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HRK welcomes increase in basic funding for universities of applied sciences in Lower Saxony

HRK President Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler has welcomed plans by the state of Lower Saxony to increase basic funding for universities of applied sciences – a move which could allow a long-term increase in student places. "The long-term increase in annual basic funding gives universities of applied sciences more certainty in terms of planning," said Hippler, adding that this example should be followed by other states in Germany. Previously, most improvements in the range of courses on offer came within the framework of short-term programmes.

Hippler also called on the state government to fully implement the announced further increase in basic funding. "Following the first extension of the range of university courses, the state must now deliver and keep its promises," the President said.

Last year the government of Lower Saxony announced plans to make more than €480 million available to universities of applied sciences by 2020 as part of the Universities of Applied Sciences Development Programme (FEP). This was to allow 3400 'temporary first-year places' created within the framework of the Higher Education Pact to be converted into 'regular first-year places'.

In a first step, basic funding has been increased by €44 million per year. This will secure approximately 2400 university places in the long term. In the second stage another €20 million will be made available every year for innovative degree programmes, enabling universities of applied sciences to offer another 1000 first-year places on a long-term basis.