



European Strategy Forum
on Research Infrastructures

ESFRI

Support of Research Infrastructures to the Ukrainian Research Community

Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and methodology

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) called upon Research Infrastructures (RIs) to establish support measures for the Ukrainian research community. These measures included facilitating access, providing training, and donating scientific equipment. To assess the uptake and impact of this call, ESFRI conducted a survey in October 2023, receiving responses from 32 RIs. A total of 17 RIs (53%) initiated support measures from the onset of the invasion. Twelve RIs (37%) had not taken any action, while 3 RIs (9%) plan future support.

Findings

- **Supporting research:** The most common support measures included hosting Ukrainian researchers and establishing joint projects, both reported by 8 of the 17 active RIs. Hosting numbers varied, with an average of 4.3 researchers per RI. Other measures involved, among others, funding participation in RI events, provision of access and training, and donation of scientific equipment. Furthermore, the RIs also provided accommodation, grants, and third-party-funded short-term positions.

- **Enhancing Collaboration and Training:** Increased collaboration with Ukrainian entities and the hosting of students for practical degree work, as well as the provision of summer schools and other forms of training, were reported.

- **Funding Sources for the support measures:** The majority used internal funds for support (13 out of 17), supplemented by government (4), EU (2), and regional funds (1). Some reported no additional funds were required.

- **Reasons for not engaging:** RIs that have not implemented any support measures cited reasons such as limited funds, lack of connection with the Ukrainian research community, geographical irrelevance, or the inapplicability of their research focus to Ukrainian needs.

- **Importance of continued support:** The importance of sustained support in research, innovation, and security for Ukrainian students and researchers was highlighted, emphasising the need for structured assistance programs

Conclusion

The survey demonstrates the significant support the RIs offered to the Ukrainian research community since the outbreak of the Russian aggression. As in the case of COVID-19, the RIs responded to the crisis from the onset with various measures, often using their own resources. The study confirms the importance of a well-developed system of research infrastructures, not only for enabling the research for which they are established but also for the increased resilience of our research and innovation system.

REPORT ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO THE RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

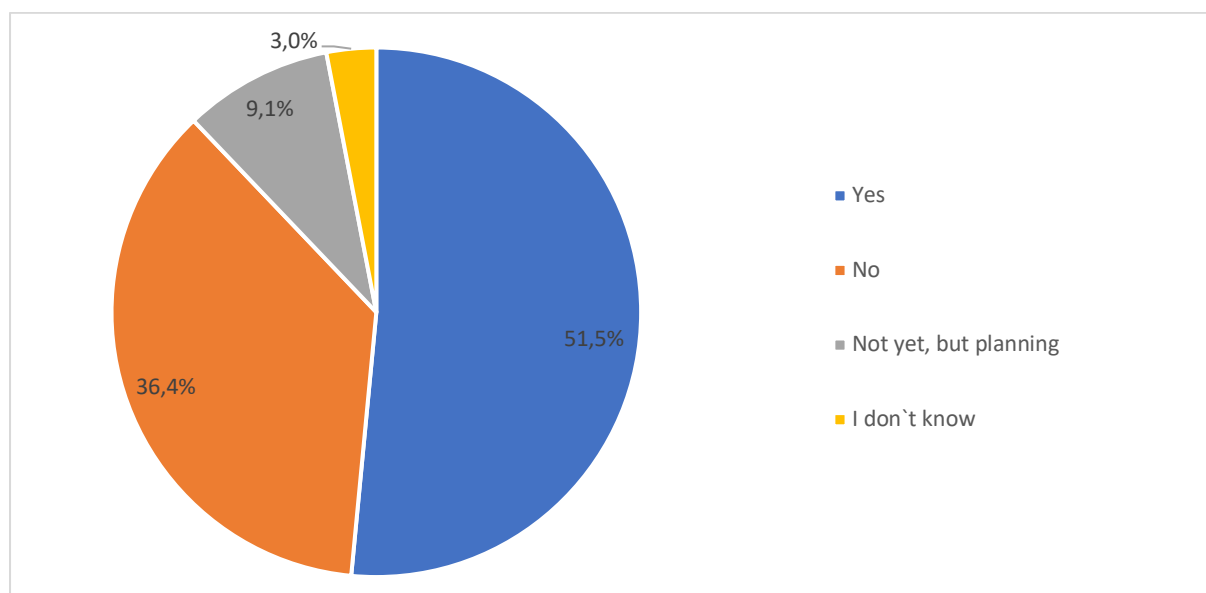
Introduction

The Russian invasion of Ukraine severely disrupted their research and innovation system. In light of this, ESFRI invited Research Infrastructures to set up specific measures in support of the Ukrainian research community, such as access provision, training, provision of scientific equipment, etc.¹ This call supported the already ongoing activities, with which the RI community responded to the aggression, and aimed to incentivise additional ones. To gain a deeper understanding of the various activities performed by the RIs, ESFRI conducted a survey in October 2023, to which 32 RIs responded.

Results

Among the RIs who responded to the survey, 17 (53%) replied that they had set up support measures for the Ukrainian research community from the beginning of the invasion. 12 (37%) had not yet introduced any measures, while 3 other RIs (9%) plan to do so.

Picture 1: Has your RI set up any support measures for the Ukrainian research community since the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022? (N=32)



When asked what kind of support they have offered, the most commonly selected answers among the ones that were listed in the questionnaire were »hosting of researchers at their RI«, and »joint projects

¹ Kolar, J., Brečko, B., Campana, P., Chamberlain, M., Daillant, J., Harrison, A., Keppler, A., Lévai, P., Martins, R., Plaskan, J., Weeks, A., & Wosnitza, J. (2023). ESFRI Report on Energy and Supply Challenges of Research Infrastructures. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8123921>

with Ukrainian institutions or researchers», both selected by 8 of the 17 RIs who replied to the question. Those RIs that reported offering hosting of researchers from Ukraine also reported the number of hosted researchers. It ranged from 0 to 14, with an average of 4,3.

Other RIs selected »invitation to events organised by the RI, with funded participation« (selected by 6 RIs, or 35,3%), »access provision«, »training online or on site« (selected by 4 RIs, or 23,5%), »provision of scientific equipment for free« (selected by two RIs) (Table 1).

Table 1: What kind of support have you offered? (N=17). More than one answer possible.

	n	% (among those with support measures)
Hosting of researchers at your RI	8	47,1
Researchers hosting in UA	0	0
Joint projects with UA institutions/researchers	8	47,1
Invitation to events organised by the RI, with funded participation	6	35,3
Access provision	4	23,5
Training (online and on site)	4	23,5
Provision of scientific equipment for free	2	11,8
Other	9	52,9
Total	41	241,2

Over half of the respondents described other kinds of support they offered the Ukrainian research community. Their answers included:

- ☐ Offering accommodation for refugee researchers
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ Support via third-party funding of short-term positions
- ☐ Supporting them as external reviewers for the EURIZON fellowship program for Ukraine.

The respondents were further asked about the details of their support to the Ukrainian research community.

Some common points included the following:

- ☐ Some RIs with existing ties to the Ukrainian research community (e.g. via projects funded by the European Commission (EC)) or Ukrainian consortium members increased their collaborations and activities. Some also increased partnerships with other local organisations.

Example: CESSDA approved the funding to upgrade the Kyiv archive to international standards and support its operations. The CESSDA service provider in Czechia, CSDA (Czech Social Data Service), extended its aid to the Ukrainian data archive /.../ CSDA offers mentoring and assistance to enhance the institutional capabilities of the Kyiv archive

- Many RIs hosted Ukrainian students or researchers, for example, one RI offered students to make their practical work for the degree they're pursuing, and another RI offered support in the form of summer schools. Other forms of training were also mentioned. Other RIs mentioned hosting researchers, and one RI hosted a visiting professor.

Example: CLARIN has supported participation of a Ukrainian researcher in international training events (e.g. Digital Humanities hackathon in Helsinki) and scientific conferences (e.g. Digital Humanities conference in Graz). They had also supported Ukrainian lecturers to deliver their tutorials at 2 international summer schools (European Summer University in Cluj, Romania, Tutorial at DH conference in Graz).

- Several RIs secured financial support, either through grants (e.g. funded by the EC through the H2020 project) or securing third-party funds for short-term positions. Furthermore there were also calls for contributions to Ukrainian researchers.

Example: EHRI created the category »Holocaust in Ukraine« within the preexisting EHRI blog with a call for paid contributions by Ukrainian researchers.

Example: EURIZON project, which aims to enable Ukrainian research teams to continue their scientific work remotely by carrying on research projects in collaboration with partners from European research infrastructures and institutes. EMPHASIS experts have supported Ukrainian researchers by reviewing multiple applications and providing concrete recommendations. Several other infrastructures were engaged in the proposal preparation.

The RIs which haven't yet implemented support measures, but are planning to do so, listed similar measures as those above, for example:

- Hosting scientists in [the RI's] network
- Training initiatives involving Ukrainian researchers in webinars or other events.
- Including Ukraine in meetings to identify possible joined activities between the RI and Ukrainian colleagues

Example: IFMIF-DONES planned to include Ukraine as an observer in the DONES Steering Committee in the meeting, held by the end of October. Later on, other specific meetings will be held in order to identify possible joined activities between IFMIF-DONES and Ukrainian colleagues

Regarding funding sources, most RIs (13 of the 17 that have set up support measures) used internal funds to support the Ukrainian research community. A handful of RIs also use government funds (4 RIs), EU funds (2 RIs), and regional funds (1 RI). The two RIs that answered »other« mentioned »in-kind« and that »none (funds) were used« (Table 2).

Table 2: What are the funding sources that the RI has used to support the Ukrainian research community? (N=17) *More than one answer possible*

	n	%
Internal funds	13	76,5
Regional funds	1	5,9
Government funds	4	23,5
EU funds	2	11,8
Other:	2	11,8
Total	22	129,5

RIs that haven't implemented any support measures list the following reasons:

- ☐ No or limited funds to do so.
- ☐ No connection or interaction with the Ukrainian research community or no Ukrainian user base. In one case, the RI is still in the construction phase, in two cases, their activities don't geographically cover Ukraine, or no organisation in Ukraine addresses their research topic. In some cases, however, this support or interaction comes from national research organization that are involved in the consortium.

Example: EPOS ERIC have mentioned that, as a whole RI, they have no direct interaction with the Ukrainian research community, however national research organizations involved in EPOS have their own support programs.

- ☐ Lack of knowledge on how to connect to the Ukrainian research community or on what measures could be taken.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to add any other comments, if they wished so.

Some RIs once again elaborated on why there is no support or low support:

- ☐ Their research topic is low on the agenda in the Ukrainian research community, or they are not (yet) in place to introduce support measures
- ☐ They would welcome Ukrainian scientists if they receive applications for visiting scientists

Some RIs elaborated on the kind of support they offered, e.g.:

- ☐ Help in relocating Ukrainian refugees
- ☐ Undertaking local action in support of the Ukrainian people

A few respondents stressed that it is vital to continue support in research, innovation, and security, to establish support for Ukrainian students, and emphasised the importance of structured support.

Annex

The table in the annex includes the names of RIs that have responded to the survey .

<i>Table 3: Names of Research infrastructures that have responded to the survey.</i>
DANUBIUS-RI
AnaEE
CERIC-ERIC
CESSDA ERIC
CIEMAT - Plataforma Solar de Almeria
CLARIN ERIC
EISCAT
ELIXIR
EMBRC-ERIC
EMPHASIS
EPOS ERIC
E-RIHS
ESRF - The European Synchrotron
EU-OPENSOURCE
Euro-Bioimaging
European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF)
European Holocaust Research Infrastructure
European XFEL
EU-SOLARIS ERIC
FAIR
GANIL/SPIRAL2
GSI Helmholtzzentrum für Schwerionenforschung GmbH
IAGOS
IFMIF-DONES
Instruct-ERIC
International LOFAR Telescope
LifeWatch ERIC
METROFOOD-RI
RESILIENCE
SKAO
SLICES-RI
University of Manchester