

28 November 2023

Student numbers: Universities remain at a high level

In Berlin, the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Professor Dr Walter Rosenthal, commented on the Federal Statistical Office's press release on current student numbers as follows:

"Overall, student numbers remain at a very high level. The number of first-semester students even rose by 1.2 per cent to 479,000. While the number of young people inclined to study had already decreased before the COVID-19 pandemic and led to a slight decline in the number of new students, this effect was exacerbated by the absence of international students in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The universities have now overcome the COVID-19 effect and have regained ground among beginners. This shows that German universities continue to be very attractive both in Germany and abroad.

In contrast, the total number of students enrolled in the current winter semester 2023/2024 fell slightly for the second time by 1.7 per cent to 2,871,000. This is primarily due to the exceptionally high number of first-year students – over half a million per year until 2019. These former first-semester students are now leaving the universities and reducing the total number of students.

Overall, the figures show the importance and attractiveness of universities for Germany as a business and research location. Academic education remains a key prerequisite for overcoming social and economic challenges. Stable funding for universities therefore remains essential."