

## Press Release

# European cooperation enables Syrian refugees in Turkey and the Middle East to take up university studies

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**Special programme funded by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'Madad Fund'**

Brussels, 11 May 2016. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), in cooperation with its partners from British Council, Campus France and EP-Nuffic, has launched a new programme to provide Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt the opportunity to gain access to further and higher education. In addition to reaching up to 42,000 young Syrians through academic counselling, the project will provide language courses and short-term study programmes to more than 7,500 student refugees and award more than 300 full scholarships to Syrian refugees in the region. A total of 12 million euros has been allocated for this purpose until 2019. The programme is financed by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the 'Madad Fund'.

Before civil war erupted in Syria, twenty percent of the 18- to 24-year-olds in the country had studied at university. Today less than five percent of Syrian refugees in this age group have access to higher education. HOPES - "Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians" is a programme targeted at this group of prospective Syrian students among the refugees, which provides them the opportunity to gain a university education in the region.

"By facilitating access to tailor-made academic programmes in the host countries, we are offering these young people and their families long-term opportunities in the region. These future professionals will be urgently needed to rebuild Syria when the time comes," explains DAAD President Prof. Margret Wintermantel.



DAAD/Christian Müller

*Press conference in Brussels: Together with European partner organisations, DAAD Secretary General, Dorothea Rüland, presents the EU funded scholarship programme HOPES for Syrian refugees.*

In the first phase of the programme, Syrian refugees will receive counselling and advice with regard to the academic programmes available to them in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. In addition to full scholarships, the programme also offers preparatory and language courses and supports the creation of innovative educational programmes and capacity-building of local institutions.

Applicants will be selected on the basis of their academic potential, whereby social aspects will also play a role. This will ensure that applicants from disadvantaged families are given an equal chance. To this end, the project intends to work closely with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Vulnerable host communities will also profit from services offered under this programme.

### Background

The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, launched in 2015, supports Syrian refugees in Turkey and the Middle East to take up university studies - DAAD - Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst

the 'Madad Fund', was launched in 2014. The overall objective of the Trust Fund is to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to the Syrian crisis on a regional scale, responding primarily in the first instance to the needs of refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries, as well as of the communities hosting the refugees and their administrations, in particular as regards resilience and early recovery. After just one year, the Trust Fund has already reached a total volume of €727 million with contributions from the EU budget, 20 EU Member States, and Turkey. Of this, €427 million have already been allocated to programmes focusing on education, training, higher education, livelihoods and health.

Further information on the Madad Fund:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index_en.htm)  
[[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/syria/madad/index_en.htm)]

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