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New student numbers: universities performing well despite COVID-19

The President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Professor Dr Peter-André Alt, has just commented in Berlin on today's press release from the Federal Statistical Office on current student numbers.

"The total number of students of well over 2.9 million in the current winter semester represents an all-time high, slightly above last year's figure. German universities offer their students varied and high-quality education and thus fundamental opportunities for their futures. This is made possible by the extraordinary efforts of teaching staff, who, with the support of a large number of other staff members, continue to teach as best they can in person and, if necessary, digitally, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

It seems reasonable to attribute the decline in the number of first-year students to the effects of the pandemic. This figure fell by around 18,000 and four percent to 472,000. This is also below the most recent KMK projection of 487,000, which, however, explicitly took no effects of COVID-19 into account. The decline in the number of international first-year students appears to be the main reason for the drop. There was a slump of almost 25,000 last year, and the numbers are not expected to have recovered from this yet this year.

Universities are once again in an enormously challenging phase due to the current pandemic situation. They will ensure that teaching will continue with prudence, responsibility and flexibility."

[Link to the Publication of the Federal Statistical Office \(in German\)](#)