

A statement from universities of applied sciences (UASs) on the war in Ukraine

We are appalled by the ongoing war waged by Russia against the sovereign state of Ukraine, a war that is in clear violation of international law. We are deeply concerned about the lives and well-being of the Ukrainian people, of students and our colleagues at institutions of higher education. This is as an attack on our shared European values, on democracy and on freedom. We stand in solidarity with Ukraine.

Many people fleeing Ukraine are expected to come to Germany, about 100,000 from the scientific sector alone. At universities of applied sciences, we are preparing to welcome large numbers of students, teaching staff and researchers. With our practice- and application-oriented focus, our international study programmes and partnerships, and building on experience gained in 2015 and in the years that followed, we can offer them short-term perspectives and – if they wish – a long-term connection to the German labour market. Additionally, we will use the opportunities offered by digitalisation both to support universities in Ukraine and to establish Ukrainian-German platforms, for example, for collaborative teaching activities. Such teaching activities, in particular, can also provide openings for scientists and science managers: accommodating them on a large scale presents universities with different challenges to the admission of students.

We are counting on the federal and state governments to provide the funds needed to support students and academics from Ukraine and to offer appropriate assistance in a timely and unbureaucratic manner.

Russia's attack on Ukraine concerns us all. We call on all members of universities to participate in non-violent demonstrations for peace, freedom and democracy. We ask for donations to support the Ukrainian people. We call on people to regularly inform themselves about developments through reliable sources and to spread no inappropriate messages, images or videos. We are committed to our responsibility to ensure peace and freedom and a knowledge-based view of the world. Our universities will continue to be non-discriminatory, liberal-minded places of diversity. We call for the respectful treatment of people from the Russian Federation. All those people who are taking a clear stance against this war at enormous personal risk deserve our great respect and recognition. We would like to thank all universities and university members who, in the past few days, have shown solidarity with Ukraine and with the refugees arriving in Germany, have maintained contact with our partner universities and who are preparing to continue their efforts in the long term.

The UAS's joint website www.unglaublich-wichtig.de provides information about the services currently offered by individual universities of applied sciences. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is also coordinating the nationwide support services of all higher education institutions through its website.