

Catholic Church Pastoral for International Students in Germany 2015

Internationalisation of the German Higher Education

The German system of Higher/Tertiary Education with its 423 universities/universities of applied sciences (ca. 100 private, but obliged to follow high standards of accreditation) has been challenged during the last about 15 years by processes of economisation and the implementation of the so called "Bologna-reform". There is still (and actually growing) a certain balancing position by the governmental and coordinating public agencies against tendencies to shape the universities (traditionally following in Germany the ideals of Humboldt) according to an "enterprise-model" (as "Leitbild") and to give a dominant role to vocational-oriented education ("Ausbildung") instead of a formation of the whole personality ("Bildung") via science in view of the common good of the society beyond labour-market. The level of privatisation is relatively low in the German Higher Education-sector. All this depends also on the policy of the federal states (Bundesländer) which maintain constitutionally a dominating influence inside the German cultural federalism. At the same time the often prevailing "benchmark"-orientation towards an international standard-model of a "world class university", mainly characterised by "excellence", has also been put into question accompanied by a recall of the traditional (cultural) strengths of the German universities pleading in general for a "bio-diversity" of university cultures and the possibility of "Differenzerfahrung" (experience of cultural diversity) for international students. The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) opts also for curricula which favour "global citizenship" (Weltbürgertum) in German universities.

Meanwhile there is a large consensus that Germany showed a certain "overdose" of obedience implementing the Bologna-reforms. An inflexible, even "dogmatic" model of Bachelor-Master-PhD-Curricula had been introduced (3/2/3 years) and even internalised by the students themselves leading to high workload and pressure; after students' protests more flexibility had been admitted. In the context of "Bologna" English as teaching-language got significant importance in German universities, mainly for internationally oriented courses (ca. 25% of "Bildungsausländer" attend curricula exclusively in English); but in this point also a counter-movement valorising German as language of science and humanities is ongoing.

Germany is the third country worldwide in terms of the numbers of international students. The Bologna-reforms and partial English-teaching had been favourable, but the steady increase is mainly due to economic reasons (meanwhile entire abolition of regular study-fees; quota of scholarships among international students 23 %; quota of accommodation of them in hostels 37 %; relatively good chances on the temporary job-market, later-on also in certain sectors of the labour-market (the quota of those who remain after study to work is estimated by 50 %).

The DAAD which claims to be the biggest public agency for international academic exchange worldwide is campaigning in direction of a number of 350.000 international students in 2020. This campaign is still balanced between the interests of the German economy (lack of high potential workers due to demographical reasons) or the universities themselves (integration of the most brilliant researchers) and the focus on exchange and capacity-building in the (developing or emerging/transforming) countries of origin of the international students which could suffer from brain drain-effects. The overall objective of a forced "internationalisation" seems nevertheless the national and European economic competition as base for the building-up of a "knowledge based economy and society".

Number of international students in Germany (Winter Term 2013/14 and WT 2014/15 [*])	300,909/319,283 [*]			
Foreign Students/Bildungsinlaender ¹ (WT 2012/13, estimation for 2013/14)	77,557 / 81,245			
Foreign Students/Bildungsauslaender ² (WT 2012/13, estimation for 2013/14)	204,644 / 219,644			
Country of origin of the foreign students in Germany (main groups, Bildungsausländer) (2013)	I	China (25,564)	IV	India (7,255)
	II	Russia (10,912)	V	Bulgaria (6,764)
	III	Austria (8,655)	VI	Turkey (6,666)
Number of national students abroad (2011)	about 133,800			
Countries of major concentration of national students (2011)	I	Austria (30,574)	IV	Switzerland (13,916)
	II	Netherlands (25,028)	V	USA (9,347)
	III	Great Britain (15,025)	VI	France (6,147)
Number of Universities in total	423			
Number of <i>Catholic</i> Universities	1 University + 5 Univ. of Applied Sciences; 5 bigger (philos.-theol.) 'atenei' run by orders			

“Secularism“ in German universities? – The status of Catholic university pastoral

Following a paper of the German university pastoral accepted by our Bishops' Conference in January 2013, the religious “neutrality” of German authorities in the Higher Education field has been increasingly interpreted in the case of Christian actors not as “cooperative neutrality” (German constitutional tradition) but as a “neutralization” of them. In general, this does not appear in an aggressive manner but happens sometimes “unconsciously” without being deliberately expressed (taboo or lack of language to deal with the subject?). So university pastoral is an “agency” among others, in competition with other religious or secular actors. Only 5 % of university students can still be integrated in the activities of our chaplaincies. However, in general it seems that the university sector as far as students are concerned is no more “secularized” than the German society as a whole. Additionally to new confessional actors on campus, there is a free floating “irrational” spirituality noticeable among the students.

Furthermore a certain “pressure” coming from Muslim or Pentecostal actors (“Evangelikale”) is visible on the campuses which urge the authorities to give them space and representation (a solution on some campuses is the establishment of a multi-religious “House of Silence” to create a “neutral” room mostly used by Muslims for their prayers). Also a first Jewish religious community has been established (Potsdam); Muslim organisations started their own scholarship-program (“Avicenna”). In terms of “competition” it can be noticed a growing rivalry also inside the world-religions on campus, especially Islam, which tendency/denomination could represent best their religion. The general need for response of the authorities to religious demands – in the context of a

* provisional result

¹ **Bildungsinlaender:** Students who are foreign nationals (or stateless students) and who have obtained their higher education entrance qualification at a German school or passed a Gifted Students Test (Begabtenprüfung) or an Aptitude Test (Eignungsprüfung) in Germany.

² **Bildungsauslaender:** Students who are foreign nationals (or stateless students) and who have obtained their higher education entrance qualification at a foreign school. This status also applies to foreign students who have complemented their school qualifications by attending a German Studienkolleg (preparatory course for higher education admission).

necessary “integration” of migrant groups in our society – could also help to “relaunch” the attention for the traditional Christian presence on the campus. E.g. on a higher level the coordination board for scientific research (“Wissenschaftsrat”) stimulates the presence of Christian Theological Faculties and at the same time the creation of Faculties for Islamic Theology.

Therefore we also experience, with the motto “diversity” – which includes a wider spectrum of factors like gender, culture, age etc. – a growing attention for the presence of religious actors. This goes hand in hand with an increasingly reduced Christian contribution to this tendency. The danger consists for our pastoral actors in taking a “defensive” position in view of more “secularist” university authorities on the one hand and towards a growing plurality of spiritual and confessional actors on the other hand.

Despite of a well structured coordination on national level (see below) the university pastoral remains primarily under diocesan regime depending also on the priorities of the Bishop, diocesan administration and the different levels of (church tax-)income. E.g. our most “internationalised” city/capital Berlin relies on relatively weak institutional possibilities for the pastoral work with international students. Of course university pastoral became part of structural reforms due to the decrease of ecclesiastical practice and engagement of the German population and the lack of priests. So a discussion is open to link students’ chaplaincies closer to or even to bring them under the umbrella of the traditional (“territorial”) parishes (both shrinking) whatever that could mean for their specific “profile”. Target-groups would then be more generally “young-adults”. Also the diaconic presence via refugee-aid has been enlarged in the students’ chaplaincies.

Catholic Church-Responsibilities for Students

1. University Students in general:

1a. National: Commission VIII of the German Bishop’s Conference,
responsible: Auxiliary Bishop Wilfried Theising, Münster
1b. Coordination of Dioceses: Konferenz für Hochschulpastoral / Forum Hochschule und Kirche

2. International Students:

2a. National: Commission VIII of the German Bishop’s Conference
responsible: Auxiliary Bishop Wilfried Theising, Münster
2b. KAAD (clearing agency) together with 1b.

Pastoral activities and scholarships

KAAD documented the spectrum of pastoral activities and scholarships for international students for the last time in 2010 based on 68 questionnaires from all German dioceses (www.kaad.de/publikationen/publikationsliste/) including good-practice-examples in the fields of inter-religious dialogue, various forms of counselling, Catholic hostels, international partnerships of university chaplaincies, emergency funds, scholarships etc.

In quantitative terms the capacity of approximately 8000 rooms in Catholic student hostels, often priorly for international students, is still impressing (but decreasing due to the decision of some dioceses to close hostels). For 2013 we estimate about 5.5 Mio. Euro invested in scholarships and (shorter) emergency aid for international students in Germany on diocesan and national level, the biggest part for a strategic world-church oriented scholarship-program for lay-people (KAAD, ca. 3.2 Mio. for scholarships, see below). The amount of what German Catholic church organisations annually spent for the formation of “international” priests/theologians is much higher (in 2009 estimated 11 Mio. for university-studies and Major Seminaries), but overwhelmingly aiming to

Higher Education-institutions outside Germany (Rome as preferred place, English or French speaking countries, Major Seminaries in home- or third countries). Recently a new program for mainly doctoral studies of priests and religious people started (“*Albertus-Magnus-Programm*”) with the objective to bring more international scholars in theology to Germany (instead of destinations outside) and to give them educational and spiritual orientation in the German ambiance in analogy to the form of close assistance which KAAD offers (2014 34 scholars of AMP). The KAAD inside the Catholic world church is a very specific German foundation as fruit of the new openness of German Catholics to world-church partnership after World War II.

Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst

The Catholic Academic Exchange Service (KAAD) is the scholarship institution of the German Catholic Church for post-graduate students and scientists from (developing) countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle East, as well as Eastern and South Eastern Europe (lay-people). The KAAD supports its scholars in form of scholarships and educational programs and offers spiritual and personal assistance in view of future multiplying functions students will have in their home countries. This is based on cooperation with partner committees and associations of ex-scholars in those countries and it aims at setting up (scientific) networks and at contributing to a holistic development, which includes the religious and inter-religious dimensions.

Some figures for 2014 in short:

- Ties with 54 partner committees and 28 alumni associations.
- The educational program of KAAD in Germany and abroad contained 54 events with 1,550 participants.
- The main event in Germany was the Annual Convention in Bonn, attended by 277 people. It dealt with the topic “Global Health” from an intercultural point of view. The highlight among the events abroad was the conference on “Future development of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)” in Jawa Barat, Indonesia.
- In 2014 the KAAD was able to sponsor a total of 458 fellows (previous year: 453): 240 individuals in Scholarship Program I (250), 124 in Scholarship Program II (118) and 94 in the Eastern Europe-Program (85). *The Bonn Office received 12,702 first application requests (13,467).*
- The total budget of around 4,6 million Euro came again mainly from church taxes (60,5% - Association of German Dioceses, VDD). Considerable contributions came also from the KZE (the years before from Misereor), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Renovabis. Third-party funds that derived from cooperation with universities and dioceses are not as significant in terms of quantity, they, nevertheless, form an important part of our network (3,4%).

The Annual Convention 2015 focused on “Global Student? – Educational Migration as Challenge for Church and Universities” (our website shows the presented papers, mainly in German; see www.kaad.de/Publikationen).

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