

31 January 2020**Brexit: HRK calls for the UK's full association to Horizon Europe and Erasmus+
Joint statement with European and British partners**

"The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union marks a watershed in the history of European unification. Together with our British partners, we want to do everything in our power to ensure that academic relations remain as unimpeded as possible by this deep and painful cut," the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) Professor Dr Peter-André Alt said today in Berlin.

"It is now vitally important for German universities, too, that the framework for future cooperation between European and British partners is quickly resolved in the transition phase which is now beginning. We must ensure that the United Kingdom is fully associated to the Horizon Europe research programme and also the Erasmus+ exchange programme. This is the only chance we have to continue the close and well-established relationships with British universities and academic institutions to the benefit of both countries after 1 January 2021," Alt said.

Traditionally, British universities have numbered among German universities' most important international partners. However, ever since the referendum in June 2016, uncertainty has prevailed about the precise framework for European-British cooperation after the United Kingdom's exit from the EU. "This uncertainty is proving to be increasingly counterproductive for academic cooperation, which relies on dependable long-term framework conditions," the HRK President said.

The HRK is a co-signatory to a joint declaration in which 36 European and British scientific organisations are calling upon the European Commission and their national Governments:

„We, the major bodies representing science and higher education across the UK and Europe, are united in agreeing that we wish to continue to work together following the departure of the UK from the European Union. We call on our national governments and the European Commission to act on the commitments of the political declaration and work swiftly to agree a basis for continued collaboration through the UK's full association to Horizon Europe and Erasmus+. Swift agreement in this area of clear mutual benefit would be good for all of us and should be reached before the end of 2020, allowing for the development of innovative and stronger collaboration over the decades to come.“

The statement was signed by:

European institutions:

Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR)

Wallonia-Brussels Federation - Council of Rectors of the Belgian French Universities (CRef)

Danske Universiteter (Universities Denmark)

Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (German Rectors' Conference (HRK))

Rektorite Nõukogu (Universities Estonia)

Aurora Universities Network

CESAER

European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU)

European University Association (EUA)

The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities

League of European Research Universities (LERU)

Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe (UNICA)

Universities Finland (UNIFI)

Conférence des présidents d'université (CPU)

Irish University Association (IUA)

Icelandic Rectors' Conference

Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università italiane (CRUI, The Conference of Italian University Rectors)

Latvijas Rektoru Padome (Latvian Rectors' Council)

Universities Lithuania

Universitāt Luxemburg

Vereniging van Universiteiten (VSNU, The Association of Universities in the Netherlands)

Universitets- og høøgskolerådet (UHR, Universities Norway)

Österreichische Universitätenkonferenz (uniko)

Konferencja Rektorów Akademickich Szkół Polskich (CRASP, Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland)

Conselho de Reitores das Universidades Portuguesas (CRUP, Council of Rectors of Portuguese Universities)

Sveriges universitets- och högskoleförbund (SUHF, The Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions)

Crue Universidades Españolas (Universities Spain)

swissuniversities

Česká konference rektorů (CRT, Czech Rectors' Conference)

Magyar Rektori Konferencia (HRC, Hungarian Rectors' Conference)

Institutions in Great Britain:

Academy of Medical Sciences
British Council EU Region
Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE)
Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
GuildHE
Universities UK

Background information: academic cooperation between Germany and the United Kingdom:

Currently, the HRK's Higher Education Compass lists almost 1,700 partnerships between German and British universities.

Between 2013 and 2017, German and British researchers authored more than 70,000 joint publications. More than 4,000 projects in which both the United Kingdom and Germany were involved were funded under the umbrella of the EU's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. The total funding volume of these projects was €18.2 billion.

The United Kingdom is the most popular destination for a stay abroad for German students after Austria and the Netherlands. A total of 16,910 study visits by students from German universities to the United Kingdom were funded through Erasmus+ in the years 2014 to 2018. In the higher education sector, a total of 8,333 German students received Erasmus+ funding for placements in the United Kingdom in the years 2014 to 2018.