

**Rectorate of the Bahcesehir University
Academic Affairs and International Programs Directorate
Exchange Programs Office**

This announcement is dedicated to draw an attention to our students and staff who already went abroad for study and internship purposes and cancelled their programs (**as its referred as beneficiaries in the following paragraphs**)

First of all, we highly recommend all beneficiaries to act by avoiding sudden decisions and strictly following the personal hygiene measures in order to remain calm and conscious under the current circumstances. Besides, we also strongly believe that the quarantined places where some of our students are currently living in, are much more safer than the areas hold large crowds like the airports.

All the necessary notices and measures should be taken into consideration have been shared with the beneficiaries in a comprehensive way regarding the Corona virus (COVID-19) epidemic which has first showed up in mainland China and now been detected in Turkey.

For the beneficiaries who went abroad within the framework of Erasmus + programs;

We're in constant touch with the partnering universities that are currently hosting our students. Most of the institutions which are located in one of the risk areas have already suspended all the classes temporarily and recommended the students not to leave their places if it's not necessary. Considering that all the students as an adult who have reached the lawful age and matriculated individuals within the 'Higher Education System', we're positively sure that they all have read the important announcement carefully and been taking the personal measurements accordingly.

For the beneficiaries whose departures are planned in near future and would like the cancel their program or for those who would like cancel their ongoing program and return back to Turkey;

First of all, such decisions should be addressed to the host institutions and us beforehand.

The financial supports until the mobility ending date and the returning flight tickets are being covered by 'Turkish National Agency'. All the calculations will be made based on the amount handed to students prior to their departure by abiding the following criteria;

The monetary aid can be funded considering the total distance between the host city *-where the mobilities are taking place-* with Istanbul based on the 'air space' (not land route) is calculated as shown within the following chart, and those are the maximum amounts can be provided

| Total Distance (KM) | Grant Amount (€) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10-99 | 20 |
| 100 - 499 | 180 |
| 500 - 1999 | 275 |
| 2000 - 2999 | 360 |
| 3000 - 3999 | 530 |
| 4000 - 7999 | 820 |
| 8000 and above | 1500 |

To be more precise with few instances;

- 1) A beneficiary who went to or purchased a flight ticket to go to Italy / Padova and cancelled the program, will be financially supported with 275 € (500-1999 KM) travel grant
- 2) A beneficiary who went to Poland / Warsaw can receive 275 € (500-1999 KM) travel grant
- 3) For Spain/Zaragoza, that would be 360 € (2000 - 2999 KM)
- 4) For those who returned back from U.K. / Hertfordshire can receive 360 € (2000-2999 KM)

SIDENOTE: If the flights are not available from the departure city, travel costs –airfares- can be covered from the neighboring countries based on the chart shared above, if the beneficiary submit the necessary documentation proves the situation.

For the beneficiaries who have cancelled their programs before it starts; all the expenses can be grouped as ‘unrefundable’ will be covered by ‘Turkish National Agency’. Those expenses can be listed as; visa application fee, accommodation expenses – if not refundable- and health insurances. In such cases, beneficiaries first should be contacting with service providers and ask for a refund and provide all proofs regarding those expenses including payment confirmation, receipts and such.

SIDENOTE: We’re aware that most of the airline companies are refunding back the most part of the total amount by only keeping the taxes to themselves, for the cancellations due to Covid-19 cases.

GENERAL INFORMATION

World Health Organization has named the ongoing outbreak as ‘pandemic’ back on 12.03.2020 which lays an emphasis on the matter of its severity.

Regardless of the total number of cases confirmed in a particular country, we highly recommend our students to wait until the initial panic disappears, stay in their accommodation addresses and not to leave for noncompulsory reasons. There are some uncertainties about total number of cases, the virus’ spreading pace and the ones already confirmed or not considering the fact that in Italy; 4 cases have reported in the first two weeks of infection which has followed with about 500 cases in the third week and now it’s more than 10.000

cases officially reported. In this context, we would very much like to highlight the importance to the students who would like return back with a sudden decision, is that the places hold large crowds like airports are considered as high risk areas for an infection and once they return, 14 days quarantine period should be applied.

The most hope-inspiring news received so far is from the mainland China, where it all has started. According to the news, most challenging days under the influence of the virus have relatively passed, import & export activities started once again and the citizens of China now have an access to their daily needs like food and cleaning materials on their own including the cities like Wuhan. (source tr.euronews.com/2020/03/11/).

Hereby, we would like to inform you that we've been working in a very meticulous way to follow the constantly changing situation in order to disseminate the most up to date information and of course to compensate the probable losses that our staff and students may have been experiencing lately. with all our support.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I freeze my semester, will my merit based scholarship (achievement grant) continue ?
NO. It will be stopped only for the freezed semester.

If I would like to return back to BAU on 13.03.2020 or later on, will I still be able to register 2019-2020 Academic Year Spring Term Classes.

After the indicated date, 6th teaching week of the semester will be already passed and most of the midterm exams will take place until the 15th of March at latest. Starting from the 16th of March, the university will be closed for 3 weeks period and we're following the instructions given by 'Turkish Higher Education Council -YÖK-'. Even if we have the well-settled infrastructure for online learning processes, the decision has been made to suspend all classes both in physical and virtual environments. Therefore, our management is closely following the announcements are being shared by YÖK and for now we're only assessing the semester freeze requests until the further notice.

If I purchase a business class flight ticket, will Turkish National Agency cover this expense?

All the flight tickets should be booked as economy class, thus no.

Can I postpone my program ? Can my eligibility transfer to following semesters ?

Due to the current regulations and announcements received from TNA, your mobility should be completed by 30.09.2020 at latest. If you would like to cancel your program regardless, then you need to apply once again for the call covering the next the academic year. However, there won't be any penalty point applied (-10) considering the reason behind for the cancellation is 'compelling reason'. Internship students can apply directly to our office for their mobilities as it should be started by August 2020 at latest and ended by September 30th, 2020