



**Committee for the promotion of French-German-Polish Cooperation
(« Weimar Triangle »)
Komitet Wspierania Współpracy Francusko-Niemiecko-Polskiej
(« Trójkąt Weimarski »)**



Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań



Franco-German University, Saarbrücken

**SECOND ANNUAL ADAM MICKIEWICZ LECTURE
ON FRENCH-GERMAN-POLISH COOPERATION
(‘WEIMAR TRIANGLE’) *)**

WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2013

SENATE HALL, 1 H. WIENIAWSKI, COLLEGIUM MINUS, 61-712 POZNAŃ

11.00 Address of Welcome and Moderation:

prof. dr. hab. Jacka Witkosia

Prorektora ds. nauki i współpracy międzynarodowej
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

11.05 Introductory Remarks:

Prof. h.c. Dr. Drs.h.c. Klaus-Heinrich Standke

Former Director for Science and Technology, United Nations, New York
President, Committee for the French-German-Polish Cooperation, Berlin/Cabourg

**11.15 Second Annual Adam Mickiewicz Lecture
On French-German-Polish Cooperation:**



PROF. DR. PATRICE NEAU

PRESIDENT, FRANCO-GERMAN UNIVERSITY, SAARBRUCKEN

“THE FRANCO-GERMAN UNIVERSITY: MODEL FOR A EUROPEAN NETWORK”

Dear Rector Marciniak,

Dear Rector Gorynia,

Dear Professor Standke,

Distinguished University Rectors,

Distinguished guests,

Let me first thank you very much for the privilege to be here in Poznan in this beautiful Adam Mickiewicz University. The glorious name of Adam Mickiewicz sounds familiar to everybody in France and Germany who is interested in the history of Poland in the XIXth century and I am very glad to be here.

I should like to thank Rector Marciniak most sincerely for inviting me. It is a pleasure and an honor to speak here in this famous university.

My thanks go also to Pr. Standke, who took the initiative of this invitation.

The Committee for the promotion of French-German-Polish Cooperation ('Weimar Triangle') initiated this series of annual Adam Mickiewicz lectures on French-German-Polish cooperation. I sincerely believe that the civil society in our three countries can be the driving force of an efficient cooperation in the scientific and academic fields. We need certainly the support of politics, the political will to strengthen our tripartite relationship must be affirmed, but we can also support politics when we, the academic world, implement concrete projects.

As President of the Franco-German University, it is for me a welcome opportunity to develop our relationship to Poland. Poland is the first country I visit in my capacity as President of the FGU. We are a Franco German institution indeed, based on an agreement between both governments (the Weimar agreement), but I do not forget that Art. 3 of the agreement says: "the Franco-German University is open to cooperation with institutions of higher education of third countries, more especially with European ones". It seems to us in the Franco-German University that Poland is the country with which the possibilities for enhancing academic relationships are the most promising and I think that the political context of relations between our three countries, the Weimar Triangle, offers opportunities that we must seize.

The common declaration of 1991 that founded the Weimar Triangle specified cooperation in research and teaching. 1998 at the first summit meeting of the Triangle of Weimar, held on 21 February here in Poznań, Presidents of France, Jacques Chirac, of Poland Alexander Kwasniewski and the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl already discussed the idea of a tri-national University. In 2003, at the ‘Weimar summit’ held on 9 May in Wrocław, President Chirac made it clear that he did not think of a tri-national University but of “a close partnership between the French-German University and, what he called the German-Polish University, the Viadrina in Frankfurt.

Ten years later, what has been done? I don’t believe that a tri-national university is possible in a next future, but I am convinced that our three countries have much to gain from an integrated academic cooperation. The example of the Franco-German University shows the benefit that two countries can have from this form of cooperation: a fruitful confrontation between different scientific systems, intercultural awareness, and intercultural skills. The FGU reflects the uniqueness of the Franco-German relationship: a relationship built with patience, obstinacy to overcome an antagonism that some people said it was irreducible. We are proud to educate young students in a European spirit, we are convinced Europeans, our graduates, the young researchers that we support make the practical experience of a Europe of knowledge and science in progress, they experience an identity that is built on common values: freedom, justice, tolerance, solidarity. All this is as important as the acquisition of necessary knowledge and high skills.

We all know the present difficulties of the European construction, we all have heard from the fear of a “renationalization of European politics”. In the 50s or 60s of the late century, the memory of war was enough to propel the European idea on its own. After the collapse of communism in central and Eastern Europe, Poland became the chance to be an important member of a large free Europe. The Weimar Triangle was first a privileged forum to support and prepare the accession of Poland to the EU. It was also intended to support the German-Polish reconciliation, inspired by the Franco-German experience. The triangle of Weimar was intended to bear witness to the successful reconciliation process that had brought Germany

closer to its two largest immediate neighbours in the west and east. Now, more than 20 years later, Poland that joined the EU for almost 10 years, in 2004, is a fully integrated and essential member of the EU.

It is obviously not my purpose to discuss here ways and possible solutions out of the present crisis of Europe. I just believe that the European project can only be attractive if it is the focus for the young generation and we all together can contribute to make Europe more present and more concrete for our students and for young researchers. The FGU supports the construction of a common intellectual and scientific space in Europe. It is time to take concrete trilateral initiatives and the FGU is ready to contribute to this initiatives.

Let me now present the institution I have the honor to preside.

The university was created in 1997 by an intergovernmental agreement ("Weimar agreement"), which came into effect in September 1999, and which lays down the legal basis of this supra-national university institution. The FGU is equally funded by the two governments of France and Germany. Its objective was to increase co-operation between France and Germany in the field of higher education. This institution was founded as a network and an alliance of German and French universities, i.e. without a campus or faculty of its own. However, the FGU was granted its own legal personality. Even though the legal status of the FGU is not spelt out in the Weimar Agreement, the first article explicitly states that the FGU is an international institution entitled to all the privileges granted to "UN specialized agencies". It is a special institution with a specific purpose, formed on the basis of a bilateral agreement. As I said, the FGU commenced its activities in 1999. Next year we will celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of our institution.

The FGU has its administrative seat in Saarbrücken, in Germany. The FGU does not provide training itself but supports and approves more than 150 Franco German and trinational courses of excellence (the so called integrated study programs") at bachelor's and master's degree level, as well as 21 binational graduate schools. Each year more than 5500 students register for tailored courses which involve a period of study in the partner country. This

bilateral university cooperation agency is unique in Europe and had developed recognized expertise and has established itself as an actor in quality-assurance for training.

One of the main tasks devoted to the FGU was to work toward establishing joint study programs – in particular, integrated study programs. These programs – and this was revolutionary in 1999 – were to offer German and French students professional, university-level qualifications. As far as was possible, students were to form a Franco-German group for the entire duration of their academic program. Basically, three core ideas made the concept of the “integrated study program” and continue to live on in the FGU. They certainly sound less esoteric in the Bologna era than in the late 1980s, when the predecessor of the FGU was created 1987 as *Deutsch-Französisches Hochschulkolleg*. Put in simple terms, the plan called for:

- a mixed group,
- an integrated curriculum, and
- a “dual degree” as a reward for the extra work required from students to achieve intercultural, thematic and linguistic proficiency in their subjects.

Which are the skills of the FGU graduates? Each year, more than 1000 students complete their binational or trinational studies under the auspices of the Franco-German University. Irrespective of their subject or university, these graduates all have something in common:

- They speak three languages or more, have gained plenty of intercultural experience, and have learnt to assert their skills in a foreign country. On successfully completing their studies, they also all hold a double degree.
- Their subject-related expertise and their linguistic and intercultural competence give them a significant advantage, which qualifies them to go beyond the Franco-German sphere and take up leading positions in business, research or public administration anywhere in the world.
- In integrated degree programs, courses are held in two or more countries. Credits obtained in the country are fully recognized. Based on joint study and examination regulations, these

degree programs allow students to obtain two or more qualifications (a double or joint degree) without having to study for a longer period of time. The FGU's degree programs lead to two or three national qualifications of equal value.

All of the degree programs are individually organized on the basis of a cooperation agreement between the partner universities. As far as possible, students study for the same amount of time at both partner universities. In general, this means at least two semesters at each partner university for a bachelor degree program. In the case of degree programs spread over three countries; students must also study or do an internship in a third country.

The FGU ensures high scientific quality of his programs. All degree programs are subject to regular quality control involving a four-level evaluation process. The two first stages – formal and administrative evaluation – are conducted by the Secretary-General's office. As well as undertaking a general assessment of the course, the office checks that the required content is completely covered and that it meets the formal funding requirements. The next stage involves academic evaluation. This is carried out by two experts – one from France and one from Germany – working in tandem, as well as by the Scientific Advisory Board. The University Council makes the final decision on funding based on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Board.

The FGU not only provides funding to dual degree programs, but also to bi-national post-graduate programs and offers students and young researchers the opportunity to meet each other. The FGU began with integrated teaching programs. 2002 it started programs to support research and has now a lot of programs, a real toolbox. As well as promoting and funding integrated degree programs, the FGU supports cooperation in the fields of structured doctoral programs and Franco-German research. It is particularly active in promoting collaboration and an intensive pooling of knowledge and experience between researchers.

What are the networking opportunities that the FGU offers?

- The FGU's Franco-German summer schools:

The FGU's Franco-German summer schools give professors, lecturers, junior researchers (doctoral and postdoctoral candidates), students who will shortly sit their degree examinations, and advanced under-graduate students the opportunity to discuss an academic topic chosen by the organizers. The summer schools take place between June and September and last for one to two weeks. Apart from being a venue for high-level academic discourse, the summer schools' workshops, seminars and conferences provide participants with extensive insight into the teaching and research environments in France and Germany. The languages of these summer schools are French, German and English. It is expected from the participants that they master English and one of the two other languages.

- Franco-German research workshops for junior researchers:

The research workshops provide junior researchers (doctoral and post-doctoral candidates), professors, lecturers, students who will shortly sit their degree examinations, and advanced undergraduate students with a forum where they can work on and discuss an academic topic chosen by the organizers. These workshops often take an interdisciplinary approach.

- Academic Encounters / exchanges

The Academic Encounters are used as a basis for organizing and holding meetings between partner universities and for supporting the development of new degree and research programs. The funding covers travel and accommodation expenses.

-Franco-German graduate schools (FGGS)

The aim of the Franco-German graduate schools is to foster structured doctoral programs, in all disciplines, which require candidates to research in both France and Germany. The funding primarily helps doctoral students to research and travel abroad.

- *Cotutelle de thèse*

A Franco-German *cotutelle* system allows doctoral students to write their dissertation under the supervision of at least one professor in Germany and another in France. Students are awarded a doctoral degree from both institutions upon passing the joint defense.

- PhD-track programs

The aim of this program is to develop Franco-German programs in all disciplines that combine the two years of the master's program with a further three years spent on a doctoral degree to form a five-year study period in total.

Numerous Polish Universities have established close contacts both to French and German partners, so that the opportunity of developing programs in teaching and in research is given.

In some ways, the FGU can be regarded as belonging to the category of scientific, intermediary and funding organizations. The FGU maintains an appropriated budget, organizes calls for applications, develops and manages selection processes, initiates cooperative programs, provides funding to selected projects and coordinates their quality assurance. There is no overstating the fact that the Franco-German University is uniquely positioned in the area of university internationalization and is opened to cooperation with third countries: we have many programs with our neighbours (Luxemburg, Switzerland), but also with Spain, Great Britain, and Austria. Since the beginning of this academic year, we have a first trilateral project with Poland: Two weeks ago a new integrated trilateral curriculum of European studies was solemnly opened at the University of Opole. A bilateral program between Dijon in France and Mainz in Germany was extended to the University of Opole. This program is supported by the local authorities in each country. This model with strong interactions with local authorities and the civil society can help to build up scientific and academic cooperation. Also two bilateral institutions can help us: the Franco-German Youth Office and the German-Polish Youth Office which both develop trinational programs. This could be very useful in language learning. The universities of our network organize language courses for the students. We have also courses in English. This is the case for the summer schools. So I do believe that all the conditions are right for Poland to become a privileged partner of the Franco-German University.

Let me conclude with the words pronounced by President François Hollande, on the occasion of the visit of the Polish President, Bronisław Komorowski in France this year in May:

“This visit helped the Weimar Triangle to revive. The idea was brought in 1991. The foreign ministers had then given a first translation to Weimar Triangle. Then, the idea has retained its strength, but could not have its concrete translation. Our responsibility, with our German friends will be to give this Weimar Triangle its contents and therefore his whole future.”

Thank you for your attention!

**(* THE FIRST ANNUAL ADAM MICKIEWICZ LECTURE
ON FRENCH-GERMAN-POLISH COOPERATION
WAS DELIVERED ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2012
BY DR. GUNTER PLEUGER, PRESIDENT, EUROPE UNIVERSITY ‘VIADRINA’, FRANKFURT/O.
ON THE TOPIC
“ACADEMIC IMPULSES FOR THE COOPERATION WITHIN THE WEIMAR TRIANGLE”
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