



Attention: news desks/science and education correspondents

For immediate release

11 November 2015

Press release: European Universities for an Open World

The German Rectors' Conference ([Hochschulrektorenkonferenz - HRK](#)) has today, 11 November, launched an initiative for 'Open Universities', calling on its members to stand up against any form of xenophobia, and to defend the basic university values of openness, tolerance and diversity against the backdrop of the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe. The European University Association (EUA) welcomes and fully supports the HRK's initiative.



Openness, tolerance and inclusiveness are fundamental university values, and diversity of opinion and the free exchange of ideas are the basis of all academic teaching and research. European universities in particular have a long history of cooperating beyond national boundaries be it in Europe or with

partners around the world.

Over the past decades cooperation has flourished with the support of national and European policies and funding. EUA's [2015 Trends report](#) shows that increased internationalisation has been one of the most important developments for universities in recent years. This trend is expected to continue as a result of increase in student numbers globally and a growing interest in Europe as a study destination. The world is facing complex and interconnected challenges that require global solutions, making it essential for today's students to become not only European but global citizens.

European universities have a long tradition of welcoming international students, staff and researchers as well as threatened scholars from different parts of the world. Today, Europe faces major challenges with political, economic and societal implications in the form of massive inward migration and a weakening of European solidarity. EUA therefore calls on universities and their communities to reassert their commitment to the fundamental values of openness, tolerance and solidarity, by opposing any form of racism, discrimination and national stereotyping; by unreservedly committing to an open society; and by encouraging other societal actors to do the same.

EUA President Rolf Tarrach underlines: "Europe's universities are the main source, transmitter and repository of knowledge on our continent and this knowledge leaves no room for xenophobia and hate. Instead it empowers us to support any efforts that aim to integrate those who are forced to leave their countries by sharing with them our democratic values, rights and responsibilities."

ENDS

Notes:

- EUA Statement: [European universities' response to the refugee crisis](#)
- Website of German Rectors' Conference (HRK): <http://www.hrk.de/universities-against-xenophobia>
- The publication "Trends 2015: Learning and Teaching in European Universities" is available here: http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/EUA_Trends_2015_web.pdf?sfvrsn=18, page 28 on Internationalisation
- Download the European Universities for an Open World logo here: http://eua.be/Libraries/project-logos-images/eua_logo_open_world-1.png?sfvrsn=2

For more information, please contact Ulrike Reimann, Tel: +32 2 743 11 58, Mobile: +32 491 158972, email: ulrike.reimann@eua.be

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research.