

Representatives of rectors' conferences from Germany, Italy, Croatia, Poland, Switzerland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Serbia and the Czech Republic met with Universities Austria or UNIKO, Austria's association of university heads, in mid-December to take stock of growing trends in society towards 'pseudo-science' and 'pseudo-facts'. Representatives from Hungary had also been invited but refrained from attending.

In their 'Vienna Declaration', the participants of the meeting state that they are "firmly convinced that the basic values of higher education reflect the achievements of enlightenment". Academic freedom and integrity in teaching and research as well as students and academic staff having a say in the running of institutions are seen as key elements in the functioning of universities. The rectors also stress the significance of the Magna Charta Universitatum, signed in 1201 by 388 university heads from across Europe and marking the 900th birthday of Italy's University of Bologna. Here, they refer to the holistic concept of education emphasised in the Charta. (Fonte: UWN 24-12-18)