

**8 August 2014**

**Heads of innovation instead of heads of cabbage**

**Governments are protecting agricultural subsidies to the disadvantage of research and innovation**

EU budget negotiations for 2015 have resulted in European government leaders planning to cut payments for research and innovation by 11% over the proposals of the European Commission. €1.1 billion would no longer be available.

As a consequence it is possible that universities and small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) would have to wait months for the money to which they are entitled and whole credit lines might be frozen in the mid-term.

In contrast, agricultural subsidies have remained almost unaffected, with a mere 0.1% cut: a clear imbalance.

HRK President Professor Dr. Horst Hippler has called publicly upon the European Parliament to correct these wrongly set priorities in the coming negotiations on the 2015 budget: "The proposal that agricultural subsidies be given preference over funding for research, even though almost five times as much EU money is spent on farming as on research and innovation, is not the way to the future. Europe needs investment in heads of innovation, not in heads of cabbage."

He continued: "The member states' plans for the 2015 budget are unacceptable – not just for research but for the whole of Europe. Given these figures, the member states have clearly only been paying lip service to the role of innovation in the future of Europe.

The worrying trend of recent years is becoming more marked: the governments want to continue to apply disproportionate cuts to the funding programmes for research and innovation. At €9.3 billion, the budget now proposed for funding EU research and innovation would be substantially lower than in 2013 – by 13.5%.

The Council's proposal for the 2015 budget is not in keeping with the spirit of a Europe aiming to become the most competitive region in the world."