



Joint Press Release by the University of Freiburg and the University of Freiburg Student Government

University of Freiburg

Rectorate

Public Relations

Fahnenbergplatz
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Senate Issues Statement against Xenophobia

University of Freiburg declares its support for pluralism, openness, and international exchange

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On 28 September 2016, the University of Freiburg Senate issued a statement in which the governing body positioned itself unequivocally against xenophobia and for pluralism, openness, and international exchange:

Statement of the University of Freiburg Senate against Xenophobia

The University of Freiburg Senate emphatically condemns all forms of xenophobic activity throughout the university. Several university institutions have repeatedly fallen victim to xenophobic attacks in the past months:

Following a cyberattack, university printers unwittingly printed inflammatory anti-Semitic material. The building of the Student Government and other university buildings have been vandalized repeatedly with swastikas scratched into window frames and xenophobic stickers; these stickers evidently come from the right-wing extremist "Identitarian movement," which is currently under observation by Germany's domestic intelligence service.

The basis for the Senate resolution is the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, which clearly states (Article 3, Paragraph 3, Clause 1): "No person shall be favored or disfavored because of sex, parentage, race, language, homeland and origin, faith, or religious or political opinions."

Freiburg, 05.10.2016

Against this backdrop, the University of Freiburg Senate makes it absolutely clear that universities are places of pluralism, open-mindedness, and international exchange. In the 2015/16 winter semester, for example, more than 16 % of the students matriculated at the University of Freiburg were of foreign origin, and the proportion of international students and scholars has been on the rise for years. There is no place for racism and xenophobia at the University of Freiburg.

Research and teaching need a climate marked not by hate and fear but by curiosity and openness. The University of Freiburg regards creating and maintaining this climate as one of its most important responsibilities. The Senate calls upon the members of the University of Freiburg to take an active part in this endeavor.

(passed unanimously on 28 September 2016)

The initiative for the Senate resolution came from the managing board of the Student Government and the student representatives to the Senate **Julia Müller, Isabel Schön, and Jona Winkel**. “This is an important signal for the university and for society as a whole. We welcome this clear statement from the Senate against the strengthening of right-wing forces,” says Isabel Schön from the board of the Student Government and student spokesperson in the Senate.

The Senate resolution is just one of many activities the university has undertaken in the past years to emphasize its clear commitment to diversity and tolerance. For example, the university signed the “Charter of Diversity” in 2009 and participated in the nationwide campaign “Universities for openness and tolerance and against xenophobia,” sponsored by the German Rectors’ Conference, in 2015. The university will devote its annual “Day of Diversity” on 14 November 2016 to the topic “ethnic and geographic origin.” “Our university community is broadened and enriched by people of all nations and creeds,” says Rector Prof. Dr. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**. “Science and research are unthinkable without this exchange among people from different countries and cultures working together on solutions to the

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■ great challenges of our present and future. The university therefore categorically opposes racism and xenophobia.”

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Further information

University website

www.uni-freiburg.de/universitaet/universitaet-und-gesellschaft

Student council website

www.stura.uni-freiburg.de/news/PMGegenRechts

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