

Statement by Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions on the Military Actions of the Russian Federation against the Independent State of Ukraine

2022 02 25

The Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference vehemently condemns the military actions of the Russian Federation against the independent state of Ukraine. Lithuanian universities are in solidarity with Ukrainian universities, their staff, teachers, students, and the entire Ukrainian nation.

We are ready to use all available resources to help Ukrainian universities in these challenging times. We will also help Ukrainians who come to seek asylum in Lithuania by giving them the opportunity to continue their studies or research or to settle in Lithuania for a shorter or longer period.

Again, these events again demonstrate the importance of fostering an educated, democratic, and critical society. Our shared responsibility is to work together to develop a young generation that loves the country and is ready to defend it.

Universities are one of the most important institutions in helping a country create a strong social fabric. The solidarity and shared tradition of universities unite all those who believe in European values, democracy, freedom of speech, and freedom of thought at such times.

President of the Lithuanian University Rectors' Conference Prof. Rimvydas Petrauskas

President of Rectors' Conference of Lithuanian University Colleges Nerijus Varnas

LURK position and further actions

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I

Any relations in the area of education and science, all agreements and memorandums for cooperation, have been terminated with higher education establishments in Russian Federation and Belorussia.

In the frame of existing law on migration, Lithuania remains open for everybody who wishes to reside, get an education, or work here.

The academic community in Lithuania stands for the position:

- to suspend Russia's and Belorussia's participation in the European Higher Education Area;
- to suspend the memberships in the EUA of all institutions in the Russian Federation and in the Belarus;
- to suspend the membership of all Russian agencies and institutions in ENQA and EQAR;
- to seek for suspension of Russia's and Belorussia's membership in all global and international higher education organizations, networks and associations;

– to ensure Russia's full isolation from the use of benefits and achievements developed in the civilized democratic world.

II

– Lithuanian universities express their full solidarity with Ukrainian universities, their staff, lecturers, students, and the entire Ukrainian nation due to the Russian military invasion.

– Lithuanian universities allocate all available resources to help the academic community of Ukrainian universities. For asylum seekers it includes, but is not limited to, an opportunity to continue their studies or research; settling in Lithuania for a required period; receiving and accommodating refugees in university dormitories or other available facilities.

– The capacity of all universities has been estimated to admit transfer students to English or Russian taught study programs and integrate teaching staff into the study process covering their living expenses to the best possible extent. Preliminary, the capacity for transfer students from Ukraine could be over 2,000, giving the priority to those whose studies have been interrupted by the Russian military invasion. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania (LR ŠMSM) is ready to provide scholarships for transfer students.

– A gateway for Ukrainian students has been built on the “Study in LT” platform (<https://studyin.lt/support-for-ukrainian-students/>) by Education Exchange Support Foundation and is already in use by Ukrainian students looking for relevant courses in Lithuanian higher education institutions. Universities are connected to the [Study in LT](#) platform with their information on very practical steps towards access to the study process.

– Counselling services such as psychological counselling, various mentorships, and other programs are ready to work with incoming Ukrainian students. All academic communities have been actively involved in counselling international and local Lithuanian student communities due to their increased worries because of war happening close to Lithuania.

III

The long-term recovery period of Ukraine is predicted in the light of recent developments and the extent of the damage to the country. This will affect the ability of many Ukrainian students to return to their home universities. Therefore, the academic community of the Lithuanian universities suggests considering the establishment of an EU program (e.g. could be a special Key Action or Activity in the scope of Erasmus+ plus program) to support eligible Ukrainian refugee students who could continue their studies in universities (e.g. members of Erasmus+ Charter) until they can return to their home universities. The EU model of credit transfer and exchange studies would perfectly fit to assure transparency and performance of the process.