



Hungarian higher education institutions' humanitarian efforts in the war in Ukraine

The Hungarian Rectors' Conference (HRC), as the representative organization of Hungarian higher education institutions aims to provide as much assistance and up-to-date information during these critical times. Since the war in Ukraine has a direct effect on Hungary and on Hungarian higher education, we believe it is necessary to stand united and find ways to provide aid in this situation. The same sentiment is shared among all our member universities and colleges (hereinafter universities) as well. We have asked our member to provide a summary of their contributions, in order to have a greater understanding about these processes and provide further assistance where it is deemed necessary. The following document summarizes the information provided by 46 universities, detailing the various humanitarian efforts of HRC's members.

Types of assistance

There is a close cooperation and collaboration between all key players in Hungarian higher education, there is a joint effort to assist all these people in need. Our member institutions, the Hungarian universities provide assistance as their capacities allow; and are doing their best to manage this critical situation. Information and updates are regularly shared among the representatives, in order to coordinate and assist in the aiding effort.

Communication

- Since it is important for the Hungarian higher education community to be sufficiently informed about the war in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis that affect or border, HRC's member institutions are constantly circulating up-to-date information to the students about ways they can donate, help and provide support. There is a regular publication of newsletters and press releases, some institutions even organize a series of lectures to share key practical knowledge, the purpose of which is to get to know the situation and these processes in more detail, examining the real connections.
- HEIs are also publishing articles and calls for donations, sharing information on how to donate to charitable organizations that are in need of additional funding for their operations.
- In addition, institutions established information points on the institution's grounds to provide help and orientation to those refugees who arrive to the campuses. In order to help those who do not speak any foreign languages, some institutions also provide regularly updated information on their university's websites in Ukrainian language.

University assistance

- There is a great variety in terms of what our members can offer on their own institutional grounds, but for example the establishment of special committee to coordinate the institutions efforts is a common feature in most institutions.
- In order to provide help, most institutions establish information points, and organized the allocation of contacting staff at every faculty to help the refugee students.
- Those universities and colleges that have available dorm facilities are offering their vacancies for short and long term stay for the refugees, lodging and full care with meals, also day-care and other engagement for those who arrive with children. There is also cooperation with regional stakeholders and offering accommodation to Ukrainian workers and their families on institutional grounds. Communication with regional stakeholders also means that a number of our members are in direct contact with universities across the border for communication purposes and to provide direct assistance when necessary. In some cases this means medical or technical equipment, allocation of staff as well.
- Institutions also offer long term opportunities for transferring students, which will be available in more detail from the next semester that begins in September 2022. Currently, institutions try to provide support by offering tuition fee waivers and emergency support for already enrolled students in Hungarian higher education.
- To help in surviving this transitioning period, institutions began the rearrangement of their available scholarship resources from remaining Erasmus+ credit mobility programs, where there are vacancies.
- For those incoming students who are arriving currently (in the middle of the spring semester), a special student status is offered - at courses where vacancies are available.
- Similarly, positions are offered for university staff, researchers and teachers as well. Due to the unordinary nature of the current situation, HRC's member institutions also try to provide crisis support and psychological assistance for those who require.
- The crisis also inspires people to come up with unique or innovative way to help, for example some institutions organized charity concerts, while others are offering free online courses and trainings, to help refugees in finding a job.

Donations and fundraising

- Collection of donations on university grounds either to charity organizations, and donations organized by institutions' student union and then forward to various partners or charity organizations. Furthermore, in other cases they deliver the collected goods directly to a Ukrainian partner, municipalities or humanitarian organizations.
- Some parts of the funds raised are also funnelled to the [Bridge for Transcarpathia](#) Higher Education Infoline, which was established by Tempus Public Foundation that can help teachers and students who want to continue their full or part-time study in Hungary or participate in a Hungarian teacher mobility program.

Furthermore, in some cases, institutions decided to offer financial support in the form of donation to charity foundations from the institution's own budget.

- As a special donation by one of our members, a container was delivered to the border. This container is operated 24/7 by a charity organization and was provided a courtesy of one of the universities that is in a long standing partnership with that charity organization (Hungarian Baptist Aid).

Human resources

- Hungarian higher education institutions also aim to help in the management of the crisis by the recruitment of volunteers to provide help at the university, and also to help at the border with the content influx of people fleeing the war-torn lands Ukraine, as well as volunteers who speak Russian or Ukrainian to provide translation. As a compensation, some universities offer a small scholarship fee for their students who volunteered to translate in 8 hour shifts a day at the border.
- For some time, the government has been paying a fee for volunteer students who are assigned to interpret on train and at the train station.
- The ministry arranged for Ukrainian- or Russian-speaking volunteers to provide information on trains carrying the refugees. Volunteer students perform interpreting duties on government general and health information lines, thereby also assisting the ambulance service in interpreting.

Scholarships and enrolment

- Regarding the scholarship opportunities that are available for the students and staff at the moment, some HEIs offer the opportunity to enrol in partial studies for the time being, or to transfer their studies to the Hungarian university completely. It is also possible to join the Hungarian higher education system with Erasmus scholarship positions, but the general consensus currently is to accept all student with a special student position for the rest of this spring semester.
- In case students want to continue their studies at the Hungarian institution after this semester, the university will conduct a proper entrance exam - in case the desired course is available and capacities allow.

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Hungarian Rectors' Conference Secretariat