Current Higher Education and Research Policy Issues in Germany

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German Rectors’ Conference
Structure of the Presentation

- The German University System & the HRK
- Current Issues I: Higher Education in High Demand
- Current Issues II: Sharpening of Institutional Mission & Profile
- Current Issues III: Enhanced Interconnectedness between University Research & Extra-University Research
- Current Issues IV: Increasingly Strategic Approach in Internationalisation
The German University System

Legal Framework: Federal government and state governments

Core funding provided by state governments

Research funding predominantly provided by federal government, but also by EU and industry
Member Institutions

The **German Rectors’ Conference** is the association of state and state-recognized universities in Germany.

The HRK currently has **268 member institutions** which account for **94 per cent of matriculated students** in Germany.

- 102 Universities
- 121 Univ. of Applied Sciences
- 45 Colleges of Art and Music
Mission

The HRK is the political and public voice of the universities and provides a forum for the process of forming joint policies and practices.

- Agenda setting and advocacy at national and international level
- Service provision for member institutions
HRK Resolutions and Recommendations (selected)

- „Creating a European Education, Research and Innovation Community“ (2016)
- “On the Further Development of the Accreditation System” (2016)
- “European Study Reform” (2015)
- “Managing Cooperative Doctoral Degree Programmes” (2015)
- “Franchising Models in Medicine and Medical Schools” (2015)
- “On Basic and Project Funding for the Universities” (2014)
- “MOOCs in the Context of Digital Teaching” (2014)
- “Recommendations on Teacher Education” (2013)
Current Issues I: Higher Education in High Demand

- **Increasing demand for higher education**: In the framework of various funding schemes („Higher Education Pacts”) Federal and state governments are investing additional funds in the expansion of study opportunities.

- **Change of the Basic Law as a „window of opportunity“ for the universities**: A recent change to the Basic Law now allows the Federal Government (again) to extend basic financing for universities directly and on a long-term basis.

- **Nevertheless: Core funding** has in real terms hardly increased since the 1990s, third-party funding has more than doubled. Third-party funds cannot compensate for lack in core funding.
University Entrants: KMK Forecast, HEP Set and Actual Performance

- KMK 2012
- KMK 2014

Current Issues I: Higher Education in High Demand
Current Issues II: Sharpening of Institutional Mission & Profile

Growing institutional autonomy and the increasing establishment of competitive structures lead to a permanent process of profile building and differentiation in the national university sector.
Hallmark of the German University System: A Sound Balance between Excellence and Diversity

„Academic and Competitive Agenda“
- Develop and support strong researchers/ fields/ departments
- Become internationally visible

„Academic and Social Agenda“
- Maintain and develop high level of research and teaching across wide range of subjects/ areas/ departments
- Cater for the needs of internal and external stakeholders (students, community, society as a whole)
HRK Research Map

- Universities inform a broad international audience about their research priorities (interactive database)
- 344 key research priorities of German universities; up to eight research priorities per university (with at least 25 professorships each)
- Parallel research map for universities of applied sciences was launched in 2014: 153 key research priorities

www.researchmap.de
Current Issues III: Enhanced Interconnectedness between University Research & Extra-University Research
Promoting Top-Level Research: the Excellence Initiative

- 44 participating universities
- Roughly € 4.6 billion (2006 - 2017)
- Three lines of funding:
  - Graduate schools to promote young researchers
  - Excellence clusters to promote world-class research
  - Plans for advancing top-level university research

Source: DFG
Ensuring Sustainability in Promoting Top-Level Research: the Excellence Strategy

- Starting from **2019**
- **€ 5.3 billion** for ten years, to be continued afterwards
- Funding for **45 – 50 excellence clusters** and **a limited number of excellence universities or university consortia**
- **Allocation of funds**: excellence clusters (€ 3 – 10 m p. a.) and excellence universities / university consortia (€ 10 – 15 m p. a.)
- Successful application for **two clusters of excellence** is a **prerequisite** for an application as a university of excellence.
- The **general goals** and the **basic structure** of programme are welcomed by the **HRK**.
From Basic Research to Development and Application

In 2014 German universities spent more than €14.9 billion on research and development:

- Third-party funded R&D accounted for €7.4 bn (2014). Thereof, third-party funding for R & D by business/industry amounted to 18.9%.

- The universities are the preferred partner for business–science collaboration in Germany (3/4 of collaborative activities). In this respect, German universities hold a top position worldwide (Source: OECD 2016).
Current Issues IV: Driving Internationalisation

- Germany has become a "global player" in transnational education. It is the **third most popular host country** for internationally mobile students worldwide (third only to the US and the UK, thus the No. 1 non-English speaking country).

- The number of **international students** has risen to **322,000** in 2015 (11.9% of all students; TOP 5 sending countries*: China, India, Russian Federation, Austria and France). Roughly **25,000 students** study in German higher education projects abroad.

- At the same time, the number of **mobile German students** has risen to **134,500** in 2013 (Top 5 destinations: A, NL, CH, GB and the US).
Increasingly strategic approach to internationalisation

- The German universities perceive of themselves as transnational actors within a world higher education system. They maintain 34,000 partnerships with over 5,000 partner universities worldwide.
- Most German universities have developed or are currently in the process of formulating an institutional internationalisation strategy.
- Also, importance of "internationalisation@home" as opportunity for international and intercultural learning on campus is growing.
Summing Up: Universities as the core of the national research & innovation system

The universities’ mandate in
- teaching & learning
- research & innovation and the
- training of early career researchers
makes them function as crystallisation points of the national research and innovation system.
Vielen Dank!
Thank you!
謝謝