

5 October 2021**Coalition negotiations at the federal level:****HRK Senate calls for solutions to unresolved issues in higher education policy**

Around a week after the Bundestag elections, the Senate of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) has emphatically reminded the future coalition leaders of the most pressing tasks in higher education policy. During its online meeting today, the HRK Senate listed the most important points for which it holds the federal government responsible:

- Comprehensively ensuring internationally competitive research at German universities by creating appropriate legal and financial framework conditions in **research and research funding**;
- A needs-based **BAföG reform** including an emergency aid component;
- Providing more **housing for students** with good digital connections;
- Ensuring the accessibility and attractiveness of the German higher education system for **international students** against the background of the consequences of the pandemic;
- Support in regulating long-term **career paths at all types of universities** in terms of university performance and attractive working conditions;
- A federal-state agreement on the substantial **digitalisation** of universities in the order of €270 million annually (as previously calculated in 2019 by the Expert Commission on Research and Innovation (EFI));
- Viable solutions for reducing the enormous funding backlog in **university construction and renovation**, as well as for additional requirements arising from climate protection measures and altered room concepts in the course of restructuring studies;
- A permanent guarantee of appropriate possibilities for the use of **copyright-protected** materials for university teaching;
- Increased commitment of the federal government and states towards **more educational equality and equal opportunities** at all levels of the education system.

HRK President Prof Dr Peter-André Alt: "Ground-breaking and lasting solutions to these issues are crucial if we want to ensure the future viability of our country. We therefore expect the potential coalition partners to make clear and binding agreements on necessary measures. The

new federal government must address the problems quickly, with expertise and in recognition of university autonomy, as well as in consultation with the states and universities."