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EU-wide student- and pupilprotests newsletter number 3

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EU-wide student- and pupilprotests From December the 10th - 14th. A lot has happened since we wrote the last newsletter. In this newsletter we have some new information about the upcoming protests (December the 10th until 14th)against GATS and privatisation of Education and some important dates from meetings and so-called warm-up actions.

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A lot has happened since we wrote the last newsletter. In this newsletter we have some new information about the upcoming protests (December the 10th until 14th)against GATS and privatisation of Education and some important dates from meetings and so-called warm-up actions.

Actions that were proposed locally are for instance demonstrations against privatisation of education (Slogan wich united students and schoolstudents in Germany is: "Public education is not for sale!"), picketlines, occupations, strikes etc. The goal is to build-up an international network that organise the actions of students and pupils against privatisation (read for detailed information the call for an EU-wide student- and pupilstrike on our website: <http://int-protest-action.tripod.com>)in December in a decentral (in their own cities, schools and

universities) and later in the week in a central way (Brussels). Than we want to build-up this network further so we can react very fast on developments and organise other actions togheter and/or organise solidarity-actions if something happends in one of the EU countries. We also try to establish contacts with studentgroups outside of the EU. We already have contacts with studentgroups in Canada and Australia (where there was a big demonstration against GATS - read the articles about GATS on our website - on October the 6th).The GATS negotiations are scheduled to finish in December 2002. Important steps will be made at the WTO meeting in Quatar in November this year. We don`t have much time left, but if we use our capabilities we can put pressure on the EU in order to stopp this proces. And we are not alone: more and more labour-unions are supporting the struggle against the GATS-treaty. On the Attac congress in Berlin last week we did a GATS-workshop togheter with the biggest trade-labourunion of the planet (VERDI). They also called for action against the GATS-treaty. It`s difficult sometimes to work with such organisations, but it`s important that we build coalitions with other groups. Some of us will go to Brussels next week to take part in the international preparationdays. The list of countries is not complete, but it geves an idea on what is going on.

D14 Preparation days

From October the 29th until the 31st of October 3 of us went to Brussels to take part at the international preparation days of D14. There were some workshops (legal situation at demonstrations in Brussels, media-activism and much more) and some interesting debates. On the last day we talked with students from Belgium and the UK (N.U.S. representative in Sussex) about the coming actions in December (On december the 14th in Brussels and decentral in several European cities in the days before the march in Brussels)and the build-up of a network of schoolstudents and students across Europe to coordinate the resistance against GATS and the privatisation of education. Next step after Brussels could be actions in June, when there is a EU-Summit in Sevilla, Spain.Some Belgian students also mention the need for resistance against the Bologna-declaration. We decided to meet again on November the 17th at the university of Brussels. Since the last online conference was a disaster and we know that it will be impossible for everybody to come to Brussels at the 17th, we will ask some computerspecialists to arrange a online connection as well in order to let people participate on-line. Further we

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arranged a place for the mediagroup at Indymedia Belgium for December the 14th to work and held a pressconference. D14 also starts to organise sleepingplaces in Brussels. We also heard that several unions which are members of the European Studentorganisation ESIB are mobilising for actions in Brussels on December the 14th. We will send an invitation through our mailinglist (Address below).

Spain

In Spain there is a call for a strike on December the 12th and the plan is to go to Brussels with as many students as possible on December the 13th (arrival at December the 14th to demonstrate during the EU summit). Several studentgroups from different cities are participating. There were also a number of actions against the war on Spanish universities this month and in the coming month there will be more actions against the war. On November the 7th there will be protests of Professors and teachers against the LOU in Barcelona. Students will support them and are also planning protests on November the 13th. More information about LOU at <http://barcelona.indymedia.org/>

Greece

In Greece there are also several groups who are planning actions during the protestweek in december. There are also mobilisations for Brussels. In Greece there are also a lot of actions on universities against the war.

Denmark

A group from Denmark is trying to get support of the national union for the strike. They also translated the call into Danish.

Italy

Somebody offered to translate the call for a strike in Italian but we still don't have it. Italy is very important so it's good if somebody can do this. The Greek group DARAS has a lot of contacts in Italy and they will contact them.

UK

Students from the UK are trying to get the support of the N.U.S.(National Union of Students) for the action. The N.U.S. is writing a protest-statement against GATS.

Germany

In Germany groups are mobilising for the week of protest. There were several meetings this month. The next nationwide meeting is on November the 11th. There were actions in the city of Leipzig this week with about 3000 (source the German newspaper TAZ) protesters at a demonstration. On November the 1st there will be a meeting about the December-action on the university of Leipzig. On November the 12th (during the WTO-meeting in Qatar - November 8th- 13th)there will be an action against GATS on the university of Dortmund. We meet on the 12th at 12 in front of the university-library. The action is meant to mobilise for December and to inform students about the impact of the GATS-treaty. On November the 22th there will be a meeting on the F-University in Berlin. One of the Points of discussion are the EU-wide protests. In the city of Halle there will also be another meeting for actions in Halle and the surrounding region. In Duesseldorf the FAU-education group arranged the first bus to drive to Brussels.

Netherlands

In the Netherlands there is meeting about the actions in december on Tuesday the 6th of November at 20.30 PM at the university of Utrecht. The meeting is at "vergaderzaal" Oudegracht 229 (ring 2 times) in Utrecht. On the 9th of November there will be an action in the city of Leiden on the issue of education and commerce and on December the 8th there will be a national action day preparing for the EU summit in Laken (Brussels), issue in Leiden will also be education and commerce again.

Belgium

On November the 29th there will be a demonstration against the Bologna-process during a meeting of the EU-educationministers in Brussels. Studentgroups and organisations can support the call of the demonstration by sending a mail to: als@student.rug.ac.be On October the 31st there was a meeting with Belgium, English and German students and schoolstudents in Brussels during the D14 international preparation days for the big demonstration on December the 14th. On November the 17th there will be another international meeting in Brussels . On October the 19th (During the small EU summit in Ghent)there was a strike at several schools and universities in Belgium.

France

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A group in France is also spreading the call in France. They are trying to get support of the national unions.

Austria

In Austria the AKS will do some actions (National Union of pupils). The students organised a week of action against student fees this month. In Vienna thousands of students marched through the city. They are discussing to join the actions in December as well.

Finland

We didn't hear for sometime from Finland, but we saw on the website of one of the Finnish groups that are involved that they are mobilising as well.

Switzerland

In Switzerland some student groups are planning actions as well. Before the December protests there are already some actions planned: at Tuesday November the 6th there is a seminar about GATS with lots of discussion and information about GATS and the consequences for education. The Seminar is at Uni HG KOL-F-109 at 7pm (19.00hrs). In Geneva there will be a demonstration on November the 10th to the head office of the WTO. It's organised from attac Zürich, Studentunion Zürich and the actionkomitee against education cuts. The demonstration starts at 14.00 hours, Place Neuve in Geneva, Switzerland.

Solidarity

We've had some solidarity and support e-mails from student groups from Canada, the USA and Australia. This mail is from the UK:

Dear EU students, This is a wonderful development, and I wish you every success in your actions. The GATS pose a significant threat to free, democratically accountable and publicly-funded education. The GATS mean the commercialisation, commodification and capitalisation of education and other public services. With GATS, everything falls under the law of money.

Good luck and best wishes Glenn Rikowski

Glenn Rikowski teaches education studies at University College Northampton, England. He is the author of "The Battle in Seattle: Its significance for education", published earlier this year by Tufnell Press. See: <http://www.tufnellpress.co.uk> With Dave Hill, Mike Cole and Peter McLaren, he co-authored "Red Chalk: On Schooling, Capitalism and Politics", published in 2001 by The Institute for Education Policy Studies. See: <http://www.ieps.org.uk>

Website We published the French and Greek version of the call for an EU-wide student- and pupil-strike on our website. Next week we will also publish the Danish version of the call. We are still waiting for the Italian version and it would be great if somebody could make a Finnish and Portuguese version... People can still send us information about the education and situation of school students (pupils) and students in their own country, we will publish it on our website. You can also suggest links about websites from student- and/or pupil organisations or good sites with information about GATS and or other sites about education. Somebody from Groningen (Netherlands) is going to the European Student Convention in Brussels in November. It would be good if some other people that are going there as well also would discuss the coming actions at the convention.

Mailing lists:

English: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/international-pupil-and-studentactions>

German: <http://de.groups.yahoo.com/group/int-schueler-und-studentenaktionen>

Dutch: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/int-scholieren-en-studentenakties>

Website: <http://www.studi-protest.de.vu> or <http://int-protest-action.tripod.com>

contact: eustudenten@gmx.net

<http://publish.uk.indymedia.org/ennull115104.shtml>