



## LIETUVOS UNIVERSITETŲ REKTORIŲ KONFERENCIJA

*Lithuanian Universities Rector's Conference*

04/03/2018

### **DECLARATION FOR INVESTING TODAY IN TALENT FOR TOMORROW LITHUANIAN STATE'S INVESTMENT TO SCIENCE AND STUDIES**

The Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference (LURK) supports the main purpose of a reform of higher education in Lithuania, – to create preconditions and conditions for the higher education of the younger generation meeting the highest standards of quality. Only such education would ensure the creation of higher economic, social and cultural value in the country and guarantee the sustainable development of our country.

However, LURK is concerned about the level of research at Lithuanian universities, the working conditions of researchers, the state of social infrastructure of students, and the sustainability of state's investment in higher education.

The disproportion between research and study funding contributed up till now not only to the massive degradation of studies programs but also has caused a much greater trouble, – the weakness of the ability of Lithuanian universities to respond to the challenges of the 21st century. These challenges are becoming more and more important. One has to relate to the transformation of the paradigm of higher education, where the future community leaders have to have the ability to think critically, have to have the strong knowledge and understanding of the importance of self-renewal several times during their career.

It is impossible to develop such qualities without broadening the involvement of academicians and students in the largest uncertainty, the most demanding and most valuable human activity field of intellectual effort – research. We therefore, invite the authorities to provide additional resources for universities, in particular to target research funding.

In addition, we also draw the attention to the fact that, despite some progress in recent years, the working conditions of researchers complicates the attraction of academic staff from abroad, and the social conditions of students complicates the attraction of talented foreign students. International circulation of intelligence, which determines the progress of the modern world, has become a devious, unidirectional form in our country. It destroys the efforts of universities to develop a sufficient number of highly qualified professionals, capable of acting in a global context, posing a huge threat to the country's competitiveness and encourages further loss of a nation.

The above-mentioned problems have become inveterate, and their solution has been perplexed by the state authorities' unsuitable approach to financing the higher education sector solely as a cost, rather than as the most important investment in the country, which gives the highest return. Rectors also warn Lithuanian society about

the threat to the sustainability of university funding due to the projected decline in European Union (EU) support after year 2020. Therefore, it is highly important to focus on EUA's "EU funding for universities" campaign, which can be favorable in achieving EU's post-2020 multiannual financial framework, and Erasmus+ programme.

LURK invites public authorities and the public itself to openly discuss the establishment of a renew mission of the Lithuanian higher education and its fundamental possibilities for its implementation. We believe that the key principles of higher education reform that will ensure the successful development of our country must be based on the development of research, the fostering of the international dimension of universities and the sustainable investment of the state in higher education.

On behalf of Lithuanian University Rectors,  
The President of Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference,  
Professor Artūras Žukauskas

