



Press Release

Help for Refugees

University and College of Education establish joint coordination office

Helping people who have fled from war and political persecution in their native country: The Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg (MWK) has granted the University of Freiburg and the Freiburg College of Education funding to establish a joint coordination office. It will be located at the Studierendenwerk Freiburg-Schwarzwald and will be responsible for coordinating measures to support refugees interested in taking a course of study at all higher education institutions in the Freiburg administrative district. It will work closely with the Liga der freien Wohlfahrtspflege in Baden-Württemberg e.V., the working platform of the state's eleven independent welfare work organizations, including the church-run organizations Caritas and Diakonie as well the German Red Cross (DRK). "We are all touched by the fate of the refugees. The university wants to help them integrate and give those who are suited for and interested in studying the chance to realize their potential," says Rector Prof. Dr. **Hans-Jochen Schiewer**.

The university has set up a service portal on the internet with information on services for refugees interested in studying as well as existing initiatives and projects for refugees. For example, the university is opening its guest student program for refugees in winter semester 2015/16 and has waived the 50-euro registration fee for them. Among other things, guest students receive free access to the university's independent language learning area, where they can use computer programs and learning materials to practice

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German and other foreign languages. “Learning the German language is the key to integration and the basic prerequisite for all who wish to take up a course of study,” stresses Prof. Dr. **Juliane Besters-Dilger**, vice president for academic affairs. The university thus sees it as one of its most important tasks to create new language teaching programs with the support of the state and federal governments.

The first point of contact at the University of Freiburg for refugees interested in studying is the Department of International Admissions and Services at the Student Service Center. The university is currently developing a toolbox for a simplified admission procedure for refugees who are not in possession of documents to prove that they have the necessary qualifications for higher education entrance.

In addition, numerous people at the University of Freiburg are devoting their time and effort as volunteers in a variety of different initiatives for refugees. In order to gain an overall picture of these activities, the rector sent an e-mail requesting information on them to all members of the university in September 2015. More than 100 replies have been received so far. The university will thus continually expand and update the information on the service portal.

The University of Freiburg’s service portal for refugees:

www.uni-freiburg.de/universitaet/refugees-welcome

MWK press release:

<https://mwk.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/service/presse/pressemitteilung/pid/hochschulen-und-wissenschaftsministerium-ebnen-fluechtlingen-wege-ins-studium>

LRK press release:

<http://www.lrk-bw.de/index.php/pressemitteilungen>

The University of Freiburg achieves top positions in all university rankings. Its research, teaching, and continuing education have received prestigious awards in nationwide competitions. Over 24,000 students from 100 nations are enrolled in 188 degree programs. Around 5,000 teachers and administrative employees put in their effort every day – and experience that family friendliness, equal opportunity, and environmental protection are more than just empty phrases here.

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