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The relaxation of the ban on cooperation by the Bundestag is a step in the right direction

HRK President Prof. Dr. Hippler calls upon the federal states to act

"We are now closer to our objective of securing the future of the further education system in Germany," said Professor Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference in Berlin, welcoming the decision taken yesterday by the Bundestag to relax the "ban on cooperation".

Agreement from the members has brought an amendment to article 91 b of the Basic Law one step closer. This will allow the federal government to contribute to university funding on an institutional basis. In the past this had only been possible as part of special programmes and tightly defined projects.

"Allowing the federal government to fund teaching at all our universities in the long term will make it possible to pursue key higher education policy objectives which the federal states would be unable to afford on their own," explained HRK President Hippler.

The proposal drawn up by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) was a significant step towards strengthening all the universities and science and the humanities overall, he continued. When the bill was heard, almost every expert in the field, including the HRK, welcomed the Federal Government's proposal.

Now that the Bundestag has voted in favour, everything is required is agreement from the Bundesrat, which will be debating the amendment before the end of the year. Professor Hippler has called upon the federal states to support this amendment which has been accepted by a broad majority. "It is now incumbent upon the federal states to finalise this pioneering legislative proposal in the Bundesrat and then it will be the responsibility of the Federal Government to make the necessary funding available."