Udice French Research Universities

GERMAN U15

JOINT STATEMENT
JOINING FORCES FOR A COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE EUROPEAN AI ECOSYSTEM

Udice and U15 – the French and German research-intensive universities have joined forces to address a critical challenge: Positioning Europe as a globally competitive force in the race for Artificial Intelligence (AI).

France and Germany consistently rank among the top 10 countries in AI[1], yet the gap with global leaders like the United States and China remains substantial. In 2022, over 35,000 AI-related patents were filed in the US and over 12,000 in China – compared to just 1,200 across the entire European Union.

To safeguard its scientific, economic, and strategic sovereignty, Europe must lead in AI innovation, leveraging its unique advantages to develop trustworthy and sustainable AI solutions. By improving its efforts to retain its top AI talent, Europe must become a globally attractive magnet to develop powerful AI systems and AI applications in areas of critical importance.

Thanks to their deep-rooted industrial and technological partnerships and their research power, France and Germany are ideally positioned to strengthen Europe's standing in the global AI landscape. Thus, Udice and U15 have formulated three strategic and complementary priorities to train and retain talent, for a strong AI ecosystem, and for data sharing:

1. Fostering a world-class AI ecosystem: Meaning creating excellent research environments that attract and retain top talent, build a critical mass and visibility, and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration on high-impact applications, all while ensuring that AI is developed responsibly, guided by strong values and continuous critical oversight.

2. Attracting, training, and retaining top talent: Establishing a Franco-German graduate school for AI with a structured academic network offering joint Master's and PhD programs, embedded mobility between France and Germany, and strong integration with industry and research labs. This initiative aims to attract, train, and empower the next generation of AI leaders in Europe, while promoting responsible innovation, and entrepreneurship

3. Developing robust and trusted frameworks: Ensuring streamlined and secure access to shared data, a cornerstone for responsible and effective AI development. To enable responsible and cross-border AI research, Udice and German U15 propose launching pilot projects on federated data sharing, with clear legal and technical frameworks. These pilots would serve as scalable models for broader European

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[1] According to international indicators such as the Stanford AI Index.
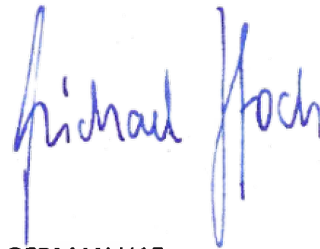
collaboration and provide researchers with the trusted data infrastructure they need to innovate.

As representatives of leading research-intensive universities, we stand ready to cooperate with fellow members of the scientific community, with policymakers and industry stakeholders to shape the creation of a European AI ecosystem of excellence!

Paris/Berlin,

UDICE

Nathalie Drach-Temam,
President of Udice and
President of Sorbonne University

GERMAN U15

Michael Hoch,
Chair of German U15 and
Rector of the University of Bonn

ABOUT UDICE

The Udice Group universities are characterized by their ambitions and the deep transformations they have embarked on, over the last 10 years, in order to fulfil their public service missions.
Udice is a group working for excellence in research, performance in higher education and the development of attractive innovation ecosystems in France and across Europe.

ABOUT GERMAN U15

German U15 is the strategic representation of research-intensive and internationally visible German universities. The U15 universities educate almost one third of all German and international students in Germany. They supervise half of all doctoral theses completed in Germany. The U15 universities attract two-fifths of all public third-party funding, with the ratio rising to 60 percent in the medical sector.