

**28 April 2014**

**European Elections:**

**Statements by the German parties on research and higher education policy lack resolve**

The German Rectors' Conference asked the major German parties for their proposals for higher education policy at a European level ahead of the European elections on 25 May 2014.

The responses of the CDU, CSU, SPD, Die Grünen, FDP and Die Linke are documented on the HRK homepage [www.hrk.de](http://www.hrk.de).

According to HRK President Prof. Horst Hippler: "It is very positive indeed that all the parties are pursuing the goal of facilitating ease of mobility within Europe and of underpinning cooperation with non-EU countries. However, we could argue with many of the parties about the proposed implementation measures. The universities themselves understand precisely what they have to do to further enhance their internationalisation and need structural support from politicians, rather than statutory provisions."

The HRK President regards the responses to the issue of future investment in education and research as being similarly undecided: "While it is encouraging that all parties view the funding of education and research as a priority task for the future, some parties are evidently shying away from stating specific targets. It is therefore hard to believe in their resolve. Universities in Europe, and especially in the crisis countries, urgently require real improvement of their situation through decisive action and supporting measures at all political levels. The future of the younger generation cannot be shaped by rhetorical declarations alone."

Together with the French Rectors' Conference (CPU) and the Polish Rectors' Conference (KRASP), the HRK asked for statements on the following policy areas in the election touchstones: The role of European and national investment in education and research; improved political consideration and coordination of the interests of universities in the EU Commission departments for education, research and business; the implementation measures for the European Research Area (ERA); promotion of the mobility of students and scientists within the European Higher Education Area; educational cooperation with non-EU countries.