

**21 April 2015**

**EU Parliament halts cuts to European Research Funding**

**HRK President Hippler calls upon the Federal Government to act**

Yesterday in the European Parliament, the Budget Committee and Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee followed the Trade and Industry Committee in voting against the cuts planned to "Horizon 2020", the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.

Horst Hippler, the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), welcomed the decision. "It is very encouraging news indeed that the members of the European Parliament share the view of the universities and acknowledge that research and development are an important foundation for a competitive Europe."

Negotiations between the EU Commission, the governments of the member states and the European Parliament are set to take place over the coming weeks. "We would now like to see the German Federal Government move away from supporting the EU Commission in cutting back on long-term investment - such as research funding - to deliver a short-term effect," the HRK President said.

"We also hope that in the course of the negotiations the European Commission will gain more insight into the process of innovation," he continued. The EU Commission has stated several times over recent weeks that the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) will strengthen research and education in Europe.

This drew an emphatic response from Horst Hippler: "We do not wish to see education and research in Europe financed with credit cards! The idea that universities will no longer receive funding for research projects from the Framework Programmes for Research and Technological Development but will take out loans from the EFSI is anything but realistic," he continued. "Financial markets are governed by the principle of debt repayment; this is completely different logic from the value creation of education and science. This is why we need funding programmes created specifically for research and development. Investment in this area is extremely profitable. We generate high yields with it, economically, socially and culturally."

### **Background**

The European Commission had proposed financing contingency insurance for loans from the European Investment Bank. It was planned to finance the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) set up for this purpose by making substantial cuts to EU research funding. The EU's Council of Ministers and therefore also the German Federal Government have so far supported the EU Commission's plans. Together with other European rectors' associations, the HRK has repeatedly protested about this process over recent weeks.

**Further Information:**

Press release from the Budget Committee and Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of the European Parliament: **"Strategic Investment Fund: committees back Juncker Plan, but not programme cuts"**

Press release from the HRK, April 2015: **"Presidents of the German and the British Rectors' Conferences: Protest against Horizon 2020 cuts"**

Press release from the HRK February 2015: **"Rectors' Conferences warn that Europe is an endangered research site"**