

30 October 2014

**HRK President Horst Hippler on the outcome of today's GWK meeting:
Agreement delivers improvement but overhead funding still inadequate**

Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), has commented on the recently ended meeting of the Joint Science Conference (GWK) of the federal government and federal states.

"The consensus of the science ministers represents a step towards a clearer outlook for higher education. We're delighted that the Higher Education Pact, with the funding of extra university places and research overheads, appears to be secured. It was important that the pact be tailored to the predicted number of students expected to enter university over the next few years.

It's also important that a basic consensus was reached on a successor to the Excellence Initiative. The Excellence Initiative clearly revealed the potential of university-based research, which must be successfully promoted through performance-based funding without political input on planning. In-depth discussion and an appropriate approach will be needed to decide how best to proceed. The GWK gave the starting signal for this today.

However, the HRK repeated its warning that the successful acquisition of third-party funding is increasing the burden on universities' basic funding resources. At its current level, overhead funding is not sufficient to cover the overhead costs of research projects for which funding has been successfully obtained. The increase from 20% to 22% resulting from the participation of the federal states will not suffice in the long term as actual costs amount to between 40% and 70%.

We now expect the heads of the federal state governments and the Federal Chancellor to finally approve the package on 11 December."