



Press Release

University of Freiburg

## Thinking Knows No Boundaries

Rectorate

European Campus officially opened – Hans-Jochen Schiewer  
elected as first president

Public Relations

Fahnenbergplatz  
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The Universities of Basel, Freiburg, Upper Alsace, and Strasbourg and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) have taken a big step toward creating the first European university: On Wednesday, 11 May 2016, they opened “Eucor – The European Campus” with a ceremony at the Palais universitaire in Strasbourg, thus giving themselves the possibility to act as a single entity. The cross-border alliance had previously elected Prof. Dr. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**, Rector of the University of Freiburg, to serve as its first president for the coming three years. His deputy is Prof. Dr. **Andrea Schenker-Wicki**, Rector of the University of Basel. **Janosch Nieden**, former Eucor coordinator, was appointed as managing director.

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The European Campus is the first European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) organized and managed by universities alone. The five universities retain their autonomy but can now act as a single legal entity. This will enable them to develop a common research and teaching strategy and create cross-border research structures in the Upper Rhine region. Dr. **Carlos Moedas**, European Commissioner for Research, Science, and Innovation, held the ceremonial address. He then discussed the expectations and challenges of the European Campus with **Thierry Mandon**, French Secretary of State for Higher Education and Research, Dr. **Simone Schwanitz**, Director of the Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg, **Joakim Rüeegger**, Director of Higher Education at the Department of Education of the canton Basel-Stadt, Prof. Dr. **Luisa**

■ **de Cola**, holder of a dual professorship at the University of Strasbourg and the KIT, and **Audrey Dujardin**, graduate of the binational degree program Regio Chimica at the University of Upper Alsace and the University of Freiburg.

Following the opening of the European Campus, the University of Strasbourg conferred honorary doctorates on three outstanding scholars for their involvement in cross-border cooperation: Prof. Dr. **Horst Hippler**, former President of the KIT, Prof. Dr. **Antonio Loprieno**, former Rector of the University of Basel, and Prof. Dr. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**, Rector of the University of Freiburg.

#### **Further information on Eucor – The European Campus**

Website: [www.eucor-uni.org](http://www.eucor-uni.org)

Informational brochure: [www.eucor-uni.org/sites/eucor-uni.org/files/eucor\\_imagebroschuere\\_2016\\_de.pdf](http://www.eucor-uni.org/sites/eucor-uni.org/files/eucor_imagebroschuere_2016_de.pdf)

#### **Comments on the opening of the European Campus**

Prof. Dr. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**, President of Eucor – The European Campus and Rector of the University of Freiburg

“We are celebrating a historical step for the European science and research landscape today. After a year of preparations, I am looking forward to working with our partners in France and Switzerland to give concrete shape to the European Campus and develop unique opportunities for cooperation among the employees of the Upper Rhine universities.”

Prof. Dr. **Andrea Schenker-Wicki**, Vice President of Eucor – The European Campus and Rector of the University of Basel

“With its five universities in three countries, the Upper Rhine region offers a unique constellation: The students receive easier access to other universities in neighboring countries and also get to experience other cultures. In an increasingly globalized environment, this is an important precondition for understanding the world we live in. The same goes for our

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researchers. The European Campus promotes internationalization at the participating universities without forcing them to lose their local identity.”

Prof. Dr. **Alain Beretz**, President of the University of Strasbourg

“The European Campus is more than just a unique and innovative instrument for enabling the universities in the three countries to cooperate freely with one another and for removing boundaries for students and researchers. Above all, it also demonstrates that we are building up the Europe of tomorrow at the university.”

Dr. **Christine Gangloff-Ziegler**, President of the University of Upper Alsace

“Robert Schuman, the father of Europe, called himself a ‘person from the border.’ The five universities of Eucor – The European Campus refer to the statutes of the European Council in that they contribute to making the members into a unified whole in order to preserve and promote the ideals and principles that constitute their common legacy and to further economic and social progress in Europe and on the Upper Rhine. This causes the boundaries to become blurred and turns our differences into a source of enrichment and strength.”

Prof. Dr. **Thomas Hirth**, Vice President of Innovation and International Affairs at the KIT

“Just like our partners in Eucor – The European Campus, we at the KIT have already been cooperating closely with French universities and research institutes for years. Our goal in establishing the European Campus is to create a new platform for this cooperation in research, teaching, and innovation as a means of consolidating our position in the international competition for the greatest minds and ideas.”

Dr. **Simone Schwanitz**, Director of the Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg:

“The European Campus will link the potentials and competencies of five strong universities across borders and enable them to grow together to form a single science and research network with an international reach. Baden-Württemberg stands to profit greatly from these synergies as a center for internationally recognized top-level research.”

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**Joakim Rügger**, Director of Higher Education at the Department of Education of the canton Basel–Stadt

“Science is hit particularly hard by the tendency of political powers to attempt to disconnect themselves from what is happening in the rest of the world. This is not just about access to research funding. The point is rather to place researchers working in Switzerland, some of whom come from Europe, on an equal footing with other colleagues from their disciplines. Students, too, are dependent on international prospects if they want to succeed on the regional and global labor market. We aspire to international visibility and a position at the forefront of development for our university. It is therefore important that the two cantons responsible for the University of Basel are using the opportunities presented by ‘small-scale foreign policy’ to open up this gate to Europe.”

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