degli Studenti (UDS)* and *Unione Degli Universitari (UDU)* as some of the main actors.

Today (October 29th), the Italian Parliament approved the law "DL 137" from the Minister of Education Gelmini. The law plans over € 8 billion of cuts from the education budget, a measure which will dramatically reduce the quality of public schools and will favour private schools. School boards and councils will be abolished establishing an undemocratic decision-making system not at all interested in students' opinions and needs. Moreover, behaviour grades would be reintroduced at school. This eliminates the principle contained in the law "DPR 249/98 Statuto delle studentesse e degli studenti" (Italian Declaration of Student Rights) establishing that behaviour judgement has to be considered apart from the evaluation of the students' learning outcomes.

Additionally in the upcoming weeks the proposal "DL 133" on University will be discussed. According to Minister Gelmini Universities will be transformed into private foundations, opening the way for privatisation of higher education. The whole process has the final aim to start the privatisation of the public system of education and to put down students' voice.

This morning in Rome, several members of the students who were demonstrating in front of the Senate were attacked by over 60 armed far-right demonstrators. Several students were injured in those confrontations before the police decided to intervene. We, the Student representatives of Europe, strongly condemn the use of violence and believe in the power of peaceful protest.

For all these reasons OBESSU and ESU call for symbolic action in front of the European Commission and the Italian Embassy in Brussels in order to support Italian Students in their fight to safeguard a free education of quality.

The actions will be held at:

- European Commission: in front of the Berlaymont building, 12.30

Metro 1A/B, Schuman station

- Italian Embassy: 28, rue Emile Claus 1050 Brussels, 14.00

Bus 38, Bascule stop