

Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES):
Conference on "Cross-Border Education and Development Co-operation"

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Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, distinguished guests,

it is a great pleasure and honour to welcome you all on behalf of the German Academic Exchange Service to our conference „Cross-Border Education and Development Co-operation“. My name is Michael Harms and I work in DAAD's Department of Development Co-operation. We are very proud that colleagues from more than 20 nations have gathered here in Bonn to discuss the topic of this symposium – which is the organisation and implementation of university courses across countries and indeed continents by equal partners.

Actually, to tell you the truth, we have been amazed by the interest that our call to hold this conference has aroused. Originally, we had planned to have a somewhat cosy meeting with around 60 participants but then had to close our list when we figured that we already had 100 enrolments. Surely, this shows that the topic has somewhat struck a nerve, maybe because academics and university administrators have begun to realise the potential that cross-border education might be able to unfold and that it might be in fact a win-win situation for all parties concerned. I am confident that the conference will certainly be a good forum to discuss this topic with people who know all about it not least because this is what they have been doing for a long time. Some of them with incredible success for the past 20 years. But we will hear about that later this morning.

I should like to conclude with the note that the organisers of this conference, the German Academic Exchange Service and the German Rector's Conference, have initiated this event because we see it as a sequel and indeed a necessary continuation of the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies that we have started between Universities in the North, the South and the East.

I wish all of us a fruitful and productive conference. Before I shall pass on to our co-organiser Marijke Wahlers of the German Rector's Conference, I would like to mention a couple of organisational things: first of all we have three more rooms beside this plenary at our disposal for the working groups. There are located on the first floor and are all well signposted. Second, the reimbursement for speakers and invited international guests will take place at various times throughout the conference. We have prepared lists for that which you find at the reception and at the door of every room we are in. Third, the reception will be staffed at all times and is willing to help you with any query you may have.

Once again, I wish all of us a good and successful time here in Bonn.

Thank you very much.