

11 May 2022**HRK General Assembly:****Full support for Ukrainian universities and refugee students and academics**

The German universities united in the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz - HRK) declared their full solidarity with Ukrainian universities yesterday at its 33rd General Assembly in Leipzig. They assured refugee students and academics from Ukraine who are seeking protection in Germany of the greatest possible support.

HRK President Prof Dr Peter-André Alt thanked the universities for their reception and support of prospective students and researchers in recent weeks: "They deserve great respect for their very extensive, often voluntary commitment. We are extremely grateful to the DAAD for the excellent cooperation and especially for the very speedy establishment of the National Academic Contact Point Ukraine, which is extremely helpful in the current situation."

Alt continues: "It's good to see that politicians are prepared to ensure the maintenance of refugees and that Ukrainian students will likely have access to BAföG benefits. Nevertheless, the demand for language courses and subject-specific preparation courses as well as academic qualification measures is also rising sharply at the moment. The universities will not be able to cope with this alone. They need medium- and long-term support here, similar to the programmes that have been launched since 2015. In view of the unfortunately numerous trouble spots in the world, German universities are faced with an enormous task that they can only meet with continuous support from government. This includes long-term planning and sustained support for the regional studies that are so essential to help us understand and analyse these crises."

"Universities can build on previous experience. At the moment, it is crucial to offer concrete help to refugee students and academics here as well as supporting Ukrainian universities, for example through cooperation in virtual study programmes. Such cooperation is an important sign of solidarity with our Ukrainian partners," Alt said.

In 1998, the HRK signed a framework agreement on university cooperation with the Ukrainian Rectors' Association, which facilitates cooperation. Due to current events, universities in both countries were again invited to join. Currently, 85 German universities and 86 Ukrainian universities have joined the agreement.