

7 November 2014**HRK General Meeting: BAföG funding must come to the universities**

Today in Lübeck, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) called upon the federal states to use most of the 'relief funding' under BAföG (the German Federal Law on Support in Education) to improve the basic finances of the universities. However, it says, there is absolutely no provision for this in the current plans.

In some federal states, the universities will receive none of the money which will be released when the federal government assumes responsibility for BAföG funding. Many other federal states are investing far too little in their universities. The HRK General Meeting also criticised some federal states for only appearing to increase university funding and in many cases obscuring the reassignment of funds or their reduction elsewhere.

The universities reiterated strongly their hopes for the planned changes to Article 91 b of the Basic Law. Following the General Meeting today, HRK President Dr. Horst Hippler said: "Lifting the ban on cooperation gives the federal government the opportunity to become directly involved in basic funding and particularly in the funding of teaching. This is also an opportunity to improve the universities, thus realising key objectives in the education policy for the future. Against this background the policy of some federal states regarding the BAföG funding seems to me to be particularly problematic. Even after constitutional reform, it is essential that they and the federal government trust each other and cooperate."

The General Meeting was unanimous in its approval of the rise of the overhead funding rate from 20% to 22% agreed at the Joint Science Conference. "The agreement between the science ministers for the federal states and the government is very positive, but it can only be the first step. The indirect costs associated with third-party projects can exceed 40%. Diverting funding for teaching to finance research projects is not acceptable in the long term," said HRK President Hippler. He urged the federal government and the federal states to increase overhead funding for publicly funded third-party projects gradually over the next few years until the costs were fully covered.

Text of the resolution