

Position paper by the Assistants' Association of the University of Basel (avuba) and the Studentischen Körperschaft der Universität Basel (skuba) opposing possible reductions in educational investments and in favor of a university offering the full range of subjects

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As part of the university cost-saving measures, it appears that scenarios are also being examined that would result in cuts to educational programs and could jeopardize the current diversity of subjects.

For the following reasons, avuba and skuba are opposed to possible reductions in educational investments:

- Savings would be made at the expense of educating future generations; educational opportunities for the local population and the region's competitive position would be drastically weakened.
- Fewer professorships with the same number of postdoctoral researchers, PhD students and students – at least initially – would increase workload for supervisors, reducing the quality of the supervision provided.
- Decreased research output leads to less innovation and/or fewer opportunities to attract external funding. This would diminish the University of Basel's international reputation and make it less attractive as an employer. The university would therefore become less visible and appealing to international researchers.
- Research produced at the University of Basel must compete on both the national and international stage. Reduced financial support from the cantons would not only jeopardize cutting-edge research; the university would also lose researchers and students to other institutions.
- Existing financial pressure for research funds would intensify further.

For the following reasons, avuba and skuba support the current diversity of subjects:

- The university offers training for academic specialists who are required by the economy and the public sector. According to 2016 figures from the [Swiss Federal Statistical Office](#), the Northwestern Switzerland unemployment rate is just 2.8% for people who have completed tertiary education, whereas 15.1% of those with a compulsory secondary school leaving certificate are unemployed.
- Increasing specialization has already created a situation in which, in many subject areas, experts in a specific topic can be found in just one location throughout Switzerland. Particularly in the smaller subjects, further monopolization would lead to a significant loss of knowledge and educational opportunities in Switzerland.
- A wide range of subjects creates the ideal environment for interdisciplinary research, networking, innovation, and exchange. This is extremely important; representatives of the social sciences, cultural studies, and humanities in particular are frequently called upon to interpret and debate current social issues.

To the supporting cantons, the University Council, the President's Office of the University of Basel, all faculties, and the population, avuba and skuba therefore recommend that the wide range of educational offerings for students and the diversity of research fields should not be restricted in either quality or quantity. However, conditions should be established to provide even greater support for innovation and interdisciplinarity.