

# Doing a doctorate in **Ukraine**: time and timing in times of war

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Candidates and Junior Researchers

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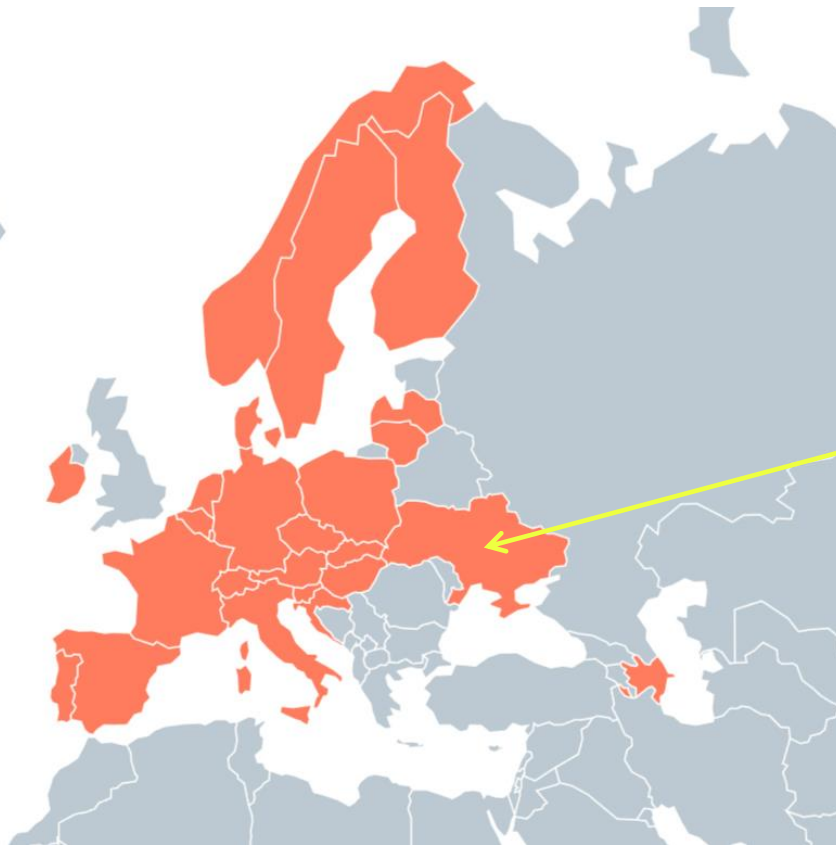
Eurodoc Hybrid AGM in Vilnius, Lithuania. 11 June 2022.



- non-profit organisation
- founded in Girona (Spain) on 02/02/02
- since 2005 has its seat in Brussels, Belgium
- funded by member fees
- supported by volunteers
- develops & informs policy
- runs workgroups & events

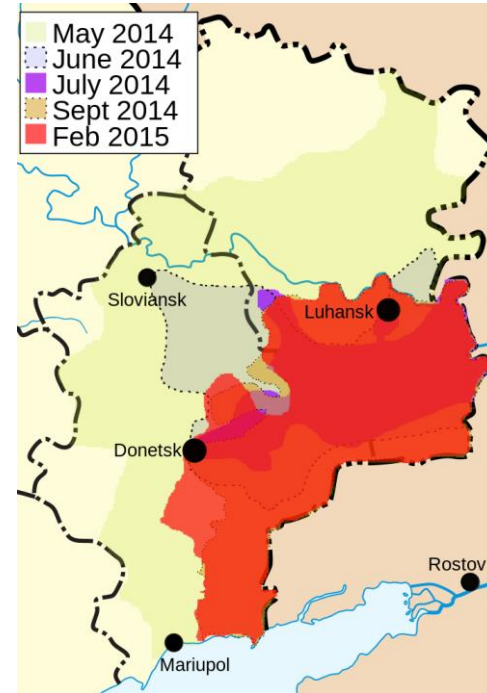
# Eurodoc Members

International federation of 29 national organisations from 26 countries of the EU and the Council of Europe



# Ukrainian displaced universities in 2014

- In 2014, 18 “displaced HEIs” were moved from the temporarily ceased territories in the Donbas region to the “mainland” Ukraine
- late in 2021, most of them were still struggling with infrastructure, funding, and human resource problems



Map of temporarily ceased territory in East of Ukraine (2014-2015),  
based on <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27308526>  
by <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:Narayanese>



# Ukrainian HEIs and the current war phase

- 43 higher education institutions suffered from constant shelling and bombing by the Russian army
- 5 of them were completely destroyed

(official info from June 13, Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine)



On photo: Professor in the destroyed building of Karazin University in Kharkiv



# Challenges

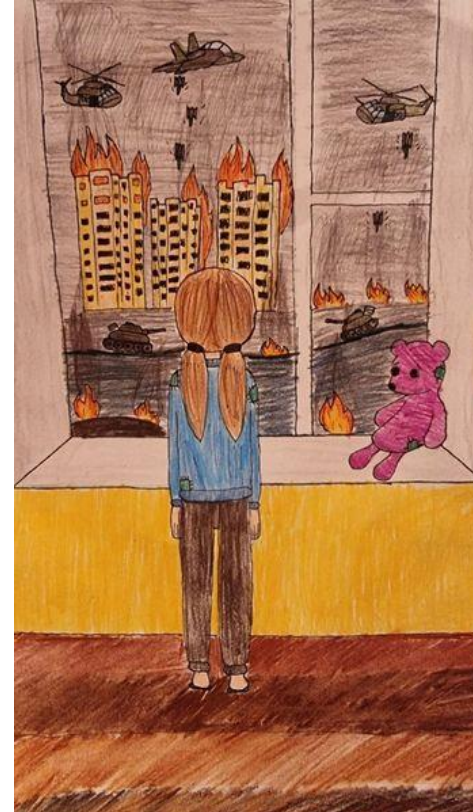
- Reduction of the number of working places and salary
- Destroyed infrastructure/laboratories
- Part of academic staff, doctoral candidates, and students are at the frontlines
- Men are unable to participate in academic mobility (go abroad) due to the martial law
- Many women are left alone with children and family being abroad or while their men are in the army
- Migration of doctoral candidates, students, lack of entrants
- General uncertainty





# Consequences for Mental Health

- in conditions of constant excessive stress and threats, it is difficult to focus on analytical and cognitive tasks
- the situation of uncertainty increases stress



<https://momiseewar.com/>



What does it mean  
to do a doctorate in  
**Ukraine** now?









## Anastasiia Yeromina

with her husband, Valentyn

*2<sup>nd</sup> year doctoral candidate (history) at  
H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National  
Pedagogical University*

- Anastasiia left **Kharkiv** the very first day with a single small handbag and went to rural Zakarpattia Oblast (West of Ukraine) while her husband volunteered in the Army
- Her **doctoral supervisor** is now in Germany, but this is not a big issue as the pandemic prepared both for remote work, and they are in close contact with each other
- She lives in **uncertainty** and constantly thinks of her husband, which makes it difficult to concentrate on her work
- **Despite everything, she plans to finish her doctoral thesis in time**





## Serhii Kozin

*last-year doctoral candidate (pedagogy)  
at H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National  
Pedagogical University*

*successfully defended his PhD thesis  
online during the war on June 6, 2022*

- Serhii stayed in **Kharkiv** till the pre-defense of his thesis in mid-April (had to walk for 2 hours to get to the university); he went to the West of Ukraine for the final defense
- From the formal side, the defense was possible despite shellings as the Rector stayed in Kharkiv and helped with all the documents himself
- The pandemic prepared everybody for remote work, but digital signatures had to be adopted
- Fully understood the importance of pedagogy and its impact on society only after the war began





## Elizaveta Kulikova

*Finished her doctoral training (economics) last year, currently finalizes her doctoral thesis*

*Head of Young Scientists Council at Odessa National Economics University*

- Decided to stay in **Odesa** despite shelling and the constant threat of Russian troops landing
- Economists are probably among the researchers **least affected** by war as their studies are mostly conducted at the desk
- However, her research was affected by bad Internet connection and unavailability of governmental websites (due to DDoS attacks)
- Reports “**psychological pressure**” of frequent shelling and explosions
- Defense of her **doctoral thesis** is delayed due to the war







**Ivan Brusak**

*last-year doctoral candidate (geodesy)  
at Lviv Polytechnic National University*

*Co-founder of “Student Volunteer  
Headquarters” at the university*

- After the shock of the first day started **volunteering** to help the Army and internally displaced people together with colleagues
- Was lucky to finish all his field research before the war, but many colleagues had to stop their work
- Many research papers to be published in Ukrainian journals (esp. in the East) are “frozen”
- Was close to finishing his thesis, but postponed the work and switched to full-time volunteering
- Submission of his **doctoral thesis** will most likely be delayed



## How can you help?

- In short - offer partnerships, become mentors
- Invite to laboratories (short-term)
- Offer internships/scholarships (short-term)
- Provide temporary work opportunities (ongoing Horizon projects are on option)
- Provide access to paywalled scholarly databases and focus on Open Science



# Thanks for your attention!

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