



***SOCIALIST DEMOCRATIC STUDENT
ASSOCIATION SAARBRÜCKEN***

ELECTION PROGRAM

***ELECTIONS FOR THE 72ND STUDENT
PARLIAMENT OF SAARLAND UNIVERSITY***



“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however is to change it.”

– Karl Marx

Everyone wants to govern, we want change. The quality of students' life is inextricably tied to the world outside. Solutions to challenges facing students, therefore, are also deeply linked to the challenges of our historic period, and to politics beyond our campus. We therefore seek to envision a program that unites our struggles, and prepares us for the world that awaits us, and for the future that we hope to build. A future **for students, for peace, for democracy, for liberation, for the environment and for socialism.**

A FUTURE FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR MATERIAL WELL-BEING:

The quality of life of students has seen a steady decline in recent years all over the globe. In an increasingly competitive job market outside, and with increasing levels of funding cuts within, learning spaces have experienced adverse effects on creativity, intellectual rigour, mental, physical and social health, and overall well-being. Therefore, our call is clear:

- 1) The new dinner offer on campus needs to stay. More snack and drink vending machines all over campus! One pizza machine outside the Campusmarkt makes a huge difference for students staying late on campus, and we thereby call for additional machines. Pizza machines should also have vegan options.
- 2) Better infrastructure for drinking water on campus. It is near time that bottle filling stations or water fountains are built.

- 3) Some buildings and facilities like Uni-Fit and Hochschulsport have amenities for showering purposes. In other buildings such facilities exist as well but the students are not adequately informed about it.
- 4) Nap stations at university! We demand break rooms with couches and coffee machines for students during their break times. Hammocks should be installed between trees in the woods surrounding the campus.
- 5) Housing is not an object of speculation!
 1. Socialisation of ALL student residences, with the help of the Studierendenwerk, under the democratic control of tenant councils.
 2. Rent cap per square meter for all student accommodation.
 3. Emergency accommodation & help to get into housing for international and precarious students.
 4. Help for newly arrived international students to find private accommodation if they do not get a place in dormitories.
- 6) Accessibility in every corner of the campus! While even private companies have to commit to the barrier-free design of hardware and software under the new Accessibility Improvement Act (BFSG), the university is still lagging behind. It is unacceptable that banks, ticket machines and e-readers have to become legally accessible - but a campus full of hurdles remains.

Mobility related infrastructure must be expanded across campus. The access to specialised workstations and technical aides for learning purposes should be constantly improved based on newer understandings of disability justice. We support the acknowledgement of hidden forms of disability like chronic pain and long covid and reject medical models of disability that seek to pathologise physical or mental differences that are rooted in conformity with standards of productivity. We thereby support the activities of the KSB, and the AStA department of accessibility, and call for a widening of their services. We call for the allocation of resources to foster the research and teaching of social models of disability based in holistic and intersectional approaches, alongside the

medical research and teaching done at Homburg. Accessibility is not a luxury - but a prerequisite for a fair university.

7) Better mobility!

1. More biking paths on and around campus.
2. Better connections between Saarbrücken and Homburg.
3. More buses to the university, especially at the start of term.
4. All bus stops have covered seating.
5. Retention and subsidisation of the Deutschlandticket.
6. Cheap bike rentals at the university.
7. More space for people instead of cars on campus.

8) Education is not a commodity. Free study for all - abolition of all tuition fees, administrative fees, examination fees and long-term study fees. Parental income independent BAFöG as a full subsidy, no debt trap! Extension to refugees, people without regular residence status and older students.

9) Access to the printer and computer rooms even on Sundays. We demand cheaper printing costs across all faculties, with some free monthly credits for all students based on the model of the Informatics student's council. At the same time, test sheet and thesis submissions need to be digitalised as far as possible to reduce the need for printing in the first place.

10) Greater access and more open lifelong learning pathways. Language courses, either the German courses at the ISZ or at the Max Planck Institute, or the foreign language courses at the Language Centre, which end up having fewer students than the intake capacity, should later be opened up without fees to people who are not enrolled at the university until capacity is reached.

11) The Mensa should offer at least one hot vegan dish every day for less than €3, and the opening hours should be significantly extended. In general, vegan

products should be cheaper than animal alternatives. Products with animal ingredients should be clearly labelled as halal or kosher, and dietary considerations due to beliefs should be accommodated by providing suitable options.

A FUTURE FOR PEACE, CO-OPERATION AND INTERNATIONALISM:

Universities and institutions of learning should not only study the world as it currently exists, but also actively imagine and expand horizons of humanism and universalism. We thereby stand united in declaring:

12) Civil clause now!

1. No cooperation with the German Armed Forces, defence companies or civil-military research. No advertising stands at trade fairs, no internships with war profiteers.
2. Immediate rededication of all third-party funded projects that originate from security policy sources.
3. Full transparency of applicability of research projects with partner institutions that operate under regimes known for violating human rights. Divestment in cases of clear violations of the principles of the civil clause by partner institutes.
4. Stop all repressive measures against students who oppose militarism, apartheid or war.
5. To implement this, the ethics committee is to be further expanded and given more opportunities to take action against violations.

13) Down with geopolitical calculations! The decision to collaborate with international academic institutions or to discontinue them clearly follows the

geopolitical interests of the German state. In contrast to geopolitically motivated networks, cooperation should be based on shared humanitarian values.

- 14) Academic cooperation should be the vanguard of civil support initiatives to regions facing destruction and aggression. We demand a commitment to reconstruction projects involving educational infrastructure and academic programs in Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan and Congo, among others. We also extend solidarity with partner universities that were targeted in unjustifiable acts of war. We call for the expansion of learning material, scholarships and grants for students and academics having to flee conflict areas.
- 15) We welcome the interdisciplinary seminars on conflict areas that include prominent international scholars from a wide range of disciplines. We call on the university management to make such lectures open to everyone.
- 16) Generative AI systems in existing form harm the environment, reinforce common prejudices, threaten human rights (deepfakes, surveillance and cybercrime), and appropriate data and products of labour, while weakening critical thinking and creativity.

The market forces that have driven general AI research in the past primarily did so to facilitate the extraction of surplus value by deskilling human labour via automation. The need for analyses and reinforcement of consumption trends in order to maximise profits has also played a major role. AI has served as a valuable asset in the military industrial complex and a key pillar of the permanent arms economy, which has led to human operators being absolved from accountability in mass civilian slaughter, as in the case of project Lavender.

Generative AI in recent times, in ostensibly providing inherent benefits and marginal use-values to humanity, continues this primary aim of upholding and reproducing social relations and inequalities. Therefore, pioneering research

must be sociologically evaluated within a wider framework of ethics and technology studies. The university should promote deeper awareness of the risks and challenges within informatics and further invest in research around ethics, dependability and societal computing at SIC.

A FUTURE FOR DEMOCRACY:

Rigid examination and programme regulations hinder the exchange of ideas and the creation of more complete and adaptable forms of knowledge. Transdisciplinary approaches and flexible modes of learning thus become the need of the era. We therefore demand:

17) More flexibility in the degree programme!

1. No to compulsory attendance in all courses.
2. Yes to more hybrid offerings.
3. No to progress checks and minimum credits per semester
4. Student empowerment to interrupt and resume studies based not only on circumstances but also on free choice, as well as the possibility to apply for longer leaves of absence.
5. The opportunity to choose courses from more distant disciplines, and to a greater extent. A broader 'free choice' module among the 180 or 120 credits, which allows students to pick courses unrelated to their degree programme. More certificates with a broad range of interdisciplinary content.

18) A popular mandate!

1. Efforts to improve voter turnout. With a voter turnout of 9% in the last elections, we question the legitimacy of the StuPa and AStA to make important decisions on behalf of the students.

2. At the moment, the university is blocking and ignoring many decisions of the StuPa, this blockade of the democratic self-administration of the students must not be accepted. The AStA and StuPa must oppose this and students, as the largest group at the university, should be given more voting rights in the university committees.
3. A campus wide system to directly book lecture, study and seminar rooms, in order to organise spaces without bureaucratic hurdles.
4. More transparency in StuPa and AStA related matters. The upload of the protocol and agenda is an important step, which should also be translated into English. The livestream of the StuPa sessions should be more proactively advertised, via social media and email.

19) Political independence of the university! No police or state influence on the campus. Against the repression of social movements rooted in justice and dignity for all.

20) Multilingualism at all levels of the university. More involvement of the international student body. Promotion of international and internationalist student collectives. Promotion of self-organised learning and seminars by students: Students should be able to organise, in presence or via an online format, academics and academic discussions on any topic that is academically relevant.

21) Politicisation of the university. We support nationwide initiatives like the critical introductory week. We want a radical AStA that participates in broader social movements and gives them a stage at the university. For example, the mobilisations against the right, the mobilisations against war and militarisation, the civil initiatives to abolish poverty and homelessness, the initiatives seeking a way out of the housing crisis, and so forth. Mass movements should have an incubator phase at university, like the kind afforded to startups.

A FUTURE FOR LIBERATION:

Our manifesto is a refusal and a reimagining:

22) Against fascism and all forms of bigotry. The university should be a place where right-wing groups and fraternities are not welcome.

We understand race as a sociohistorical construct, upheld by power and capital. Scientific institutions during the enlightenment played an important role in essentialising human differences for dominion and colonial exploitation, constructs which were heightened with challenges of modernity: the birth of nation states, religious discrimination and, at times, foreshortened forms of anti-capitalism. In a long radical tradition of combatting these issues, we call for institutional commitment to antifascist and antiracist principles, and demand the adoption of concrete definitions and frameworks within university spaces to actively counter the rising tide of islamophobia, antisemitism and xenophobia in recent times. As part of the federal student association SDS, we rely on the JDA definition to inform our efforts against antisemitism.

23) We extend full support to the activities of the Refugee law clinic and call for the allocation of increased funds and resources for their services. The general Law Clinic, which is available to students for legal questions, is also to be revived under the reintroduced AStA Department of Law.

24) In favour of feminism and against all forms of discrimination based on gender or sexuality. There are many cases of inappropriate behaviour by professors towards students, and students may not always come forth to the gender equality office or other bodies, partly out of fear of academic consequences as a result of power dynamics. We need a stronger anti-harassment hotline on campus, with more channels to encourage people to report sexist, transphobic or homophobic behaviour anonymously. While such measures would better protect students, we also need preventative measures in the form of education, campaigns and the proactive promotion of an anti-patriarchal environment. Changing one's name and

gender entry should be possible at any time without bureaucracy, and gender disclosure should be voluntary where possible.

To this end, the Queer Department and the associated Queer Working Group of the AStA are also to be supported more in order to further expand the wide range of services. The university must immediately provide gender-neutral toilets in all buildings.

We demand quotas and affirmative action for people from historically underrepresented and disadvantaged groups at all levels of campus.

25) Make learning liberationist again. Gender Studies and the Certificate in Applied Pop Culture are among the most radical programmes offered at Saarland University. We call for these programmes to be made more accessible - among other things by offering them fully in English. We call on the university to offer similar certificates for interdisciplinary fields that study contemporary challenges, like science and technology studies or climate protection and sustainability. We also demand critical scholarship and theory at our university, for example in legal studies, criminology, critical race theory, pedagogy, data studies and psychology, among others.

26) We demand the establishment of additional chairs, clusters, guest professorships or seminars at the History Institute, that focus not only on European history, but also on history from other parts of the world, as well as on history of human thought and learning.

27) Europe is not the world – and historically, it has all too often been its oppressor. We oppose the fixation on EU funding, mobility programs for the privileged few, and a pseudo-cosmopolitan logic of economic competitiveness.

Instead of "more Europe", we demand:

Global academic cooperation on equal footing and international solidarity, particularly with universities in the Global South. This includes:

- Increased partnerships with universities in Africa and the SWANA region, Latin America, South and Southeast Asia – with a focus on joint projects addressing social and climate justice.
- Critical Area Studies and academic programs beyond Eurocentric perspectives, including postcolonial studies, migration studies, peace and conflict studies, climate policy, and global political economy.
- Exchange programs that are not contingent on nationality or residency status, but open to all students.

We demand a university that takes global responsibility seriously – not as a PR stunt for EU-funded neoliberal agendas, but as a space of internationalist solidarity and anti-colonial scholarship.

A FUTURE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

Environmentalism without class struggle is just gardening. Therefore:

28) No deforestation of the Hambacher forest. #HanniBleibt! Solidarity with the squatters. Instead, the university should make better use of the available space, such as through a university-wide coordinated room booking system and taller buildings.

29) Reopening of the botanical garden.

30) Broader citizens' initiatives such as Küfa (Kitchen for All) or Edible City (Stadtgärtchen) to be linked to campus life, with the university providing spaces and resources for such initiatives together with the city administration.

31) Independent Climate Commission with a student majority, responsible for decisions on construction projects, research projects, chairs, transport, and energy supply.

A FUTURE FOR SOCIALISM:

32) We support the TV Stud for better pay, minimum contract terms, holiday entitlements and thus better living and working conditions for student/academic assistants and tutors. We also support an extension of the TVStud, as well as the TVöD for people who work at the university but are not covered by the protection of the TVöD due to subcontracting. From the kitchen employees to the janitors to the construction workers, collective bargaining arrangements for all!