Press Statement: 11 March 2015

EUA welcomes European Parliament’s draft report on Investment Plan

The European Parliament’s committees on Economic and Monetary Affairs and on Budgets have released their draft report on the Commission’s proposed European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

The European University Association is pleased that the rapporteurs have taken into account the arguments put forward by the organisation relaying the sector's concerns regarding the funding of the scheme. The draft report will serve as a basis for the Parliament’s work in the next steps of the procedure, after it is adopted by both committees before the end of April.

The draft report proposes several changes to the Commission’s text, and most notably on its funding mechanisms. While the principle of a 50% guarantee from the EU budget is maintained, the report removes the direct reference to Horizon 2020 as a funding source of this guarantee. Instead, the decision on the funding sources of EFSI is embedded in the annual budget procedure.

This means that the Parliament and Council would progressively authorise the release of funds from different sources to be allocated to the EFSI guarantee each year, rather than agreeing upfront as to which programmes will be cut for that purpose.

EUA welcomes that the lead committees have disconnected Horizon 2020 from the EFSI funding and understands that an annual discussion could open possibilities for funding EFSI from various sources across the EU budget.

EUA remains engaged in this process on behalf of Europe's universities and calls upon the Parliament and Council to reach a compromise in favour of European research, and avoid cuts that would undermine the EU’s long-term competitiveness, also bearing in mind that there can be no innovation without research. [ENDS]

Notes:
The European Parliament Budget and Econ committees draft report is available here.
The European Parliament Industry, Research, Telecoms and Energy committee draft opinion is available here.
The latest EUA Policy Brief on the EU Investment Plan is available here.
The EUA Infographic on cuts to European research is available here.

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The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors’ conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA’s mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research.