



Inspiring practices: Higher Education helping newly arrived refugees

Recognition of skills, access to HE and Integration of Researchers

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>Improve recognition of skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesment of educational attainment of refugees, including tests in case of undocumented education upon arrival (<i>Kahramanmaras Sutcu Imam University; University of Groningen; Osnabrueck University; At the University of Göttingen, if refugees' maths test exceed 85%, the school takes them right in; Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences evaluates prior learning and competences of refugee students who have started studies in engineering or health care and social services; Charles University offers as a condition for admission the successful completion of the admission procedure, including English exam and meeting other conditions set out in the admissions process</i>). • Obtention of a degree recognized by the national authorities of the host country after following a few courses in the same country (<i>Blekinge Institute of Technology's project offers newly arrived refugees with an academic degree the possibility to obtain a Swedish university degree after having taken one or two courses at Swedish higher education institutions; Dalarna University's "Korta vägen" (Short Path) is a commissioned-course for immigrants with academic backgrounds to get them into Swedish employment</i>). • Validation of credentials/full degree without paper evidence – staff training (<i>NAFSA; Magdeburg Hochschule</i>). • Acknowledgement of professional positions (teachers, professors) through provision of equivalent certifications (<i>Associazione CIMEA</i>). • Train academic and administrative staff to recognise refugees' qualifications without formal documents (<i>Tampere University of Applied Sciences: use of digital means in healthcare profession recognition</i>). • Promotion of existing free resources for independent learning (<i>www.duolingo.com, www.memrise.com</i>).



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs aiming to validate refugees' prior education (<i>The University of Borås designed and implemented a validation programme in nursing, in collaboration with hospitals and other health care providers</i>). • Fast-track procedures for recognition of qualifications (NOKUT). • Recognition of student/staff volunteering in the curriculum (<i>Student volunteers of the University Colleges Leuven-Limburg assisting the refugee children will have this experience as an integral and integrated part of their curriculum for the whole academic year; Hamburg University of Technology plans to introduce credits for voluntary work for refugees to be counted for non-technical modules in the Curriculum</i>).
<p>Enhance access to university courses (including without official status)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new, targeted learning material (Duolingo currently develops French, German and Swedish courses for Arabic speakers, with English already available). • Intensive short-term courses for beginners as provided to Erasmus students (<i>Deggendorf Institute of Technology</i>). • Allow refugees to enrol as academic students in a course to first explore the university and their level of knowledge (<i>Stiftung Universität Hildesheim; FernUniverität has all its courses open for refugees and plans to grant scholarships to cover material fees, with no fees required for studying. The University of Groningen offers the possibility to switch to a degree programme despite not having official documentation; Kiron University provides free education and enrolment, with selection based on performance (legal documents have to be handed in only after the second year). Courses are offered in English and degrees are granted in cooperation with State Universities and according to the legal requirements; the University of Bologna implements in accordance with the municipality, a programme enabling asylum seekers to enroll in single course units as fee waiver and without an official recognition of the previous degree; The Hanken School of Economics offers open university studies that are accessible to all and can be used as "bridge studies" to qualify for bachelors programmes; The Jagiellonian University in Krakow decided to</i>



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accept refugees and waive fees for students from non-EU countries who were forced to flee their countries for political reasons).

- **Open study places dedicated to refugees** ("[More](#)" programme led by Uniko in which 19 universities - including the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences of Vienna, the Vienna University of Economics and Business, the University of Linz and the University of Applied Arts in Vienna – admit each up to 100 students as extra-curricular students where they are accepted as extraordinary students without having to pay tuition fee, even if they are unable to provide degree certificates; Potsdam's University of Applied Sciences set up a Vocational student program for refugees, free of charge; the University of Bremen gives access without certificate of formal enrolment to enable refugee students to continue their studies to complete their degree; DHBW Villingen-Schwenningen offered 10 study places for refugees during the International Semester from October to December as well as from February to June with courses in English; The University of Barcelona has set up a [refugee support programme](#) that includes some measures to help those fleeing from Syria's brutal civil war. The University estimates that the programme can take in 100 refugees, help them to settle in Catalonia and enable them to continue their studies in Barcelona. The programme is supported by other institutions, like the Barcelona City Council and the Catalan Association for Solidarity and Assistance of Refugees).
- **Study Stream designed for refugees** (the University of Coimbra held a seminar with the participation of several experts in the field of migration to raise awareness among its students, researchers and staff, and has then developed a special free "channel" of study for students, academics and professionals with refugee status; London Metropolitan University has created a model unit worthy of emulation called the Refugee Assessment and Guidance Unit whose aim is to provide career advice, guidance and employability skills, and to develop training for all refugee health professionals with work placements within the UK's national health services; The Foundation For Refugees Students ([UAF](#)) also provide comprehensive services for all sorts of highly qualified refugee workers in the Netherlands)
- **Permission to follow courses as guests and use university facilities** (the [University of Applied Sciences Emden/Leer](#); the University of Duisburg-Essen; Dresden's University of Applied Sciences; Leiden University's graduate school of teaching (ICLON) allows Syrian teachers to take part in the [Mobile Educator project](#), an 8-week programme designed



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by ICLON that aims to enable participants to use a range of ICT applications for mobile education; [IN-Touch project](#) run by Bremen University's International Office; Leuphana at the University of Lüneburg with its "Open Lecture Hall" and "[Refugee Bridging Programme](#)"; the Central European University offers some classes to registered refugees at no cost; TU Dortmund Universities encourage refugees to start or continue their academic education as visiting students, waiving the tuition fee until they may start or continue their studies as regular students; at the University of Vechta, refugees can participate in part-time "guest study program" and sign up for two to four courses as well as participate in lectures and seminars. However, they cannot take exams or earn a degree; Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin offers simplified access to HE as guest students. They don't have to pay a tuition fees but don't obtain a certificate either; Catholic University of Applied Sciences Berlin offers refugees the possibility to attend classes as registered guests).

- **Online lectures, study courses and learning platforms** (*The Silent University*; [University of Applied Sciences Luebeck](#); *Haute école Francisco Ferrer*).
- **Scholarships for refugees** (*the University of Groningen*; One concerted program is [Students at Risk](#) run by the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU); the Central European University will offer a number of scholarships designated specifically for Syrian students beginning of academic year 2016/2017).
- **Fast-track training in view of integration in the country of residence** (*Södertörn University implemented a fast-track training of medical doctors from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, combined with language training. The 20-week course aims at preparing refugees with a resident permit for work in their profession; the Institute for Language and Communication of the University of Antwerp (Linguapolis) organizes a [fast-track course](#) of Dutch language in order to prepare future students to start higher education*).
- **Allow refugees to do a 1-year programme in 2, paying tuition fees for one year** (*Haute école Francisco Ferrer*).
- **Grant access to a complete study programme after a full language training** (*the [University of applied science Magdeburg-Stendal](#)*).



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<p>Deepen academic integration of researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships for academics (<i>the MF Norwegian School of Theology, the University of Oslo, the University of Geneva, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Ghent University are members of Scholars at Risk network whose aim is the protection of scholars suffering threats to their lives, liberty and well-being by arranging temporary research and teaching positions at institutions; The Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation provides threatened scholars with fellowships; the University of Macerata is involved in a project sponsored by the Euro-Mediterranean University aimed at providing scholarships to refugees from the Syrian conflict).</i> • Organise courses to retrain or redirect people with previous jobs to employers (<i>The Silent University's specifically targeted courses</i>). • Integrate refugee lecturers and researchers in universities through temporary employment and access to laboratories for scientists (<i>Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; Luleå University of Technology</i>). • Offer job and internship opportunities in research institutes (<i>Austrian Academy of Science offers internship and job opportunities for refugees whose application for asylum has been approved; the University of Applied Sciences Ludwigshafen in the Rhine offered two paid internships for refugees</i>). • Provide access to university facilities at reduced cost (<i>cooperation of Turkey's Middle East Technical University with IEE in the Scholar Rescue Fund to place qualified academics in related academic departments. Their salaries are paid by IEE but the university provides office space and housing with minimal fee</i>).
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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.