



adh | Max-Planck-Str. 2 | 64807 Dieburg

Press release

adh and HRK on university sports in view of the COVID-19 pandemic: support the resumption of face-to-face programmes and provide planning security

(18/10/2021) For decades, university sports have made significant contributions to the health, disease prevention and social cohesion of university members and maintained multiple links with players in civil society in relevant regions, not least in popular and professional sport. Like other core areas of higher education, university sports in Germany have been put under very severe restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, they could provide important support for preventing disease, maintaining and strengthening resilience as well as physical and mental health, with programmes that are predominantly provided online for students in Germany in particular. These programmes helped to ensure that people also engaged in (digital) social interaction outside of online teaching and learning. University sports significantly supported students and university staff in staying mentally and physically active.

Having said that, since March 2020, it has become largely impossible for university sports facilities to fully and responsibly fulfil their mandate, which is often enshrined in law, in its previous form. The loss of fee-based income, the main source of financing for university sports in Germany, has resulted in considerable losses that threaten the existence of some university sports facilities, and it was not feasible to continue to pay many student trainers. Compensation by means of ad hoc support from university leaders as well as the release of medium-term provisions for facility maintenance, renovation and new construction cannot prevent university sports facilities, which rely on independent refinancing, from becoming structurally strained.

"University sports facilities have fully supported all measures to curb the pandemic and repeatedly complied with rule changes at short notice, flexibly and very creatively in order to fulfil their legal mandate as best possible. Unlike organised sport, however, university sports did not have the option of compensating for revenue shortfalls and exceptional expenses using the 'COVID-19 funds' made available to promote sports. The unresolved question of how to manage financial shortfalls and the uncertain outlook caused by COVID-19 regarding the resumption of the regular university sports programme have resulted in a high degree of uncertainty, among other things, when it comes to personnel and investment decisions that have often been planned for years," says adh Executive Board Chair Jörg Förster.

The President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Professor Dr Peter-André Alt, made the following comments: "From the point of view of university leaders, university sports are an integral part of the mission of universities to promote health, disease prevention, resilience, tolerance and mutual understanding across cultural and social divides. This highlights the importance of university sports in their wide range of programmes for coping with the pandemic and its physical and psychological consequences for students and university staff. For this reason, I expressly welcome the fact that many university leaders have supported the university sports facilities in recent months with short-term financial aid. It is clear, however, that university sports must be taken into account permanently and transparently in the context of university financing in all states."

Gefördert durch:



aufgrund eines Beschlusses des Deutschen Bundestages

The adh and the HRK jointly make reference to the fact that compensation for losses incurred due to the pandemic is required to facilitate the resumption of face-to-face university sports events in the winter semester 2021/2022 and of student life on campus in terms of integration, disease prevention and social cohesion. adh and HRK call on the states to approach their universities and work with them to develop sustainable solutions for the future of university sports.

Free image material

- [Jörg Förster, adh Executive Board Chairman](#) (photo: adh)
- [Dr Peter-André Alt, President of the German Rectors' Conference](#)

Contact

German University Sports Federation
Julia Frasch
Public Relations Officer
Tel.: +49 163 2086114
E-mail: frasch@adh.de

Homepage: www.adh.de
Facebook: www.facebook.com/hochschulsportverband
Twitter: www.twitter.com/@adhGER
Instagram: www.instagram.com/adh.de/
Moving image: www.youtube.com/user/Hochschulsportkanal

German Rectors' Conference
Susanne Schilden
Head of Communications, Press Officer
Tel.: +49 228 887 152
E-mail: schilden@hrk.de

Homepage www.hrk.de
Twitter www.twitter.com/hrk_aktuell