

# *Criticizing the situation of higher education in Argentina*

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By María Josefina Arce

University authorities, teachers and students maintain their struggle in favor of higher education in Argentina, which today faces an uncertain future. There is a risk that public universities will not be able to guarantee activities during the second four-month period, given the measures to cut public spending implemented by the government of President Javier Milei.

The 2023 budget has been extended, which does not take into account the high inflation prevailing in the South American nation, which last year was over 200% and so far this year stands at 51.6%.

For this reason, the Plenary of the National Inter-University Council called for a big march next week in defense of education and the university system.

This new action is in addition to those already carried out at the beginning of this month, such as the "banderazo" of April 4, in which thousands of people carrying the Argentine flag demonstrated in the

different centers, and the 48-hour strike, which began six days later.

The science and research sector has also participated in these protests, since more than 90% of the activities of scientific organizations are carried out within universities.

But most of these institutions are facing a critical situation. The University of Buenos Aires, the most important university in Argentina and one of the top 100 in the world, was recently declared in budgetary emergency.

However, if the authorities do not listen to their demands, there is a growing danger that the prestigious center of higher education will close its doors. The university has launched the campaign "Let's take care of what works" with the aim of collecting signatures to denounce the strong adjustment of Milei's government.

Guillermo Durán, dean of the Faculty of Exact Sciences of this facility, pointed out that the freezing of the budget can be explained more as a rejection of the president to public education, than to the lack of resources, since millions are invested in the purchase of war planes.

The truth is that the panorama is very complex. The National Teacher Incentive Fund was eliminated, scholarships have not been renewed, teachers and other workers in the sector have seen their purchasing power decrease and infrastructure works in progress have been suspended.

The current government has shown a total disregard for education, so necessary for the future of the country.

For the university authorities, attacking Argentina's public university means attacking a bastion of the welfare state.

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