

German-Russian Rectors' Meeting
Bonn, 6 October 2015

Joint Statement

Current developments in the higher education systems of Germany and Russia were discussed at the meeting of representatives of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the Association of Leading Universities in Bonn on 6 October 2015. The discussion aimed at intensifying the existing good academic cooperation in learning, teaching and research between German and Russian universities.

The participants stated that in the higher education systems of both countries in-depth reform processes are taking place which are directed at improving both the efficiency and the autonomy of universities. They agreed to use the scope of action for universities which results from these processes to further improve relationships between universities. They reached an agreement on the following:

- to continue the intensive exchange of information about the developments in the higher education systems;
- to identify specific obstacles to cooperation between universities;
- to coordinate joint steps to remove these obstacles.

Obstacles should be identified and removed in the following areas of cooperation:

- Exchange of students: recognition of academic achievements and qualifications with regard to continuing the academic career, establishment of joint programmes with double degree, enhancement of the attractiveness of Russian universities for German students.
- Exchange of early-stage researchers: recognition of scientific degrees with regard to continuing the academic career, involvement of doctoral candidates in own and joint research work, establishment of joint graduate schools.
- Exchange of teaching and research staff: enlargement of the group of people involved, establishment of guest professorships, establishment and further development of joint structures in teaching and research.

For these specific areas of cooperation as overarching problems have to be considered:

- Insufficient information about the performance and thus also about the attractiveness of both countries as locations for universities and science.
- General conditions for mobility: in particular financial support and visa arrangements.
- General conditions for joint research activities: participation in research endeavours and research projects at national, bilateral and international level and relevant funding possibilities.

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the Association of Leading Universities will consider existing examples of good practice when dealing with these problems. Regarding problems which cannot be solved within the universities' autonomy, the partners will strive for a solution by approaching competent political bodies.

The results will be made available to universities in both countries.

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