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**HRK President on the new record high in student numbers:
higher education funding urgently needs a solid foundation**

Today, the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Professor Dr Horst Hippler, commented on the record student numbers of the Federal Statistical Office just released for the current winter semester 2017/18 as follows:

"Newly enrolled student and student numbers have yet again exceeded the 2014 forecast of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK). With 509,000 newly enrolled students, we have remained at around half a million every year since 2011. We see this as confirmation: it is not a one-off peak in demand for study places, but rather a high-level plateau.

For more than 10 years now, universities have had to live with the repeatedly issued, short-term Higher Education Pact based on the KMK projections. They have to proceed cautiously from reissue to reissue. Reasonable human resources planning, new permanent positions and fundamental investments are therefore not feasible. Under these adverse conditions, the universities have made every effort to enable as many young people as possible to take up a course of study. This is also confirmed by the lower number of admission restrictions. However, this procedure cannot be practised in the long term without causing lasting problems.

Higher education financing therefore urgently needs a solid foundation. This is the only way to achieve the planning security necessary for the universities. The State and Federal Governments have invested heavily in the higher education system in the past. They are now called upon to undertake the important next step with joint responsibility and arrive at sustainable solutions."

Today, the Federal Statistical Office announced an increase of 40,000 students at the record level of well over 2.8 million. The newly enrolled student numbers remain almost identical at a high level.