



Inspiring practices: Higher Education helping newly arrived refugees

Meet basic needs and ease social integration of refugees

This list is the result of responses to an EU Survey launched by the European Commission on 24 September 2015 among universities and student organisations. It has been further completed following a workshop organised on 6 October 2015 with 25 representatives of Erasmus+ National Agencies, universities and student organisations. The aim is not to be exhaustive, but to share some practices taking place in different parts of the EU.

Challenges	Inspiring practices (<i>examples italicised</i>)
<p>Develop initiatives to meet basic needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation of refugees in gyms/emergency sleeping place (<i>Universität Leipzig; the University of Helsinki; Luleå University of Technology; the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki has taken steps to accommodate refugees and support them; Humak University of Applied Sciences looks into the possibility to open a reception center for young asylum seekers within one of its campuses. For spring 2017, it will offer an innovative new Erasmus course on cross-cultural counselling and guidance titled: "Young people and Social inclusion", which will focus on early intervention, empowerment, and encouragement for wide-and-broad-gauged participation. Throughout Europe such courses should soon become widely and freely available).</i> • Support for refugees' basic needs, including food, health services, cloths, beverages (<i>the University of Coimbra; Pädagogische Hochschule Kärnten / University College of Teacher Education Carinthia; MF Norwegian School of Theology; Laurea University of Applied Sciences; Vienna's University of Applied Sciences; the University of Turku; Konstfack's students initiated the "Konstfack student for refugees" project with the purpose to raise money to Doctors without Borders. Another project initiated by a teacher has gathered teachers and students to create baby carriers that will be sent to refugees situated on the Greek island Samos).</i> • Setting up of informal student/staff networks to support refugees (<i>In addition to the established migrant-aid networks, such as the Refugee Support Network, the European legal Network on Asylum, several universities are leading the way in the realm of informal supports at the local level, such as Malmö university web platform for Refugees; Social projects are also run by local Erasmus Student Network (ESN) sections, notably in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki).</i> • Nomination of a contact person for refugees at HEIs (<i>Nuertingen-Geislingen University; Universität Mannheim; University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer; the University of Coimbra appointed the International Relations Unit as</i>



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	<p><i>the body in charge of coordination of the refugees issue at the university; the HUMLOG Institute co-ordinates the refugee response of the Hanken School of Economics; Université Catholique de Louvain set up a working group whose mission was to identify working areas around which the actions of the university community could be organized).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on humanitarian logistics at higher education institutions (<i>six week course from "Class Central" in collaboration with the University of Manchester, covering global health, humanitarian response and how to protect the vulnerable; Hanken School of Economics offering a newsletter with research in the area of humanitarian logistics in disaster preparedness, response and recovery).</i>) • Fund-raising activities (<i>Hasselt University is raising funds for the refugee centres which are then allocated by the regional platform for refugees, entitled "Limburgs platform vluchtelingen"; the University of Thessaloniki carried out a concert during which it collected essential goods to be sent to refugees; University of Applied Sciences Ludwigshafen).</i>)
<p>Ease social integration and strengthen knowledge of the host country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the supply of education and training of migrants to facilitate integration and social cohesion (<i>the project DIME has developed a repository of formal and non-formal qualifications needed for the inclusion of migrants. Partners therefore jointly design and implement modules, methods, interactive tools and learner-centered processes in order to ease cultural and economic integration. The transnational consortium is made of AIFRISS (FR), the Centro Italiano Opere Salesiane Femminili (IT), the Kinonikes Sineteristikes Drastiriotites Epathon Omadon (GR), the Universidad de Huelva (ES), the Universidad de Jaen (ES), the INSUP (FR); The SOSMIE project provides migrants and refugees with access to educational tools, including methods to self-assess their soft skills, in order to foster employability in host countries. This project brings together seven partners: IASIS (GR), ITG (FR), IPGSKSvD (TU), Team Training (DE), ISE (RO), TRUST (IT), Hôtel Alegria (PL).</i>) • Cooperation between universities and NGOs (<i>Åbo Akademi University; Lahti University of Applied Sciences has been cooperating with the Immigration Office, and students have assisted in receiving refugees in local centers for refugees; cooperation between the University of Tampere, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, and the Red Cross;</i>)



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cooperation between Masaryk University and government bodies; University Colleges Leuven-Limburg (UCLL) got in touch with the asylum centres in Limburg province; the Hanken School of Economics currently cooperates with other PRME members in the Nordic chapter to address the refugee crisis; The University of Augsburg cooperates with Augsburg's university of Applied Sciences to identify adequate measures to support refugees; A transnational consortium of universities, institutes and NGOs (including Österreich Institut GmbH, WBS Training, Inter-kulturo d.o.o., the Foreign Language Centre of the Masaryk University, the Novinka Foundation) set up [Deutsch.info](#), a free multilingual website to learn German with migrant-specific issues; the University of Passau maintains contact with local humanitarian organisations, i.e. Evangelische Studierendengemeinde, and with local public authorities, i.e. city of Passau; DHBW Villingen-Schwenningen plans to cooperate with partner companies and local authorities to prepare refugees to study at university and find work placements; [ROC of Twente](#), [Saxion University of Applied Sciences](#) and [University of Twente](#) have joined forces to contribute to support refugees staying in their region).

- **Cross-faculty approaches** ([Konstanz University](#); [Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin](#); [Universität Giessen's](#) Faculty of Law provides legal advice through its students who can be recognised for their volunteer work, the health faculty offers medical services to NGOs, language faculty trains volunteers to give language classes, education students help children, and psychology faculty supports traumatised refugees;).
- **Offer language courses to the refugees** ([Åbo Akademi University](#); [University of Turku](#); the [University for Foreigners of Siena](#); [University of Coimbra](#); [Dresden's University of Applied Sciences](#); [University of Augsburg](#); [Pädagogische Hochschule Kärnten / University College of Teacher Education Carinthia](#); [Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia](#); [University of Vechta](#); [FH Münster University of Applied Sciences](#); [University of Helsinki](#); [Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule – Edith Stein](#); [Universiteit Hasselt](#) asked the help of Arabic speaking students/doctorandi to develop an Arabic-Dutch module at disposal of refugees for free).
- **Provide "support packages" to refugee students**, including personalized guidance and a full tuition fee bursary and funding to meet some of the additional costs associated with studying at an HEI ([Karlsruhe University of Education](#); [Universität Siegen](#); the [Erasmus University of Rotterdam](#); [OLive weekend courses](#) organized by the [Central European University](#) that comprise courses taught by more than 30 student, faculty and staff volunteers from across the CEU



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community; welcome plan designed and implemented by the University of Coimbra; TU Dortmund Universities; Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences launched the initiative "Integration of political refugees with higher education backgrounds, respectively ambitions" as a comprehensive approach that enables qualified people who are willing to study to fulfil the requirements for a higher education entrance in Germany, including the following steps: orientation sessions with interview, examination of qualification, integration components, language course, Application for study programme; Potsdam's University of Applied Sciences designed a pilot project to provide specific information and counselling to refugees interested in Higher Education", jointly with partners in the city of Potsdam and refugee networks in the region of Brandenburg and Berlin).

- **Training of NGO volunteers to provide advice and counselling in the areas of study possibilities and employment;** *(FH Münster University of Applied Sciences [two-day training course](#); Helsinki's Law faculty plans a pop-up desk that would provide asylum seekers with legal advice).*
- **Social integration by student and staff volunteers through welcome programme or orientation/international week** *(Deggendorf Institute of Technology; the University of Coimbra; Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt holds a series of opening lectures during the winter term for refugees and other interested people about topics of the university's faculties; Students of the field of "German as a foreign language" in TU Dortmund Universities are encouraged to do their mandatory internship in refugee homes in order to foster their integration into the community; University of Oslo; Kahramanmaraş Sutcu Imam University; St.Pölten University of Applied Sciences; Friedrich Schiller University Jena offers free of charge guest access to courses, Info days for refugees and migrants "Ways to study in Jena" and individual counselling and evaluation of documents/certificates).*
- **Buddy programmes to couple students with refugees,** providing administrative guidance and language courses *(University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer; Evangelische Hochschule Dresden; Vienna's University of Applied Sciences; Justus Liebig University of Giessen; University of Passau; [University of Bremen](#); University of Groningen; Landelijke Studentenvakbond; Deggendorf Institute of Technology; [the University of Coimbra](#); Dalarna University; Haute école Francisco Ferrer; Stiftung Universität Hildesheim; University of Vechta; Universität Mannheim).*



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- **Intercultural training for adaptation to the local culture**, including MOOCs and other e-learning products made available for free ([University of Bremen MOOCs](#); *University of Groningen*; [Dalarna University's MOOC](#); *University of Oslo*; *Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences*; *A transnational consortium of universities, institutes and NGOs (including Österreich Institut GmbH, WBS Training, Inter-kulturo d.o.o., the the Foreign Language Centre of the Masaryk University, the Novinka Foundation, set up Deutsch.info, a free multilingual website to learn German with migrant-specific issues; Scuola Superiore per Mediatori Linguistici of Milan holds intercultural courses in already existing courses of linguistic mediation).*
- **Organize regular meetings** between the refugees, students, representatives of the university and civil society actors (*Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen*; *University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer holds regular meetings with local community, church, NGOs, volunteer management*).
- **Academic and individual counselling to choose the right courses** that fit into the academic career of refugees ([Degendorf Institute of Technology](#); *University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences of Vienna*; *Hafencity Universität of Hamburg*).
- **Preparation of school material and preparatory courses for children/students from refugee families, including via MOOCs** (*Kirchlich Pädagogische Hochschule Wien/krems*; [Ready4Study MOOC consortium](#); *Philipps-Universität Marburg set up an [online platform](#) for refugees with information on possibilities for enrolment and support services on site provided by students and staff*).
- **Arabic lessons for students in the host HEI** (*Kirchlich Pädagogische Hochschule Wien/krems*).
- **Phased courses**, including language, cultural and specialised components (*Kohtaamisia-project led by the [University of Turku](#)*).

Have you implemented other types of activities that are not listed above and that could be interesting to share?

Please share them with us via EAC-HIGHER-EDUCATION-FOR-REFUGEES@ec.europa.eu. We will regularly update the above list.