

13 April 2015**Presidents of the German and the British Rectors' Conferences:
Protest against Horizon 2020 cuts**

In a joint article published today in the "Financial Times", the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and Universities UK (UUK) have protested against cuts to Horizon 2020, the EU research programme. The Presidents of the two organisations, Professor Dr. Horst Hippler and Professor Sir Christopher Snowden, expressed their great concern that diverting €2.7 billion into the newly-created "European Funds for Strategic Investments" (EFSI) will weaken university-based research in Europe.

"As representatives of two of the most powerful higher education systems in Europe, we want to make it clear that the European Commission is acting with short-sightedness here and its priorities are wrong. Sustainable financing for university research is one of the prerequisites for innovation, growth and competitiveness throughout the entire European Union. In its present form, the Horizon 2020 research programme supports European universities in successfully implementing excellent, internationally respected research projects. Basic research as it is conducted at European universities is not suitable for sponsorship from EFSI funds," said Horst Hippler.

Hippler and Snowden are appealing to the EU Commission to reject the proposals to cut the EU research programme's budget. "Adequately financed, Horizon 2020 is an effective tool that supports top-level university research. This in turn generates innovation and growth in Europe," emphasised Hippler. "Solidarity with Universities UK, whose members include several of the strongest research universities in Europe, once again highlights the fact that plans to cut Horizon 2020's budget face fierce criticism on an international scale."

Text of the joint article