IÜD Heidelberg to maintain university status

Showing unparalleled solidarity, conference interpreters the world over have taken action to assure that university-level education for future colleagues will continue to be offered in Heidelberg.

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Plans were afoot to downgrade IÜD Heidelberg, one of the oldest and most prestigious training institutions for conference interpreters, to a non-university level. But after announcing the intended change, the Department of Education of Baden-Württemberg received hundreds of letters from professional interpreters from all around the globe, including many who head the language services departments of international organisations, industry and government. And colleagues did not hesitate to use well-placed contacts in their effort to overturn the decision.

Obviously, the Department of Education of Baden-Württemberg had not expected such a wave of protest from the profession. Science Minister Klaus von Trotha called off the projected change on 12 April 2000. IÜD Heidelberg, which according to a survey commissioned by the EU trains some 15% of all conference interpreters with German in the world (Germersheim 12.8%, Saarbrücken 5.6%, non-university training schools 1.1%), is now set to maintain its university-level curriculum.

On behalf of all IÜD graduates, a sincere word of thanks goes out to colleagues. This collective action has again shown just how important it is to have a strong international professional association whose members take its objectives seriously.

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