



CONFERENCE

18TH – 19TH JUNE 2019

BERLIN

InCAMPUS

VUB WELCOMES REFUGEE STUDENTS

Inclusion of highly skilled refugees in HEI's

AT A GLANCE

In response to the migratory influx in Belgium which reached a peak in 2015, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) set-up the Welcome Refugee Programme for students looking to continue or start their academic studies.

The InCampus Programme, **InC**lusive **Acad**emic Programme for **U**niversity **S**tudents (**InCAMPUS** programme) is one of several additional initiatives set in place by the VUB, aimed at facilitating access to higher education for refugees by providing them with the necessary guidance and support to be able to meet all the administrative and academic requirements, and to get fully prepared to enrol in one of the programmes at the VUB.

The InCampus programme is a **preparatory pathway** designed to welcome **20-25 refugee students** with **very diverse backgrounds** who were admitted by VUB's faculties but who need additional requirements:

- A B2-level certificate in Dutch or English (depending on the whether they will study in Dutch or English)
- Students who need a preparatory year before embarking on the full study programme, either because they are newly arrived in Belgium, or because they aren't aware of the educational system and ready to start their studies.

The training sessions included in the preparatory programme are:

- A year of intensive language classes to prepare students to take the ITNA/ITACE language tests (in collaboration with ACTO)
- Two courses, chosen by the faculty, from the students' future study programme
- Psychological support sessions (group and individual) led by an expert psychologist team
- Cultural orientation sessions in collaboration with Agentschap voor Integratie en Inburgering-Bon Brussel

CORE OBJECTIVES

1. Provide access for refugee students into higher education in Belgium, by offering them the adequate guidance and support
2. Ensure that refugee students get acquainted with the educational system in Belgium
3. Help refugee applicants at the VUB to meet all the necessary requirements to enrol in full BA, MA and PhD programmes
4. For the university to fulfil its social role by participating in the education for all citizens, regardless of their background or situation

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

- The first year of the InCampus programme was a stepping stone towards a sustainable project that is perfectly adapted to the refugee students' needs.
- InCampus programme has been selected by the steering committee of the Academic Refuge project, to contribute to its e-handbook as an Inspiring Examples of Putting Values into Practice. Launch of the toolkit 13 June 2019.
- During the academic year 2018-2019 the VUB welcomed 80 refugee students (60 direct access, 20 preparatory programme)
- Partnership with important stakeholders in the fields of education for refugees, and their integration into university life.
- Policy recommendations to enhance the access and the inclusion of refugees in HEI in Flanders (Belgium)

LESSONS LEARNT

1. Individual follow-up of each student, taking into account the complexity of their situation, with diversity and openness at its core.
2. It's important to offer refugee students proper guidance to help them attain academic success.
3. Effective communication with all parties involved (faculties, academic staff, social workers, etc)
4. Close collaboration with associations, which aim to facilitate the inclusion of refugees into society

FURTHER INFO

More info via: <https://www.vub.ac.be/en/welcome-student-refugees-programme#home>
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