

DAAD and UNHCR enable Syrian refugees in Turkey and the Middle East to attend courses of study

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24.10.2016 - Press release 

In the future, it will be easier for Syrian refugees in Turkey and the Middle East to commence or continue courses of study in the region. This is thanks to a cooperative partnership between the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service.)) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)). In order to achieve this, the organisations have combined the resources of two projects: the HOPES project run by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service.) with its consortium partners and the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)'s scholarship programme DAFI.

The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service.)'s HOPES project, funded by the EU (European Union), is geared towards Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and Turkey who are qualified to attend university. Up to 600 young people can either start or complete a course of study thanks to the scholarships. Disadvantaged young people from the host countries also stand to benefit from the project, which is scheduled to run until the end 2019.

The UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)'s Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) was established back in 1992. Since then, over 8000 scholarships have been awarded to bachelor's students who have fled their countries of origin and who have been recognised as refugees by the United Nations. The programme is being financed by the German Federal Foreign Office, which has made additional scholarships available to Syrian refugees against the backdrop of the crisis in Syria.

Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier issued the following statement about the project:

Germany has financed 2500 additional DAFI scholarships in 2016 – primarily for Syrian, but also for Afghan and African refugees. With its commitment in the area of tertiary education and these scholarships, the Federal Government is enabling young refugees to take the future into their own hands, thereby enhancing the prosperity of their communities.

The cooperation between HOPES and DAFI is creating new synergies, and UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) is making tried and tested structures in the region available to the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). The first scholarship holders were able to commence their studies at the beginning of the winter semester.

I am delighted that this intensive cooperation between the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) is having a positive impact. Thanks to the collaboration between our programmes, we are able to offer talented people the opportunity to study in the region...

... said DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) President Prof. Margret Wintermantel. The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) have already reached a large number of prospective students with their information campaign. Some 13,500 candidates have applied for 1500 courses in Turkey alone.

The scholarships are financed by HOPES (90), DAFI (750) and by the YTB, the Office for Turks Abroad (660). Selection processes are currently taking place in Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq, with decisions taken by joint HOPES-DAFI selection committees.

Background information:

The HOPES project was launched in April 2016. The project consortium is managed by the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). Partners include the European sister organisations the British Council, EP-Nuffic and Campus France. HOPES enables Syrian refugees and disadvantaged young people from host countries to attend university and further training courses. The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) is responsible for awarding scholarships and for performing advisory services in this regard. The British Council promotes English courses to prepare students for university, while EP-Nuffic awards funds for innovative education projects and programmes in the region via a call for tenders. Campus France spearheads dialogue and networking measures, as well as public relations work for the HOPES project. HOPES is financed by the EU's (European Union) Madad Fund, which sees itself as a European response to the crisis in Syria. Since 1992, the DAFI programme has enabled thousands of refugees to attend tertiary education courses in their respective host countries. More than 5000 students in 40

countries received financial support in 2016. The programme is administered directly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and receives significant funds from the Federal Foreign Office.

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 Entrance to a tent in a refugee camp in the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon