

# Protocol: 'Students and staff from acute crisis areas'

Adopted by the EB on 15 May 2023

## 1. Rationale

Students and staff from crisis areas have stated they do not feel sufficiently recognised and heard by EUR. In consequence, the Rector has asked for the creation of a protocol regarding students from crisis areas. In the course of the drafting, the applicability of the protocol was extended to staff from crisis areas in consultation with HR.

## 2. Definition of students and staff from acute crisis areas

By students and staff from acute crisis areas we mean EUR students and staff *from or present in* areas where an acute crisis has arisen. This can be a political, medical, natural, social or economic crisis, with regard to which it can reasonably be assumed that students and staff expect immediate action or support on the part of EUR. Examples of such situations include the war in Ukraine and the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

For regular support services, students can always be referred to EUR.nl, the Student Well-being Platform, the IO website and the HR website. In the specific case of individual students or scholars being threatened or taken captive, we refer to Integral Safety; in addition, UNL and/or the international network Scholars at Risk can be engaged.

## 3. What the target group asks for

Experience has shown that students and staff caught up in crisis situations have the following needs:

- *Solidarity*: students and staff wish to feel solidarity and understanding for their situation on the part of EUR, both centrally and at the faculty level. This involves EUR as an organisation as well as sympathy shown by colleagues and fellow students.
- *Practical support*: students request clear information on special arrangements around examinations, study completion delays and support services, as well as support around specific events or campaigns, such as fund-raisers and collection campaigns. Staff members ask to be put in touch with other staff members (e.g., through a mailing list) and request help with returning to the Netherlands or advice on travelling to affected areas.
- *Mental support*: students (and staff) want to be in touch with other affected persons, a psychologist, a spiritual counsellor and/or to be referred to other support services.
- *Financial support*: this mainly concerns students; think of living allowances, emergency funds, waivers of tuition fees or deferrals of fees (e.g. in consequence of the sanctioning of international payments).<sup>1</sup>
- *Timing and timeliness*: with regard to all of the above-mentioned there is a need for good timing, with (communication around) these matters requiring fast action. Table 1 below sets out a timeline with each action to be taken, based on our experience with the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.

## 4. Considerations

- *Political sensitivity*: expressions of solidarity in the form of publicly shared political positions can be a sensitive issue for EUR; here the EB needs to exercise its discretion. What EUR can do, however, is emphatically express its solidarity with affected students and staff by way of

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<sup>1</sup> While EUR cannot always offer these forms of support, the student target group does request them. Consequently, it has been decided to set up an Emergency Fund in coordination with the Trust Fund for the financial support of students. Students can submit requests to their counsellor by email.

the protocol (Table 1). This need for discretion does not apply in the case of natural disasters or other crisis situations that do not involve sensitivities.

- *Customised approach*: the situations and needs of students and staff from various crisis areas are not standardised: within the general protocol there is a need for a customised approach. This customised approach factors in the number of affected students and staff, the gravity and acuteness of the situation, whether student associations are represented and whether there is a national policy. However, some consistency can be identified with regard to what students and staff ask for (see 3).
- *National directives and discussions*: in responding to crises, it is recommended that we verify whether UNL or the government have issued directives that we can adhere to (take, for example, the tuition fee rate for Ukrainian students).
- *Students and staff from areas with protracted crises*: although the protocol does not apply to this group, these students and staff members also have a need for loyalty and support. They can be referred in more general terms via EUR.nl, the Student Well-being Platform and the HR website (for staff).

## 5. Protocol: Actions and distribution of tasks <sup>0)</sup>

Table 1 gives an overview of actions and the distribution of tasks in the 'Students and staff from acute crisis areas' protocol. In case of a crisis that impacts education, research and/or operations, the chair of the CTO will activate the CTO instead of this protocol. Of course, the CTO can initiate actions similar to the ones listed in this protocol.

Awareness of the protocol at EUR is raised by E&S and HR ('the owners'). The first time the protocol is activated, the CACT group will evaluate its efficacy and make adjustments where needed, involving representatives of the affected target groups.

Table 1: Protocol: 'Students and staff from acute crisis areas' – actions and distribution of tasks

Components	Action	Involves:	Responsibilities:	Remarks
A. Responsibility and coordination	<p><u>No later than day 3 of the crisis<sup>1)</sup></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision to activate protocol made by HR and E&amp;S directors; appointment of CACT director.</li> <li>• Ascertainment of the number of potentially affected students and staff.<sup>2)</sup></li> <li>• Decision (negative or positive) and size of target group communicated to the Crisis Area Core Team (CACT), which consists of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Head of E&amp;S/IO – chair or member, depending on the situation</li> <li>- Head of E&amp;S/SV – chair or member, depending on the situation</li> <li>- Policy advisor of International HR – chair or member, depending on the situation</li> <li>- Manager of SW programme</li> <li>- Manager of IDEA Center</li> <li>- Head of M&amp;C</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CACT informs Integral Safety and the deans (including the vice-deans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E&amp;S, HR,</li> <li>• E&amp;S, HR</li> <li>• E&amp;S, HR</li> <li>• CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Director of E&amp;S Director of HR</li> <li>• Chair of CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Information about crisis areas is acquired primarily via IO, but also via other channels (such as IDEA and SW). This information is forwarded to the E&amp;S and HR directors. They submit a recommendation on whether or not to activate the protocol to the EB for a decision, with the RM having primary responsibility.</li> <li>▪ The RM has no role in the protocol and acts as a decision-making body.</li> <li>▪ CACT implements the required actions and coordinates the management decisions.</li> </ul>

	<p>and the faculty and unit directors) of the positive or negative decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In case of a positive decision: CACT asks deans and M&amp;C immediately to display a message on the websites stating that information about the situation will be provided as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair of CACT</li> </ul>	
B. Selection of protocol components	<p><u>No later than day 2 following decision to activate protocol</u><sup>11</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The chair of CACT plans an initial CACT emergency meeting within one day of the decision to activate the protocol.</li> <li>CACT decides which protocol actions to activate, decides whether to involve student organisation (and if so, which) and assigns tasks in accordance with the protocol.</li> <li>The chair of CACT plans a follow-up CACT meeting and creates a Teams group for the exchange of information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair of CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In selecting components, a distinction can be made between 'need-to-haves' and 'nice-to-haves'.</li> </ul>
C. Statement from EB and deans	<p><u>No later than day 2 following decision to activate protocol</u><sup>11</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statement from EB on EUR.nl</li> <li>Statement from the deans on the faculty websites</li> </ul> <p>The statements will remain pinned on the websites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M&amp;C in consultation with the chair of CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directors of M&amp;C in consultation with the EB and deans</li> </ul>	<p>Statement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expression of sympathy and solidarity</li> <li>Appeal to all to be mindful of those affected</li> <li>Offer of support (study advisor is central to students)</li> <li>Arrangements regarding examinations, study completion delays (in general terms)</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open-office consultation meeting <sup>3)</sup></li> </ul> <p>Also see sections 3 and 4.</p>
<p>D. 'All-students email' and 'All-staff email'</p> <p>Email to study advisors</p>	<p><u>No later than day 2 following decision to activate protocol <sup>1)</sup></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Text for email communication to all students and staff (or managers) (CACT writes text)</li> <li>Clearly state that the email also applies to EUC, EMC and ISS students and staff.</li> <li>In addition, study advisors send out an email to their own students (CACT provides a draft message)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair of CACT</li> <li>E&amp;S ('all-students email') via director of E&amp;S</li> <li>E&amp;S (email to study advisors) via head of E&amp;S/SV</li> <li>HR (via director of HR)</li> </ul>	<p>Email contains the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expression of sympathy and solidarity</li> <li>Appeal to all to be mindful of those affected</li> <li>Offer of support to students and staff (study advisor is central to students)</li> <li>RE&amp;F contact person for questions about practical support for campaigns on campus (such as fund-raisers)</li> <li>Arrangements regarding examinations, study completion delays (in general terms)</li> <li>Open-office consultation meeting <sup>2)</sup></li> </ul> <p>Also see sections 3 and 4.</p>
<p>E. Student advisors and managers</p>	<p><u>No later than day 2 following decision to activate protocol <sup>1)</sup></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student advisors, student deans, student psychologists and managers are informed about EUR policy regarding the crisis situation.</li> <li>Create overview of questions received from students and staff, and how these will be addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E&amp;S/SV</li> <li>HR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of E&amp;S/SV</li> <li>Policy advisor of International HR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree with study advisors that they are the first point of contact for students and determine in consultation with them what forms of support (whether or not on-site) are desirable.</li> </ul>

<p>F. Page on EUR.nl</p>	<p><u>No later than day 3 following decision to activate protocol</u><sup>1)</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EUR.nl has a <u>temporary page</u>, and the websites of faculties and of the online Student Well-being Platform have a temporary page based on this, with current and relevant information and links for affected students and staff.</li> <li>• EUR.nl has a <u>structural page</u>, and the websites of faculties and of the Well-being Platform have a structural page based on this, with information for students and staff from crisis areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;C</li> </ul> <p>Following consultation with CACT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of M&amp;C</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the content of the web pages, see section 4: Considerations.</li> <li>• M&amp;C keeps abreast of developments regarding crisis areas, keeps the EUR.nl web page up to date and informs CACT of any changes</li> </ul>
<p>G. Open-office consultation meeting for students and staff</p>	<p><u>No later than day 5 following decision to activate protocol</u><sup>1)</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-threshold, free consultation meeting for students and staff with the aim of sharing experiences and offering support and information.<sup>3)</sup></li> <li>• The meeting also provides further information on relevant problems. On the basis of this, CACT creates a tailored approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair of CACT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendees of consultation meeting: CACT and EB</li> <li>• Consultation meeting always takes place on a level floor</li> <li>• Student Living Room may be made available</li> </ul>
<p>H. Exit strategy</p>	<p><u>Decisions to scale back the actions from the protocol</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CACT advises the directors of E&amp;S and HR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CACT</li> </ul> <p>Advises: see on the right</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of E&amp;S</li> <li>• Director of HR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The directors of E&amp;S and HR submit a considered decision on deactivating the protocol to the EB for a decision, with the RM having primary responsibility.</li> <li>• The decision is communicated to CACT.</li> </ul>

<b>I. Deactivation of the protocol</b>	<i>The statement by the EB and the faculties and the page at EUR.nl go offline</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The file is archived. The situation may intensify and/or transition into a prolonged crisis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M&amp;C</li> </ul> <p>Following consultation with CACT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director of M&amp;C</li> </ul>	
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*0) E&S and HR are the owners of this protocol.*

*1) This does not refer to working days but to weekdays.*

*2) On the basis of the nationality of students and staff from affected areas, a preliminary assessment can be made of the size of the affected EUR target group and of whether student associations are involved. The actual size of the target group connected in some way with the affected area may be much greater.*

*3) Depending on the situation, it is suggested to recommend to directors of operations that they also organise an open-office consultation meeting at the locations of ISS, EUC and/or EMC.*

## Appendix: Abbreviations

GMD = General Management Directorate

AA = Academic Affairs

EB = Executive Board

CTO = Crisis Team Operational

E&S = Education and Student Affairs

EUR = Erasmus University Rotterdam

HR = Human Resources

IO = International Office

IDEA = Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access Center

CACT = Crisis Area Core Team

M&C = Marketing & Communications

RM = Rector Magnificus

SV = Student Affairs

SW = Student Well-being

UNL = Universities of the Netherlands