



## Inspiring practices – January 2016: Higher Education helping newly arrived 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.*

### Integration in society

Challenges	Inspiring practices ( <i>examples italicised</i> )
Lack of accommodation/clothes /catering/healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEI accommodating refugees in gyms/emergency sleeping place (e.g. Universität Leipzig).</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.shelteranywhere.org">www.shelteranywhere.org</a> by HousingAnywhere.com, where people can offer their room/couches for refugees until the refugee is settled. There is also a short section detailing how citizens can help student refugees even if they cannot offer a room/place to sleep.</li> <li>• Calls for student housing to open their doors to refugees.</li> <li>• HEI staff/students/parents collecting clothes/beverages/sleeping bags stored at the university (<i>Refugees welcome to Norway informal collective <a href="http://rwtm.no/">http://rwtm.no/</a> which also has a supporting <a href="#">Facebook group</a> with over 85,000 members ; SocialErasmus projects run by local Erasmus Student Network (ESN) sections, such as <a href="#">this event</a> promoted on Facebook by ESN UÉvora</i>).</li> <li>• Cooperation with NGOs, the Red Cross and diverse associations (e.g. <i>collaboration between the University of Tampere and Tampere University of Applied Sciences</i>).</li> <li>• Cross-faculty approaches: faculty of law providing legal advice through its students who can be recognised for their volunteer work (e.g. <a href="#">Universität Giessen</a>), health faculty offering medical services to NGOs, language faculty to train volunteers to give language classes, education students helping children, psychology faculty supporting traumatised refugees (e.g. <a href="#">Konstanz University</a>).</li> <li>• Recognition/honour of students/staff volunteering for such types of activities, recognition of student volunteering in the curriculum.</li> <li>• MOOCs on humanitarian logistics at HEIs to be shared among peers (e.g. <a href="#">six week course</a> 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 <a href="#">newsletter</a> with research in the area of humanitarian logistics in disaster preparedness, response and recovery).</li> <li>• Mediation services available to prevent conflicts and share practices between mediators and refuge workers (<a href="#">Grünes</a></li> </ul>



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<p>Lack of knowledge of the host country/university; need for integration activities</p>	<p><a href="#">Netz Mediation</a> network).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of NGO volunteers to provide advice and counselling in the areas of study possibilities and employment; organisation of an academic information day (<i>Münster University of Applied Sciences' <a href="#">two-day training course</a></i>).</li> <li>• Nomination of a contact person for refugees at HEI.</li> <li>• Social integration by student and staff volunteers through integration courses/welcoming programme (e.g. <a href="#">Deggendorf Institute of Technology</a>).</li> <li>• Buddy programme to couple students with refugees, providing guidance (accompanying them to authorities) and language courses (e.g. <a href="#">University of Bremen buddy programme</a>).</li> <li>• Orientation/international week (support provided to Erasmus and international students can be opened to refugees).</li> <li>• Intercultural training for adaptation to the local culture (e.g. <a href="#">University of Bremen MOOCs</a>).</li> <li>• Phased courses with language, then cultural and specialised elements (e.g. <a href="#">University of Turku</a>).</li> <li>• Mentoring programme (e.g. <a href="#">Deggendorf Institute of Technology</a>).</li> <li>• Regular meetings between refugees, students, HEI staff, civil society actors.</li> <li>• Students assisting children on a weekly or two-weekly basis, which can be part of their curriculum (service learning).</li> <li>• Recognition/honour of students/staff volunteering for such types of activities.</li> </ul>
<p>Lack of knowledge of the host country language</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buddy programme initiated by students.</li> <li>• Intensive short-term courses for beginners (<i>same as <a href="#">support</a> provided to Erasmus and international students at <a href="#">Deggendorf Institute of Technology</a></i>).</li> <li>• MOOCs and any other e-learning products to be made available for free (<i>University of Groningen for <a href="#">Dutch</a>; <a href="#">deutschinfo</a>, an online platform for learning German, which uses modern teaching tools and at the same time provides practical information about living and working in Germany and Austria – nominated for website of the year 2015</i>).</li> <li>• Development of new, targeted learning material (videos, apps... <a href="#">Duolingo</a> currently developing French, German and Swedish courses for Arabic speakers, with English already available).</li> <li>• Promotion of existing free resources for independent learning (<a href="#">www.duolingo.com</a>, <a href="#">www.memrise.com</a> etc).</li> <li>• Free multilingual website for learning German with migrant-specific issues (<a href="#">deutsch.info</a>).</li> </ul>



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### Academic integration

Challenges	Inspiring practices ( <i>examples italicised</i> )
Lack of documentation justifying diplomas/credits/level of prior learning and competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validation of the credentials/full degree without paper evidence – staff training (<i>Example from <a href="#">NAFSA session</a> discussing the issue and sharing inspiring practices; <a href="#">Magdeburg Hochschule</a></i>).</li> <li>• <a href="#">Fast-track procedures</a> for recognition of qualifications in Norway.</li> <li>• On the spot testing (<i>University of Göttingen: if maths test &gt;85%, authorised to enrol</i>).</li> <li>• 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>).</li> <li>• Validation of professional positions (teachers, professors) through provision of equivalent certifications (<i>Associazione CIMEA</i>).</li> <li>• Permission for refugees to enrol as academic students on a course of study to first explore the university and their level of knowledge (<i>FernUniverität has all of its courses open for refugees and plans to give scholarships for the material fees, with no fees required for studying. There is a possibility to switch to degree programme despite not having official documentation</i>).</li> </ul>
Lack of official status to enrol at university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give access without formal enrolment (while waiting for their official status) to enable refugee students to continue their studies to complete their degree (e.g. <a href="#">University of Bremen</a>).</li> <li>• Permission to follow courses as guests and use university facilities; guest study program with relevant certification (e.g. <a href="#">IN-Touch project</a> from Bremen University International Office; Leuphana at University of Lüneburg with "Open Lecture Hall" and "<a href="#">Refugee Bridging Programme</a>").</li> <li>• Open study places for refugees (<a href="#">online lectures</a> at The Silent University that refugees can follow online at their own pace).</li> <li>• Academic counselling/student mentors to choose the right courses and mentoring programme (e.g. <a href="#">Deqqendorf Institute of Technology</a>).</li> <li>• Preparatory courses.</li> <li>• Orientation courses.</li> <li>• Fee waiver for refugees for selected courses and seminars including certification with the aim to offer orientation and</li> </ul>



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	<p>language training (<i>"More" programme by Uniko: 19 universities admitting each up to 100 students as extra-curricular students</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships for refugees (<i>Scholars at risk – ASSUR project: Students at Risk project who receive twelve months of scholarships; Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation providing fellowships for threatened scholars</i>).</li> <li>• Allow refugees to do a 1-year programme in 2 years.</li> <li>• Allow asylum seekers to follow single course units as a fee waiver; once asylum received, they can use the earned credits to enrol as regular students.</li> <li>• Further <a href="#">examples of relief for academic refugees</a> from the Coimbra Group of Universities.</li> <li>• Provision of advice and guidance on creating packages of support for students seeking asylum, enabling them to not only access but succeed in Higher Education. This includes a full tuition fee bursary and funding to meet some of the additional costs associated with studying at an HEI (<a href="#">Article 26 project encompassing a network UK HEIs</a>).</li> <li>• MOOCs as preparatory courses for language and study skills (<a href="#">Ready4Study MOOC consortium</a>).</li> </ul>
<p>Lack of access to education in the camps in Turkey, Jordan etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of volunteers in the camps to provide advice in the areas of study possibilities and employment.</li> <li>• Distance/online education (<i>Organisation of MOOCs by EADTU members; IN-Touch programme at University of Bremen, with distance language learning, with a view to University study in the future</i>).</li> <li>• Short learning programmes offered through MOOCs and with ECTS (<a href="#">TESSA -Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa project</a>- offers continued professional development in a distance learning format).</li> <li>• International university for refugees (e.g. <a href="#">KIRON University's crowdfunding campaign</a>: blended learning tailor made and free of charge with the possibility to get an accredited degree).</li> <li>• The <a href="#">Madad Fund</a> supporting continued schooling and education of Syrian children, youth and students in surrounding regions of Syria.</li> </ul>

### Changing mentalities/opening minds

Challenges	Inspiring practices ( <i>examples italicised</i> )
<p>Face fear and racism/radicalisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEI to recruit teachers as social helpers and citizenship mediators (e.g. <i>San Filippo International Primary School; could be adopted in HE</i>).</li> <li>• Develop more modules/programmes on cultural diversity, global citizenship and peace education (e.g. <a href="#">UHasselt</a>).</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate student and teachers debates to raise awareness (<i>University of Groningen</i>).</li><li>• Training of teachers to adopt inclusive practices when working with young refugees/migrants (<a href="#">Ludwigsburg University of Education</a>).</li></ul>
Chance for HEIs and enterprises – learn from refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Integrate refugee lecturers and researchers in universities through temporary employment and access to laboratories for scientists (e.g. <a href="#">Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam</a>).</li><li>• Organise courses to retrain or redirect people with previous jobs to employers (<i>The Silent University's specifically targeted courses</i>).</li></ul>

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 [ErasmusplusRefugees2015](#). We will regularly update the above list.