

**16 December 2024****Attracting international students for Germany's future: recommendations of the BDA, BDI and HRK University/Business Working Group**

International students offer Germany great potential. They make a decisive contribution to ensuring innovation and competitiveness. This makes it all the more important that employers, universities, politicians and all other stakeholders continue to intensify their efforts to ensure the successful transition of this group of people into the labour market and their integration into society. This is the central objective of a new position paper by the University/Business Working Group of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA), the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK).

"As highly qualified specialists, international students can make essential contributions to our science and economy and enrich our society with new ideas and perspectives," explains Prof Dr Ulrich Bartosch, Vice-President of the HRK and co-chair of the working group. "In order to attract young people to study in Germany and then retain them, we need a culture of openness and appreciation in administration, business and society. We also need to ensure that international students succeed in their studies and make an easy transition into the labour market and actively integrate them into our society."

With around 380 000 international students currently studying at German universities, Germany is one of the most attractive destination countries in the world. However, additional measures are needed to increase the retention rate and make it easier to take up long-term employment in Germany. The experts from universities and industry therefore recommend improving the living, studying and working conditions for international students in a targeted manner. Among other things, they emphasise the need to accelerate visa procedures, strengthen multilingualism in study programmes and improve support and counselling services. Adequate German language skills are also essential for everyday life and access to the labour market. To ensure the success of the measures, it is essential to strengthen cooperation between universities, businesses and public bodies.

"International talent is a competitive advantage for the economy," says Oliver Maassen, Member of the Executive Board of Trumpf SE + Co. KG and co-chair of the working group. "We must and want to utilise this potential. This means that businesses have to step up too. Whether it's by offering internships, working student positions or trainee programmes, it's important that companies provide international students with insights at an early stage and seek contact with them. This facilitates the transition to employment and increases the chance that these talents will stay with us in the long

term. In the joint recommendations, we show politicians, universities and industry where there is a concrete need for action.”

Position paper “International students and graduates – a source of potential for Germany. Recommendations of the BDA, BDI and HRK University/Business Working Group” (in German)

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