

Berlin Declaration on International Academic Cooperation amidst a World in Crisis

“G7 + Partners” Higher Education Summit 2022

From 3-5 May 2022, the leadership of the “G7 + Partners”, a group of international education agencies, met for their Higher Education Summit 2022 “*International Academic Cooperation amidst a World in Crisis: Opportunities and Challenges*” in Berlin, Germany.

The gathering was overshadowed by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The pain, suffering and hardship caused by this war unites us in the belief that democratic states which cherish and share fundamental values such as freedom, including academic freedom, and the rule of law, should stand together, and that their higher education institutions need to continue to collaborate closely. It is the mission of international academic cooperation to seek and develop solutions to global challenges such as climate change, gender equality, healthcare, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The “G7 + Partners” already have close working relationships and are ready to strengthen these further.

We believe that our countries and higher education institutions are and should be safe havens for students and scholars that face persecution or were forced to flee their homeland due to armed conflict, irrespective of nationality. Therefore, we pledge to work with national and regional authorities as well as other partners, such as private foundations and international organisations, as well as our national higher education institutions and research organisations, to support threatened or persecuted students and scholars through dedicated schemes. We stand ready to support like-minded partners in establishing such instruments.

Support for post-conflict institutional re-building as well as capacity and leadership development needs to commence as soon as the conflict situation allows for it. Through our sustained academic cooperation, our collective efforts can serve to bolster institutional ties and people-to-people relationships, while strategically helping to minimise the brain drain from the higher education sector of the home country.

The ongoing war against Ukraine does not shift our attention away from other crises worldwide. Every humanitarian relief effort should have a higher education component in its portfolio. Countries neighbouring conflict-ridden areas often bear the greatest burden in providing education to refugees. Our goal should be to also ensure these countries are part of our research and innovation networks. Higher education in times of conflict is a necessity, not a luxury. It is an investment that will benefit all. Yesterday’s pupil is today’s student and may be tomorrow’s entrepreneur or researcher.

Agreed upon in Berlin on 4 May 2022

Austria’s Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD), Austria
British Council, United Kingdom
Campus France, France
Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), Canada
Czech National Agency for International Education and Research (DZS), Czech Republic
Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI), Finland
German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Germany
Institute of International Education (IIE), United States of America
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Japan
Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (DIKU), Norway
Nuffic, Netherlands
Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA), Poland
Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of Education (SEPIE), Spain
Uni-Italia, Italia
Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), European Umbrella Organisation of Internationalisation Agencies