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**EU funding boost for student mobility and research
HRK President: Higher level of funding must continue**

Today the European Parliament in Brussels approved the EU budget for 2018. In July the Council of Ministers had demanded a cut in research funding by €500 million, but the Parliament and finance ministers have now agreed to increase funding for research for the coming budget year. In 2018, funding from the EU will increase by €110 million to a total of €11.2 billion. Funds for the mobility programme Erasmus+ have also increased and now amount to €2.3 billion.

HRK President Professor Horst Hippler commented in Berlin today:

“This is a very welcome turnaround. After years of cuts, decision-makers now seem to be realising the importance of education, research and innovation to European competitiveness and social cohesion.

That is precisely why we can't afford to rest on our laurels. Brexit and the reorientation of the EU financial framework are just around the corner. The EU's flagship programmes, Erasmus+ for student exchange and Horizon 2020 for research and innovation, still receive only a small portion of the EU's total budget. This fails to reflect their importance for the future of Europe. These programmes must be further strengthened, even if the EU budget is likely to become tighter.

The European Commission is pointing the way forward by calling for a substantial increase in funding for these areas, including a doubling of Erasmus+ funding. The German government in the European Council and the European Parliament must measure their future success by these ambitious targets.”