

Statement: Students are part of the University of Vienna too #watergate

For a better and immediate communication with us students

Joint statement by ÖH Uni Wien, Fakultätsvertretung Jus, Aktionsgemeinschaft Jus (AG Jus), Verband Sozialistischer Student_innen (VSStÖ), Grüne und Alternative Student_innen (GRAS), Junge Liberale Studierende (Junos) and Kommunistischer Student_innenverband Linke Liste (KSV Lili)

Health-hazardous bacteria were found in the tap water at the Juridicum Vienna and in the course thereof, problems concerning the communication from the University of Vienna with us have arisen. **12000 people studying at the Juridicum were first of all not and later on only insufficiently informed.** After the identification of an increased iron level neither students directly nor the student representatives at the faculty of law nor the official representatives at the ÖH Uni Wien were informed that there are problems and that rust preventives have been added to the tap water at the Juridicum since last summer.

Only when the MA39 found out about health-hazardous bacteria by taking a water sample at the end of October, the deanery informed the faculty representatives of law about the problems. At that time we got to know via thirdparty that there is a permanent use of rust preventives and that problems have already arisen at summer. If the anonymous source hadn't informed us, the students would probably still not know about the problems. The students have not received any direct information from the University about the installation of a rust preventives dosing unit, about health-hazardous bacteria or about any possible health risks. Later, the deanery stated via media that it had informed the faculty representatives already in summer and that warning signs were adequate information for students. However, to the student representatives the deanery pointed out it had only learned about the rust problems in October. This gives a raise to the question how the students and their representatives could have been informed back in summer. After another water analysis (according to the ORF a private testing) at the beginning of December suspicion has come up again that the warm tap water at the Juridicum is contaminated with bacteria. The employees at the Juridicum have been briefed on this issue via e-mail on December 10th 2015. Again, students have not been informed directly about the suspected legionella bacterial load. Several fractions have been contacted informally by employees of the department. The above-mentioned e-mail has immediately been forwarded to the faculty representatives allowing them to inform the students.

For us, the students, this shows that we are not valued: Not only the study conditions worsen but also the promised 2% of the GDP for higher education institutions are still not reality. Further, we ñ the 90% of the higher education sector ñ are not being informed about specific health hazard. This lack of information has to stop! A simple e-mail to all students would help to remove the information gap.

Furthermore, there seem to be problems with the ventilation system at the Juridicum. The ventilation exit is probably covered in mold. This is why we demand an inspection of the ventilation system as soon as possible. The results have to be forwarded to the students directly. If not, we reserve the right to take further action.

The students' health has to be top priority. The university has an obligation to inform us fully and immediately on issues that affect students.