



JOINT PRESS RELEASE

HRK and DSW: Tackle BAföG structural reform promptly

- **Joint appeal of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German National Association for Student Affairs (DSW) to the federal government**
- **HRK President Walter Rosenthal: "Needs-based federal education funding is an investment in the future of our society"**
- **DSW President Beate Schücking: "Now is the time to powerfully implement the structural reform of BAföG as a central promise of the federal government"**

Berlin, 12 July 2023. The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German National Association for Student Affairs (DSW) are jointly appealing to the federal government to promptly tackle the structural reform of the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG) announced in the coalition agreement and to provide the necessary funds in line with demand. Otherwise, the two organisations believe, this central instrument for greater educational equality will soon lose its purpose completely, because fewer and fewer students benefit from funding.

HRK President Prof Dr Walter Rosenthal said: "Today, more than ever, our society is dependent on highly qualified, scientifically educated professionals to meet the numerous existential challenges of our time. It is imperative to provide students with conditions that allow them to adequately prepare for this responsibility. Those who have serious financial worries cannot concentrate on a demanding course of study. The federal government's support for education is therefore an investment in the future of our society."

BAföG is also the central instrument for creating greater equality of opportunity in the education system, which in Germany is still characterised by too much selectivity. This significance of BAföG is in danger of being completely lost if the structural reform, which has been recognised as necessary and has been announced by the coalition government, will not be implemented quickly now. There are still too few young people from lower income groups, often from families in which neither parent has a university degree, entering higher education. However, the openness and plurality of a society must be reflected in its universities as the heart of its research system."

DSW President Prof Dr Beate A. Schücking said: "BAföG is the core of state student financing. It has enabled millions of young people to study who would not have been able to afford without it. However, it has lost much of its power because it has been neglected by different governments in recent years. The fact that BAföG allowances have not been regularly increased has contributed significantly to the fact that within ten years the number of students receiving BAföG has dropped from 30 % to a meagre 11 % now."

The federal government has therefore promised an intervention to make BAföG more attractive again. It is imperative that the BAföG reform be tackled quickly, even in a difficult budgetary situation, otherwise the economy and society will suffer. We cannot afford to see students drop out of university due to insecure funding. After the Covid pandemic, the young generation was promised to be taken care of. The structural reform of BAföG as a central promise of the federal government to students must happen now."