

Joint statement

On the occasion of the first joint members' assembly meeting of German U15 and Udice in Paris, we emphasise our commitment to strengthen the partnership between leading French and German universities.

Our meeting takes place in tremendously challenging times – wars and terror against liberal democracies, rising geopolitical tensions, climate crisis, disruptive artificial intelligence, and increasingly fierce competition for global economic and technological advantage. These challenges call for determined answers. We are deeply convinced that universities have an essential responsibility to fulfil here. They are essential in our societies' endeavour to shape their future in a sustainable, self-determined and positive way. However, no country can achieve this alone. The demand for cooperation across borders was rarely more pressing than today.

French and German universities are particularly suited to this. The political initiatives of our two countries have long been a crucial driving force for the development of the European Union. Our universities share a long history of collaboration in research, teaching, and innovation which greatly benefits both countries' societies and economies. Our universities also share the same values. Our universities respect and will defend academic freedom. Our universities are committed to democratic and open science. And our universities pledge themselves to the unrestricted pursuit of knowledge and facts.

Against this background, UDICE and German U15 agree to:

- further intensify their collaboration;
- deepen their exchange, with a focus on research and science policy developments in both countries;
- serve as a hub to connecting leading universities in other European countries and globally;
- advocate in favour of the advancement of scientific excellence both in France and in Germany, and especially on the European level;
- articulate views on the future of science and research in Europe;
- advise policy-makers in France and Germany on science policy matters;
- establish networking formats for member universities to facilitate cooperation and the exchange of best practices.

Paris, November, 29th 2023

Prof. Michel Deneken,
Präsident von Udice

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Hoch,
Vorstandsvorsitzender von German U15