

16 May 2024**HRK: Call for a comprehensive approach to the study and career paths of international students in Germany**

German universities would like to further improve the foundations and framework conditions for successful study and career paths for their international students. In a resolution passed by the General Assembly of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), they propose a comprehensive package of measures. The universities themselves could take additional steps to ensure successful professional and social integration. At the same time, they are making concrete demands to the federal and state governments to improve the legal, regulatory and financial framework conditions.

"Germany is one of the world's most popular host countries for internationally mobile students. This speaks for the high quality and attractiveness of the study programmes offered by our universities. It also generally demonstrates the successes in the institutional internationalisation of the German higher education system," explained Prof Dr Angela Ittel, HRK Vice-President for International Affairs, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, at the HRK's General Assembly in Fulda yesterday. "However, we must not rest on our laurels, but must continuously ensure that the framework conditions for the many international students who fortunately come to us are suitable to the extent that they are happy to contribute to innovation in Germany in the long term with their specific knowledge and skills."

According to Ittel, a successful overall strategy must focus on ensuring individual student success as well as improving residence and retention conditions. At an institutional level, the aim is to make access to higher education even more flexible and to diversify study preparation. There must also be systematic safeguarding of academic, language and social support as well as improved support during the transition to gainful employment. However, this can only succeed if the structural underfunding of university internationalisation is reduced. In addition, the legal and regulatory framework must be continuously optimised and language skills, both in German and English, must be valued much more highly as a success factor for studying and labour market integration.

The HRK has repeatedly drawn attention to the importance of the internationalisation of higher education and research for sustainable universities and the German economy. Also, against the background of securing skilled labour within science, it is essential to continuously attract international talent to Germany as a location for study and research and to retain such individuals at universities by offering attractive study and career conditions.

"The Federal Government's skilled labour strategy underlines the increasing demand for academically highly qualified individuals from Germany and abroad on the German labour market. Universities make an extremely important contribution to this. They therefore play an essential role in securing the future of Germany as a centre of innovation," added HRK President Prof Dr Walter Rosenthal. "Nevertheless, international students should of course not be viewed solely from the perspective of their potential benefits for the German economy. The specific situation of international students, the interests of the sending countries and, finally, the legitimate needs of the universities must also be given appropriate consideration in political deliberations."

[View text of the resolution \(in German\)](#)