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**Universities for openness, tolerance and against xenophobia
Nationwide campaign by HRK member universities**

The member universities of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) are set to oppose xenophobia in Germany as part of a nationwide initiative. HRK members reached an agreement to this effect in Kiel yesterday. They will commit to their stance with the slogan "Universities for openness, tolerance and against xenophobia" on their websites. The universities are reacting to the incidents of racist verbal and physical attacks that have occurred over the past few weeks and months.

"Universities are open-minded places. Diverse opinions and international exchange constitute the foundations of their research and teaching activities. In light of the increasing xenophobic tendencies that can be seen at the moment, universities are actively advocating this plurality of opinions and exchange," said HRK President Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler, who initiated the campaign.

The General Meeting emphasised its concern of the universities, yet also expressed its willingness to take action at universities. University leaders want to encourage members of universities to stand up to xenophobia and act accordingly in a regional context," Hippler said. "In this phase we need a clear commitment and decisive action on the part of the majority of the population in support of a tolerant, open-minded society. Leaving aside political discussions on the challenges associated with the influx of refugees, this consensus must be clearly articulated. The universities want to lead by example."

www.hrk.de/universities-against-xenophobia

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