



ACA statement: Call for tangible support for the Ukrainian higher education sector

28 February 2022, Brussels

The Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), the European umbrella organisation of funding agencies for international cooperation and academic exchange, strongly condemns the Russian government's decision to invade Ukraine on 24 February 2022. This aggression not only violates the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent state, but also further undermines stability in Europe and puts the life of many in danger. These terrible developments gravely threaten fundamental European values – the rule of law, non-violence, and academic freedom – all core principles for ACA, its member organisations and the wider European higher education sector. This war is also an attack on the very basis of academic cooperation and international understanding across political, national, cultural and ideological borders and cleavages – all central to our work.

In these critical times, ACA stands with Ukraine, its citizens and academic community and calls for immediate and tangible actions by the European Union (EU) and the higher education sector to support Ukrainian scholars and students whose academic journeys and lives have and will be affected by the escalating violence.

Specifically, the Association calls upon European governments to establish flexible visa and residence provisions for Ukrainian students and scholars, to facilitate their speedy evacuation when in need.

It also calls upon the European Commission to introduce an emergency scholarship/grant support scheme (e.g. within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme) and to support European-level coordination. This is paramount for ensuring continuity of studies and careers, as well as providing grounds for future academic freedom and institutional autonomy in Ukraine.

Many ACA members are rapidly preparing concrete measures to support the Ukrainian academic sector. Building on their running programmes for students and scholars at risk, they are setting up dedicated scholarship schemes and establishing national emergency programmes for Ukrainian students and researchers. In parallel, ACA is organising coordination meetings for its member organisations and will disseminate respective information with the wider sector.

ACA members will continue to make every effort to support peacebuilding in Europe and worldwide through academic exchanges, dialogue, and collaboration.



ACA members co-signing the statement



Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation – OeAD-GmbH, Austria



The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes – AMEUP, Croatia



Dům zahraniční spolupráce – DZS, Czech National Agency for International Education and Research, Czech Republic



Education and Youth Board of Estonia – HARNO, Estonia



Finnish National Agency for Education – EDUFI, Finland



German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD, Germany



State Scholarships Foundation – IKY, Greece



Tempus Public Foundation – TPF, Hungary



The Icelandic Centre for Research – RANNIS, Iceland



Uni-Italia, Italy



Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills – HK-Dir, Norway



Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange – NAWA, Poland



SAIA, n.o. (Slovak Academic Information Agency), Slovakia



Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes – CMEPIUS, Slovenia



Spanish Service for the Internationalization of Education - SEPIE, Spain



National Agency for Exchange and Mobility – Movetia, Switzerland

swissuniversities

Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities, Switzerland

Associate members



The International Education Center – IEC, Georgia



ETS Global, The Netherlands/United States



Institute of International Education – IIE, Hungary/United States