Statement by the ‘Unterbau Uni Wien’ initiative on the university austerity policy

No cuts! Neither from the state nor from the rectorate!

With this slogan, we are joining the current protests against austerity policy. What do we mean by this?

Neither from the state …

We believe that cutting spending on education and science is always the wrong approach! Because cutting back here means cutting back on all our futures. We firmly oppose the matter-of-fact manner in which the current austerity policy is being pursued and say: **Stop the cuts, hear our call — tax the rich, education for all!**

Instead of proposing tuition fees and burdening those who often live in precarious circumstances anyway, it is time to make the rich pay. At the same time, wealth is taxed very lightly in Austria! We demand: **Fair and sustainable funding for universities!** We oppose tuition fees because they exacerbate social inequalities and make it harder to access higher education. Instead, we call for adequate public funding – that is, an adjustment to the 2028-2030 performance agreements and an automatic inflation adjustment to university budgets.

… nor from the Rectorate

If the austerity policy is implemented nonetheless, the question arises: how and where will the cuts be made? The Rectorate currently maintains that there is no alternative but to make cuts to academic and administrative staff or to individual degree programmes.

We take a different view and demand the following from the Rectorate of the University of Vienna:

- **Transparent and democratic participation** in any ‘austerity measures’. Many staff members are well aware of areas where efficiency could be improved. It should therefore not be the dean’s offices alone, but also the elected faculty councils, that determine how resources are reallocated.

- An end to the practice of **excessive appointment grants for professors**. These are very high by international standards, yet there is little accountability regarding the use of these funds. Here, too, a **democratisation of resources** is needed.

- Cuts to **prestige projects** such as ViCAS, Quantum Cube, the co-funding of the University of Chicago’s Paris campus and the postponement of all planned **major construction projects** such as the Althangrund campus. These are all projects from which students and the majority of staff do not benefit, yet which consume vast amounts of money.

We call for a fair and sustainable distribution of existing resources and for staff to be involved in the decision-making process!

A long version of our statement can be found on our website: http://uni-wien-unterbau.at/

Come to a meeting. If you'd like to get involved or get to know us first, write to us at `unterbau_uniwien@nuwiss.at`. We'll tell you when and where the next meeting is taking place.

Stay up to date. We use our mailing list at `unterbau_uniwien@lists.univie.ac.at` to let you know about dates and actions. Write to us at the contact address above if you'd like to join the list. You can also follow us on Bluesky (`@unterbauuniwien.bsky.social`) and Instagram (`@unterbauuniwien`).