

HRK



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German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities

HRK

Welcome



Dear reader,

The German Rectors' Conference draws its strength from the strength of its members: Universities are the heart of the German academic and research system. They combine higher education and research, conduct the major share of basic and applied research, qualify tomorrow's specialists, train early career researchers, are key drivers of innovation and serve as cultural institutions as well as interdisciplinary think tanks of the nation. In all these endeavours, they are supported by the German Rectors' Conference, Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK).

Like German universities themselves, the HRK stands for academic autonomy and freedom, diversity and innovation, open-mindedness and internationality. As the alliance and voice of German universities, the HRK is a strong partner for other science organisations, for politics, media, business and civil society.

This publication offers you insights into key issues the HRK and the German universities are tackling at present. What is our position, what principles are we guided by, and what do we have achieved recently? A few highlights:

Freedom in scholarship and social responsibility: The HRK campaigns for academic freedom across the globe and in particular for academic freedom of individual scholars or institutions at risk. Moreover, an HRK initiative is helping universities in Germany to communicate a powerful message of openness and opposition to xenophobia and discrimination.

Dialogue and cooperation: The HRK is convinced that universities have to enter into a dialogue with society on scientific work and its best framework conditions, as well as to actively explore the expectations and concerns of all stakeholders with regard to higher education, research and innovation. The HRK invites the broader public as well as the federal and state governments to be constructively involved in this process and to support universities in their public tasks and services.

Sustainable funding and appropriate legal framework: The HRK calls for increased stability and reliability in public funding. This will enable universities to meet the needs of their excellent staff and the millions of students enrolled and to deal with the requirements of digital transformation and the steadily growing number of research projects. Moreover, the HRK stands up for an appropriate legal framework that preserves and strengthens the universities' autonomy in a time of new challenges and global academic competition.

I hope you will be able to find a few quiet minutes to read more about these and other issues. The enclosed leaflet offers you some quick impressions of Germany's diverse higher education landscape.

I wish you a pleasant read.

Professor Peter-André Alt
HRK President

Universities in Dialogue with Society



In Germany, universities' academic freedom and self-governance are guaranteed under the constitution both on federal and state level. At the same time, universities themselves as key actors in the dynamic 'knowledge rectangle' of education, research, innovation and culture are an integral part of society and thus need to respond to societal expectations. Both the institution and its individual members, therefore, are committed to transparency and accountability, promoting an open dialogue with all stakeholders in society.

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) supports its member universities in their endeavour to build on their academic strengths and develop their profiles. The HRK believes this continuous task and challenge is inextricably linked to a clear acknowledgement of the universities' role in society. It encourages dialogue with the public and wants universities to engage with other players, especially in business and industry, education and civil society. The HRK stresses, however, that this must always be a fair dialogue from which all sides benefit.

Protecting researchers who are at risk and insisting on freedom in scholarship are top priorities for the HRK. It has been collaborating closely with the international Scholars at Risk network and has been involved in the German section since September 2016. It regularly issues calls to actively counter any anti-academic sentiments. And the HRK consistently lobbies governments when academic freedoms or individual academics or researchers are threatened.

The German Rectors' Conference stands for diversity in higher education and research and through the "German Universities. Open to the world" campaign, launched in 2015, it counters prejudice, xenophobia, racism and chauvinism while encouraging open-

mindedness and giving wider exposure to what is, in fact, the general stance of German academics on these issues. Since 2015, the HRK has also been supporting universities in their successful efforts to integrate increased numbers of refugees who were students in their home countries or who are interested in higher education.

To promote dialogue with society, the HRK supports the outreach activities of German universities and has been providing ongoing advice and strategic guidance. The HRK awarded a prize for university communications between 2005 and 2019 in cooperation with ZEIT Verlag and the Robert Bosch Foundation and recently introduced an Excellence in Community Engagement Award for universities together with these partners. In addition, HRK takes part in networks and public initiatives which seek to foster competence in digital environments or which encourage young female students, in particular, in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

In 2020, the HRK's executive board set up a working group that deliberates on the future of university communications in Germany. The German Rectors' Conference promotes the exploration of up-to-date modes and forms of science and humanities communication. This is about more than merely communicating new research findings in an engaging way; it is also about promoting a comprehensive public understanding of academic work and standards. The HRK is co-founder of the "Wissenschaft im Dialog" initiative, which tests innovative dialogical communication formats. As a member of the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany, the HRK also takes part in a joint communication initiative on animal research.

**GERMAN
UNIVERSITIES
OPEN TO
THE WORLD
AGAINST RACISM
AND CHAUVINISM**

Universities and their Legal Framework



The Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, the country's constitution, guarantees the freedom of sciences, research and teaching. It therefore forms the foundation of the German higher education system. As universities are predominantly regulated by the sixteen federal states, the respective state laws and constitutions are the most important legal framework for universities. By contrast, only a few matters may be regulated at federal level, for example higher education qualifications and university admission.

Broadly speaking, public universities have a high level of self-governance when it comes to regulating academic matters. However, the exact extent of this autonomy is often the subject of political debate and negotiations between the universities and the respective federal states. Universities strive for autonomy, particularly when it comes to managing and distributing funds and making decisions on staff structure, the appointment of professors and matters of general organisation.

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) supports universities in their endeavour to preserve maximum autonomy. It believes the universities' freedom of action, flexibility and planning security are essential for facing global competition. At the same time, it acknowledges that universities are accountable to state and federal parliaments, governments and the country's citizens for their actions. In that spirit, the HRK weighs in on the drafting and redrafting of state and federal laws as well as of EU regulation. As the voice of German universities, the HRK challenges and makes suggestions stating its position on legislation and case law in higher education.

From the HRK's perspective, the state governments should focus on the legal supervision of the universities and should not go down the route of ministerial decrees and individual directives. The HRK is campaigning for the introduction of global budgets for universities. Moreover, universities should have the right to nominate and appoint professors autonomously. The interests of the states, and thus the taxpayer, should be taken into consideration in multi-year target agreements and institutional contracts. At the same time, the regulatory system within the university should strike a balance between the university's development as an institution and individual interests, particularly those of academic staff.

Against this backdrop, the HRK continuously addresses various aspects of university governance. Recently, the HRK outlined organisational structures that aim at achieving maximum productivity from the complex interaction between the various institutional bodies. The HRK also touched on important individual issues, such as freedom of speech and the freedom of science, competent processing of data and information in the digital age, systematic staff development and promoting diversity and equal opportunities for women in academia and science.

University Funding

The budgets of German universities consist of three main components: basic funding, programme funding and third-party funding. Overall, around 90 per cent of this funding for German universities comes from the public purse.

The universities receive basic funding from the federal states, which, because of their constitutional mandate for education, science and culture, bear the responsibility for public universities. This basic funding makes up around 60 per cent of the total budgets of the public universities.

Programme funding is made available to universities by the federal states, the federal government or jointly by the federal and state governments for a limited period, generally three to five years, and for a particular purpose (e.g. development of the quality of study and teaching, establishment of new study programmes). This means that these funds are not available to universities over the long term. Hence, the structures and services established with them must either become self-funded or be discontinued after funding ceases. Programme funding makes up around ten per cent of university budgets on average but varies widely between the individual universities.

In contrast, third-party funding can be allocated to universities by all public and private sources, as well as third-sector organisations. This third-party funding is provided through competitive processes, mostly for a defined project period, to support research and development, early career researchers and academic teaching. Intermediary funding organisations such as the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) play a particularly prominent role in this extramural funding. Third-party funding makes up around 30 per cent of German university budgets on average but varies between the individual universities.

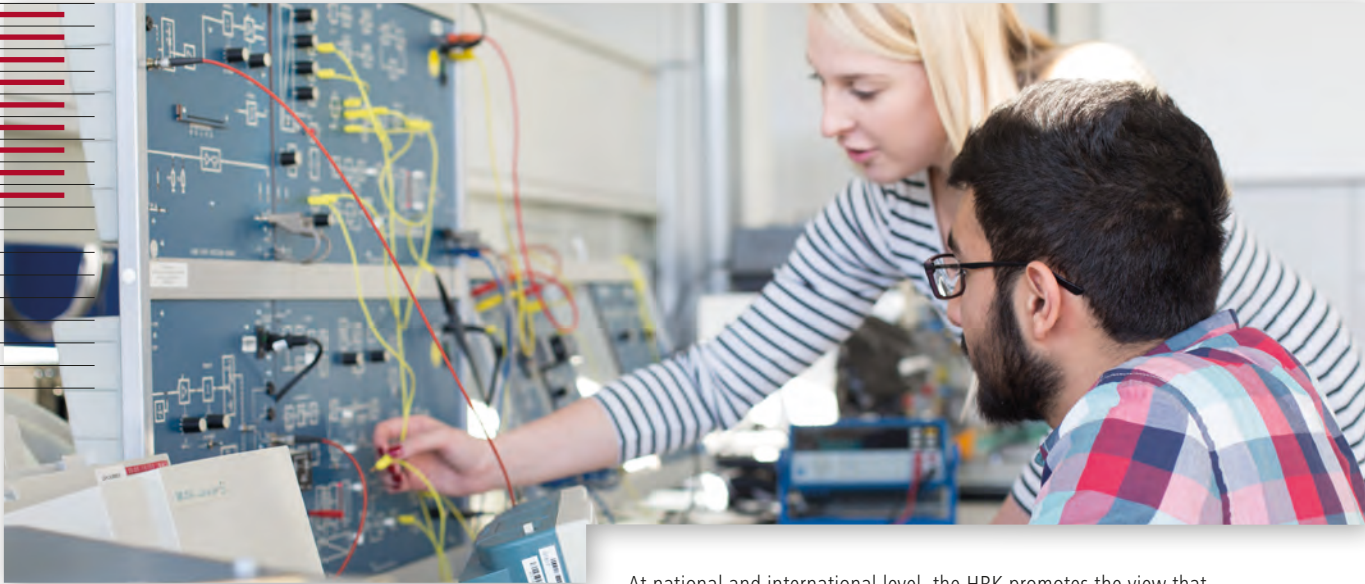
Tuition fees from students or graduates play only a minor role in the funding of Germany's public universities. Privately run universities, however, depend to a considerable extent on tuition fees.



Over recent years, the funding streams of public universities have undergone a structural shift in several respects. On the one hand, there has been above-average growth in the proportion of the universities' budgets coming from third-party funding, which increases dependency on competitive, project-based and fixed-term funding sources. On the other hand, the federal government, with its "Future Contract for Strengthening Studying and Teaching in Higher Education," has committed to permanently taking on the part-funding – and thus the shared responsibility long demanded by the HRK – of additional study places. Nevertheless, in the HRK's view the federal government cannot now hold back in other problem areas such as higher education facility construction and renovation or improvements to digital infrastructures. For this reason, the HRK advocates an adequate, task- and performance-based funding structure, in which the federal and state governments work in concert to safeguard and further strengthen the strong appeal of German universities for prospective German and international students and their competitiveness in research and innovation.



Research and Innovation



Publicly financed research in Germany is predominantly conducted at universities. They collaborate closely with non-university research institutions – not just on research projects, but also in the form of joint professorships and in joint doctoral training programmes. Traditionally, German universities also cooperate in research, development and innovation with business and industry both in Germany and abroad.

Higher education institutions conduct research and teaching across the full spectrum of scientific and scholarly disciplines. The variety of institutional types and the disciplines they represent make them the perfect place for cross-disciplinary collaboration. The unity of research and teaching is essential for German universities; teaching benefits from proximity to the latest research processes.

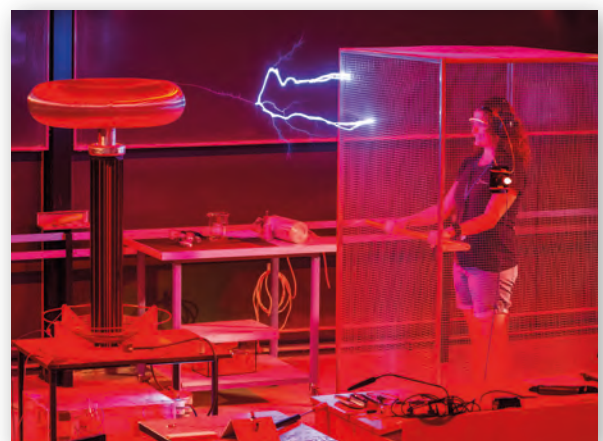
The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) emphasises the key role of universities in the knowledge rectangle of education, research, innovation and culture. It supports the claim that substantial funding for both fundamental and application-oriented research must be provided but is strongly opposed to university research being subjected to commercial pressures.

The HRK supports universities in the process of defining key areas in research and development based on their chosen strategy. This allows the university to develop priorities in academic disciplines and form the necessary critical mass of staff and infrastructures in certain areas. The HRK supports this process in several ways, including its Research Map, which visualises the research priorities of each individual university and thus of the entire German higher education system.

At national and international level, the HRK promotes the view that the core of doctoral education is the independent research work of the doctoral candidate. This first independent research makes it the key phase for early career researchers. At the same time, the HRK stresses that the right to confer a doctoral degree is the privilege of a university.

At EU level, the HRK supports the creation of a European education, research and innovation community with universities at its very centre. This community should be based on creative political collaboration between the European Union, member states and regions/federal states on a level playing field.

Doctoral graduates are in high demand in German companies requiring managers and researchers. Hence, doctoral training collaborations have been established between universities and businesses. The HRK engages in regular dialogue with major industry associations on this topic as well as others. The HRK and the industry associations jointly published guidelines for doctoral training collaborations in March 2018. These guidelines underline the fact that universities have sole responsibility for academic procedures and standards.



The HRK is a strongly advocate for adequate conditions and funding of research at universities – across all disciplines and from basic to applied research. Recently, the HRK proposed a new funding programme for bottom-up and science-driven projects in applied research to be adopted by the Federal Government. Such an approach could complement existing applied research programmes that primarily address industry and research institutions as their partners.

Science-friendly, future-oriented copyright legislation is one of the HRK's key concerns, both at national and European level. The HRK is actively involved in preparing new legislation to align copyright law with the current and prospective demands of the knowledge-based society. German universities are in favour of immediate and permanent open access publishing of new research articles and a fair and reasonable pricing policy on the part of academic publishers. On behalf of the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany, the HRK has been working on the DEAL project to negotiate nationwide, comprehensive, transparent and transformative “publish and read” agreements with the largest commercial publishers of scholarly journals.

In spring 2018, the HRK adopted guidelines for stating affiliations in publications so that the research work conducted by universities can be adequately acknowledged. For example, an institutional affiliation may be established through an employment contract or acceptance as a doctoral candidate. Authors may also have more than one affiliation. These guidelines are particularly important in the case of collaborations between universities and non-university research institutions.

Stating the correct affiliations in publications is also highly relevant to the assessment of research performance by third parties such as ranking agencies. Good ranking results are beneficial to the internationalization of universities, as they may enhance Germany's attractiveness as a location for research to international researchers and students. However, strategic participation in a university ranking should not be equated with its non-critical endorsement in terms of methodology or marketing. In February 2019, a service project was set up in the HRK to support universities in their informed participation in international rankings.



The HRK's **Research Map** provides information on the key research areas of German universities and universities of applied sciences. The research priorities listed here are central to a university's institutional profile. The Research Map thus helps to identify centres of expertise and helps researchers to explore opportunities for collaboration. Ranging from additive manufacturing to zoonotic diseases and spread out across the country, the research priorities listed in the Research Map reflect the distributed excellence of German universities. Information is available in both German and English. www.researchmap.de

The German Rectors' Conference



The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) is the association of universities in Germany. The HRK is an independent organisation, representing all types of higher education institutions. More than 92 percent of all students in Germany are enrolled at its member universities. Hence, the HRK is the voice of German universities vis-à-vis policymakers and the public.

The German Rectors' Conference

→ shapes opinion and represents interests

The HRK helps to set the political agenda and lead public discussion on all issues relating to the universities. It develops basic positions at German, European and international level. In this process, it often collaborates with partners from academia and science as well as policymakers, employers' associations and trade unions. The HRK represents the universities' positions in Germany and Europe as well as on an international scale.

→ provides services

By hosting events and issuing publications the HRK supports its member institutions and provides them with a platform for exchange with each other. Furthermore, the HRK offers individual consultation and has set up specific services on key issues relating to university development so that its members can obtain systematic advice and support, for example on how to implement the European Study Reform, on internationalisation and on digitalisation. The HRK also provides policymakers, the media and society in general with information on the higher education system.

Roots

The HRK was set up as the West German Rectors' Conference (WRK) in 1949, the same year in which the Federal Republic of Germany was established. Its founding was part of Germany's democratic development. To this day, the HRK speaks out for academic autonomy, freedom of opinion, tolerance and open-mindedness. Following the unification of the two German states, the first universities from the new federal states joined in 1990 and the WRK was renamed the German Rectors' Conference (HRK).

Funding

The budget of approximately €7.9 million per annum comes from university contributions and funds provided by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. State governments pay the university contributions for their respective state institutions of higher education. Fixed-term projects receive third-party funding. The Foundation for the Promotion of the HRK is the legal and financial body of the HRK.

How the HRK works

➤ The **General Assembly** is the supreme decision-making body. It is convened twice a year to discuss and decide on key issues, changes to the HRK's rules of procedure and the budget. The General Assembly is always hosted by one of the HRK member institutions.

➤ The **Senate** meets three times a year. Its main purpose is to ensure exchange between the universities of all 16 states (Bundesländer). The Senate consists of 36 university representatives from across the country.

➤ The **Executive Board** is the HRK's governing body. Serving on it are the President, five Vice-Presidents elected by the General Assembly and the spokespeople elected by the member groups of the universities and universities of applied sciences. All Vice-Presidents are current or former university leaders.

➤ The **President** represents the HRK both internally and externally. He or she is responsible for day-to-day business and convenes and chairs the meetings of the various bodies. The General Assembly elects the President. Only current or former university leaders are eligible for this office. The term of office is three years, with the option of being re-elected once.

➤ The **Standing Committees** prepare the HRK's resolutions and recommendations. Alongside university leaders, their members include other university representatives and non-university experts.

➤ The **HRK Secretariat's offices** in Berlin, Bonn and Brussels support the work of the bodies and commissions, and provide information and services to both the HRK member universities and the general public.



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Study and Teaching



In Germany, higher education study programmes are predominantly offered by different types of universities, ranging from comprehensive universities and technical universities to universities of applied sciences, colleges of arts and music and pedagogical universities.

The introduction of bachelor's and master's degree programmes initiated by the European Study Reform (or "Bologna Process") shifted the focus to students' learning processes; alongside gaining knowledge in a given discipline, acquiring key competences is systematically encouraged. From developing student-centred study programmes and innovative forms of assessment to the accreditation of degree courses, this has major consequences for the organisation of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the overall aim remains unchanged, i.e. to provide an academic education which enhances the students' personal development while at the same time reflecting the needs of the labour market.

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) is deeply committed to the aims of the European Study Reform and points to the impressive reform efforts on the part of universities, thanks to which the Bologna Process has now been implemented virtually everywhere in Germany. It continuously identifies important steps for further development, for example the facilitation of mobility through improved recognition procedures, the appropriate expansion of system accreditation and better use of flexibility in organising individual learning paths.

The HRK is significantly involved in quality assurance based on the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and strives for processes to ensure and develop the quality of degree programmes while doing justice to the individual profiles of universities. In so doing, the HRK assumes that the unity of research and teaching is key to the quality of teaching and that good teaching primarily depends on capable staff. Sufficient basic funding is required to attract and keep that staff.

In 2020, around 2.9 million students were enrolled at German universities – a record figure. The number of university entrants has remained constant at around 500,000 since 2011. The number of study programmes has risen sharply to the current 20,000. In response to the fact that state financing has clearly fallen short of the needs dictated by student numbers and the new forms of study, the HRK successfully lobbied for the Future Contract for Strengthening Studying and Teaching in Higher Education. Starting in 2021, this agreement provides a stable basis for the higher education funding through a system of co-financing from the federal and state governments.

A revised version of the Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (HQR) was adopted in early 2017. This framework plays an important role in accreditation, as the process verifies whether a degree programme complies with the HQR's description of competencies. The new version of the HQR, drafted together with the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German states and the Federal Ministry of Education

and Research, now provides an in-depth description of the competences that should be evident with the completion of a bachelor's or master's programme or a doctoral degree. The HQR relates directly to the German Qualifications Framework, which covers all areas of education. The HRK represents the universities' interests in the national German Qualifications Framework working group.

In the newly structured accreditation system, the Accreditation Council (representing all stakeholders, among which the number of representatives from academia and science has significantly increased) has been making decisions on programme or system accreditation and alternative procedures since early 2018. The introduction of this third type of process was welcomed by the HRK. It includes external quality assurance procedures at individual universities that comply with the ESG and the requirements stipulated in the ordinances but that go beyond this in terms of quality development.

The HRK is also focusing on the digitalisation of teaching. It creates significant momentum here as an initiator of and project partner for the "Hochschulforum Digitalisierung" (Higher Education Forum on Digitalisation) that aims to inform, advise and connect stakeholders from higher education institutions, politics and civil society. As a member of the Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany, the HRK takes part in the Digital Information priority initiative 2018-2022 as well as in the steering committee of the "Digital learning, teaching and networking" working group.



The HRK supported German universities in their study reform efforts with the project "**nexus** – Forming Transitions, Promoting Student Success" from 2014 to 2020. This initiative focused on optimising the initial phase of a study programme, facilitating student mobility through improved recognition and the transition of graduates to the labour market.

www.hrk-nexus.de/ (in German only)

In August 2020, HRK started the project "**MODUS** – Strengthening mobility and transitions: Academic recognition and recognition of prior learning at HEI", which supports universities in the enhancement of recognition processes. The measures within the project include coordination and the establishment of standards, the development of technical solutions and information and advice.

www.hrk-modus.de/ (in German only)



International Affairs



Today, the German higher education landscape is more international than ever before. Germany is one of the most popular destinations for internationally mobile students and an attractive teaching and research location for scholars and researchers from all over the world. All areas within universities contribute to this internationality of research, teaching and learning. Along with collaboration between universities at the institutional level, there are innumerable cooperation arrangements at faculty and department level, and between institutes and individual researchers. The forms taken by these cooperation arrangements are equally diverse. Internationality can be described as part of the natural fabric of the German higher education landscape.

German universities benefit substantially from cross-border cooperation. Only by means of close collaboration with its international partners can the German higher education system remain competitive in the long term, both in its curricula and its research and teaching methods. Openness to the world, the capacity for discourse, and cultural understanding all critically depend on international contact. For this reason, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) believes that a future-ready university must see itself as a formative part of the global university community and act accordingly. This creates many challenges at the strategic level and in the university's day-to-day teaching, learning and administration activities.

The HRK assists member universities with the internationalisation process by providing recommendations for action and a range of

concrete services. Recently, the HRK Executive Board adopted guidelines and standards in international university cooperation designed to provide key players – both the universities as institutions and the individual members of universities – with support and guidance on the ground when setting up and maintaining resilient university partnerships.

In addition, the HRK represents the interests of German universities internationally. This involves cooperating with universities, university associations and other partner organisations in Europe and across the world. Regular meetings are held between the HRK and the British, French, Austrian, Polish, Russian and Swiss rectors' conferences. This is complemented by an intensive exchange in the framework of European platforms, such as the European University Association or the newly established network 'Universities for Enlightenment' which focusses on safeguarding academic freedom and university autonomy. Dialogue and exchange also take place with international partners outside of Europe, for instance with American, Colombian, Japanese, Iranian, Peruvian and Taiwanese university partners.

In addition, the HRK has long been putting its commitment to development policy into practice through the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES). The programme, developed jointly by the DAAD and the HRK, offers a package of measures – training courses, dialogue events, projects and partnerships – through which universities in the Global South can align their training courses with international quality standards, expand their research capacities and develop their organisational structures.

One of the HRK's established formats is the bi-annual Global University Leaders Council Hamburg, to which the HRK, together with the Körber-Stiftung and the Universität Hamburg, invites the presidents of around 50 research universities from six continents. The key topic of the most recent meeting was the role of universities in society. The Hamburg Declaration adopted at the meeting formulates recommendations how universities can live up to societal expectations while at the same time safeguarding academic freedom and university autonomy.

The HRK also promotes the internationalisation of individual universities, thus enhancing the internationality of the German higher education system as a whole. For example, the HRK Audit 'Internationalisation of Universities' helps German universities develop a strategic approach to their internationalisation process. More than 90 universities have so far completed the Audit, and a series of audited universities are now in the Re-Audit phase. The HRK also provides consultancy services for smaller, specialised universities through its "Audit kompakt" and Audit Strategy Workshop.

The project HRK-EXPERTISE Internationalisation, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, builds on experience gained in the HRK Audit and aims to further develop the internationalisation of universities while focussing on quality and to integrate internationalisation into all dimensions of higher education activities.

Various formats – topic workshops, process workshops, round tables and peer-to-peer consultation – address specific aspects of internationalisation in dialogue with a university's relevant stakeholders and in a manner responsive to their needs. In addition, the HRK-EXPERTISE Manuals address pressing questions and topics of implementation processes in internationalisation and provide a well-reflected range of examples from German universities. So far, the published manuals have touched on topics such as the internationalisation of curricula and the outgoing mobility of junior researchers or fostered support structures for international researchers through regional cooperation.

The HRK information portal **"International university partnerships"** documents the high degree of international networking by German universities. The website offers up-to-date information in German and English on over 38,300 agreements that exist between German universities and their more than 5,800 partner institutions in around 160 foreign countries. **www.internationale-hochschulk Kooperationen.de/en/**





In a landmark resolution in response to Brexit and the rise of nationalist parties in many EU member states, the HRK stated in 2016 that “European universities see themselves more clearly than ever as a stronghold of the European Idea and a global mind-set” and as a “crucial pillar of a dynamically developing European civil and knowledge society.” This strong claim is built on the observation that universities represent ground-breaking research, high-quality teaching and cutting-edge innovation. Moreover, universities are keepers of cultural achievements and centres of critical thinking. In short, they represent a dynamic ‘knowledge rectangle’ of education, research, innovation and culture, unmatched by any other institution in civil society. Located all over Europe and connected by the mobility of students and researchers inherent to research and higher education, universities safeguard and transmit European values and the idea of a diverse and yet closely connected Europe. The HRK promotes the ever-stronger cooperation of universities in the European Union and beyond – not by harmonization but by improving the compatibility of the European university landscape.

For several years, the German Rectors’ Conference (HRK) has been deducing a set of policy positions from this key concept and establishing university activities in the knowledge rectangle as its overarching EU leitmotif. The positions stated by the HRK in its dialogue with all relevant players include the demand to make EU-wide “distributed excellence” a fundamental building block of any policy activity, to stress the universities’ linking function between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area and to advocate for multi-level funding support appropriate to the essential role of universities for the European University Alliances from the EU, member states, and regions.

To implement the aforementioned principles, the HRK maintains a continuous policy dialogue with universities and other national rectors’ conferences in Europe, on a bilateral level and in the arena of the European University Association. Together with these allies, the HRK has recently put a strong emphasis on the pilot phase of the new EU university network programme, lobbying for the inclusion of all sides of the knowledge rectangle, appropriate funding, and a true bottom up approach.

Comparable activities are targeted at the design phase of Horizon Europe, the 9th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027), for which the HRK advocates excellence as the relevant benchmark, science-driven content, and a cooperation-oriented structure to ensure European added value.

In relation to teaching and study, the HRK supports the “shift from teaching to learning” stipulated by the Bologna Process. Thus, the HRK participated in a range of European projects that aim at improving academic recognition and promote pedagogical reforms, such as Mastermind Europe, FAIR – Focus on Automatic Institutional Recognition and EFFECT – the European Forum for Enhanced Cooperation in Teaching and Learning.

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