

24 April 2018**HRK: Safeguard Higher Education Pact funds – prevent admission restrictions**

The federal and state governments need to fast-track agreement on the future supply of funds for the Higher Education Pact, the General Assembly of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) said in Mannheim today. In its statement, the Assembly underlined the immense significance that the Pact, which is due to expire in 2020, has acquired for higher education funding. The Pact, it said, ensured that despite the strong growth in demand for university courses, it had not yet become necessary to impose comprehensive admission restrictions. It is for this reason that the Assembly endorses the establishment of permanent funding – at the existing level – as decided in the Coalition Agreement, as the way forward.

The General Assembly rejected any suggestion that the funds be allocated competitively in future. Following the meeting, HRK President Dr Horst Hippler said: "If the intention were to create a competitive struggle from this situation, it would be contrary to the nature and purpose of the funding since the Pact is designed to fill gaps in universities' basic funding. In other words, it is not a question of providing additional funding for outstanding performance, but of funding study places for which there is a long-term demand."

The number of places should be secured according to numbers of new students, not by any other allocation method, he said.

"The attempt to use, say, the number of graduates as indicators for the quality of teaching and as a basis for allocation of funding would be counter-productive. The pressure created by lack of funds would create a strong temptation to lower course requirements in order to produce as many graduates as possible," Hippler said.