



Press Release

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Slovak universities support Ukrainian students and academics

Slovak colleges and universities have condemned the armed invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army. Many higher education institutions have long-term ties and cooperation with Ukrainian partners. Today, more than 5,700 Ukrainian students study in Slovakia, and Ukrainian academics also work in Slovakia. Today, Slovak universities are taking concrete steps to support them.

Several universities have opted for financial support for Ukrainian students. They provide students at risk of war in Ukraine with social or special scholarships ranging from € 150 to € 300, waive fees for student accommodation or reduce membership fees for using students' services. They offer help to students in managing their study duties. Some universities have decided to waive the application fee for the academic year 2022/2023 for applicants from Ukraine. But also set up a transparent fundraising account to support students from war-affected areas. One university announced a call under its support scheme for Ukrainian researchers for 1-2 monthly research stays with a research grant of € 1,200.

Contact centres have been set up at most universities to offer socio-psychological counselling, communication and coordination of activities not only at the university, but also in the city or even in particular region. Universities offer their accommodation capacities not only to foreign students at risk, but also to their family members, employees of partner universities from war-affected areas and their family members, but also to Ukrainian citizens fleeing from the conflict, or are looking for accommodation for them. They organize humanitarian collections. They call their students and graduates as volunteers to border contact centres. Many universities contacted their partner universities directly and expressed their solidarity and offered their help.

The President of the Slovak Rectors' Conference, Professor Rudolf Kropil, states: *"Slovak universities have clearly declared their opposition to war solutions, expressing support for Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. They also came up with concrete steps in favour of Ukrainian students and academics. They send a positive signal not only to their Ukrainian partners, but also to Slovak society. Universities don't just educate employees for specific employers. Their primary aim is to create, store and disseminate knowledge. Knowledge that protects, strengthens and develops democratic and humanistic values and that contributes to solving societal challenges as well as war conflicts. "*

However, we must not forget other students and academics at risk, in war zones around the world or in countries that violate their rights and freedoms. There is no special national scholarship in Slovakia to help scholars at risk. It is in these days that its validity is being proved. Therefore, we recommend the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic to establish a fund to support scholars at risk.