

**FREUDE.
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BONN.**

"BonnExpat Alaaf!": International revellers celebrate in the Old Town Hall

29.01.2026

Mayor of Bonn Guido Déus welcomed representatives of international organizations to the "BonnExpat Alaaf!" event in the Old Town Hall on Wednesday, 28 January 2026. At the city's traditional carnival reception for the international family in Bonn, the Lord Mayor also proclaimed Skirmante (Tamelyte) from Lithuania as the new "UNiversa", the symbolic figure of the international carnival in the City of Bonn.



UNiversa Skirmante and Mayor Déus (center foreground) at the international carnival reception of the City of Bonn in the Old Town Hall.



For the twelfth time, employees of the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations, globally active companies and scientific institutions came together at the Carnival Reception at the invitation of the Mayor of Bonn. As so-called "expatriates", these specialists from all over the world are often only in Bonn for a limited period of time. Many are experiencing the Rhineland carnival for the first time. An English moderator and prominent carnival guests made it easier for them to get to know the tradition, whose 200th anniversary is being celebrated in Bonn this session.

The Bonn princely couple, Prince Roland I and Bonna Stephanie III, the Wäscherprinzessin Judith I, Liküra Karoline I, Godesia Eva and Prince Gregor I, the dance guard of the KG "Klääv Botz" from the Siebengebirge and the carnival band "Jot Drop" were among the guests in the Old Town Hall.

Mayor of Bonn Guido Déus thanked the UN Funken and the international guests for their contribution to the cultivation of Rhenish customs and referred to another milestone birthday: "In 2026, we will not only be celebrating 200 years of Bonn Carnival, but also the fact that United Nations institutions have been working on future issues for the global community in our city for three decades." Under the motto '30 years of Bonn as a UN city', a varied program of events relating to the work of the UN in Bonn is currently in preparation."

UNiversa comes from Lithuania

The UN Funken is the carnival society of the employees of the United Nations in Bonn, their families and friends. The UN Funken's royalty, Skirmante, comes from Lithuania and has lived in Germany for more than 20 years. She has lived in six countries, speaks four languages and works for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). For her session, she will focus on the importance of cultural traditions and, above all, on freedom, justice and peace.

UN Sparks President Heidi Nabel-Meyer (Canada, UN Volunteers), said: "International cooperation connects Bonn, the United Nations and UN Sparks. As a community, we build a bridge between carnival and the Sustainable Development Goals. This session, together with our annual partnership with UN Women Germany, we are placing a special focus on peace, justice and strong institutions."

Background: "BonnExpat" event series

The "BonnExpat" series has been bringing Bonn's international community together for many years. Employees of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and international companies get to know each other as well as the diverse aspects of Bonn as a business location. The evenings are hosted by the Foundation for International Encounters of the Sparkasse in Bonn, the DHL Group and the City of Bonn.

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explanations and notes

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