



Global Guide 2022



2022 GLOBAL GUIDE

The Global Guide is a publication of the U.S. Department of State's EducationUSA global advising network, produced by the Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Institute of International Education (IIE) under a cooperative agreement. Unless otherwise noted, student mobility statistics are drawn from the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, produced by IIE and sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

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Introduction to EducationUSA

Mission and Structure: EducationUSA is the U.S. Department of State’s global network of international student advising centers located in more than 175 countries and territories. The Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) oversees the network as part of its mission to promote international educational exchange and build mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. EducationUSA’s more than 430 centers are located at U.S. embassies and consulates, Fulbright Commissions, binational cultural centers, nongovernmental organizations, and foreign universities and libraries. Supporting student mobility to the United States is a U.S. government priority, as illustrated by the [Joint Statement of Principles in Support of International Education](#), released by Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Education Cardona in July 2021. The Joint Statement outlines 10 principles to guide a coordinated, national approach to renew the country’s focus on international education – from primary and secondary education to higher education – including through enhanced support for international students and scholars, expanded study abroad opportunities for U.S. students, and international collaboration in research and innovation.

Regional Educational Advising Coordinators

Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) guide and support advisers in the EducationUSA network, which is organized into six geographic regions: East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, Middle East and North Africa, South and Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Western Hemisphere. REACs provide training and guidance to advisers to enable them to maintain and improve the quality of their work, and they are responsible for maintaining the quality and consistency of EducationUSA advising services center operations in their respective world regions. REACs also serve as resources for the U.S. higher education community to better understand local educational systems and the development of strategies for increasing international student mobility.

Programs and Services

EducationUSA advising centers offer a variety of services to assist both international students and the U.S.

higher education community. The centers provide international students with information about the breadth of U.S. higher education, as well as the application process, through group advising sessions, virtual advising, individual appointments, and pre-departure orientations. Basic services for students are free of charge. The EducationUSA network offers the U.S. higher education community current information and guidance to help develop regional and country-specific recruitment strategies, create programs and products to connect with student audiences abroad, and obtain information about application and admission issues that may impact overseas candidates. EducationUSA advisers use their expertise to help U.S. institutions make connections with local universities and schools for recruitment, study abroad programs, and the establishment of university partnerships. EducationUSA also works with recruitment agents representing accredited U.S. higher education

institutions (HEIs), incorporating them into public events, information sessions, and consultations.

Opportunity Funds Program

The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program assists high-achieving students who are competitive for full financial aid from U.S. colleges and universities but lack the financial resources to cover the upfront costs of obtaining admission, such as testing fees, application fees, or airfare. Opportunity Funds program students participate in one to two years of cohort advising sessions with EducationUSA advising staff, ultimately diversifying the pool of students applying to U.S. colleges and universities. Hundreds of academically talented students from almost 40 countries worldwide participate in the Opportunity Funds program each year and receive millions of dollars in scholarship offers from U.S. HEIs. For more information about recruiting and supporting Opportunity Funds students, please contact edusaopportunity@state.gov.

An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>



5.4 million+ 396,000+ 4.2 million+

Social Media “likes”

Webinar participants

Video views

Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study

One of EducationUSA's principal resources, *Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study*, guides international students through the application and admission processes for undergraduate, graduate, and English-language programs, as well as for short-term educational opportunities at U.S. colleges and universities. This framework provides students a timeline and practical tips to navigate the American higher education sector. *Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study* is available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

U.S. Study Abroad

The U.S. Department of State has a dedicated team focused on increasing and diversifying U.S. student mobility through programs and initiatives that support individual U.S. students studying abroad, as well as the establishment or expansion of study abroad programs. EducationUSA advisers around the globe are excellent resources for developing study abroad programs for U.S. students as they are experts on the national education systems in their respective countries and have strong relationships

with local universities and schools. For more information, visit the [USA Study Abroad website](#).

Resources for U.S. Higher Education Institutions

The U.S. Department of State promotes the United States as the top study destination for students and scholars around the world through its EducationUSA global network of more than 430 advising centers in more than 175 countries and territories. EducationUSA provides resources and strategic guidance to accredited U.S. institutions of higher education (HEIs) to help them meet their international student recruitment and campus internationalization goals. This includes information on international higher education systems that can strengthen their international networks and potential partnerships.

Benefits of Internationalization

International students enrich U.S. classrooms, campuses, and communities with diverse perspectives and experiences that expand U.S. students' horizons. They enhance the research and teaching capacity of U.S. institutions, increasing their prestige and position in the competition for global talent. The knowledge and skills all students develop on an internationalized U.S. campus prepare them to become the next generation of world leaders, who work across languages, cultures, and borders to solve shared global challenges. International students and their families also benefit the U.S. economy. The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that international students studying in the United States contributed more than \$31.8 billion to the U.S. economy in tuition and living expenses during the 2021 calendar year, for a trade surplus of \$26.2 billion.

Promoting Diversity of U.S. Higher Education

With the goal of promoting the diversity of U.S. higher education, EducationUSA advocates for study at the more than 4,000 accredited U.S. HEIs and supports HEIs that are working to increase their capacity to host international students. This diversification will help international students find their best fit academically, financially, and socially. According to data

reported in the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, in academic year (AY) 2021-2022, one of every three international students studied in only three states: California, New York, or Texas. While there are excellent institutions in these three states, there are many high-quality institutions across the country, including community colleges, looking to welcome international students. EducationUSA is committed to helping these and other institutions, such as minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), meet their internationalization goals.

Research on U.S. and International Student Mobility

The U.S. Department of State funds the Institute of International Education's *Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, an annual survey of international students and scholars in the United States and of U.S. students studying abroad in credit-bearing courses. Open Doors data is used by U.S. embassies and consulates; the U.S. Departments of State, Commerce, and Education; and other federal, state, and local organizations to inform policy decisions about educational exchanges, trade in educational services, and study abroad activity. U.S. colleges and universities, foreign governments, and the

media rely on these comparative statistics to analyze trends in student mobility.

EducationUSA Adviser and REAC Expertise

EducationUSA encourages the U.S. higher education community to connect with EducationUSA advisers and REACs in the United States and abroad. Institutions can engage by taking the following actions:

- Join U.S. higher education professionals, REACs, and advisers from key overseas markets at the annual EducationUSA Forum in Washington, DC, or regional forums held overseas.
- Participate in EducationUSA international student recruitment fairs throughout the year. EducationUSA fairs connect U.S. HEIs with local students interested in opportunities to study in the United States. EducationUSA is pleased to announce the launch of a new registration and payment portal which will serve as a centralized platform for U.S. HEI representatives to register for EducationUSA fairs taking place around the world. The fair portal responds to requests for a simplified, streamlined option for fair registration and fee payment. U.S. HEI representatives will create individual accounts on the fair portal, allowing them to log in, register



for, and (as applicable) pay for one or more EducationUSA fairs.

- Engage with EducationUSA virtually by participating in virtual fairs, webinars, consultations, and other events.
- Host EducationUSA advisers for visits and training programs on your campus, either virtually or in person. Ensuring that advisers have access to current information and skills-based training is essential to the success of the EducationUSA network. The following opportunities are available:

» Host an EducationUSA Adviser Training Institute: Each EducationUSA Adviser Training Institute includes an introductory segment held either virtually or in Washington at the U.S. Department of State and a second segment of virtual or in-person campus-based training. Further information, including the application to host on-campus training, is available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

» Engage in campus visits/higher education association conferences: Experienced advisers represent EducationUSA at a variety of

U.S. higher education association conferences each year, either virtually or in person. Advisers often visit colleges and universities, either virtually or in person, before or after these conferences. Calls for campus hosts are publicized on the [EducationUSA website](#) and in the monthly [EducationUSA newsletter for higher education professionals](#).

- Offer to serve as a subject matter expert in EducationUSA adviser training programs.
- Direct students who are accepted to study at U.S. HEIs to EducationUSA pre-departure orientations in their home countries.

HEI Exclusive Website Access

The U.S. higher education section of the [EducationUSA website](#) helps institutions develop and refine their international student recruitment strategies. Free logins are available to employees of U.S. postsecondary institutions accredited by bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and to members of higher education professional associations. A higher education professional login allows users to access information that can be found only on the [EducationUSA website](#)

and to post their institutions' scholarship opportunities for international students.

Strategies for International Student Recruitment

The EducationUSA network provides advice about developing regional and country-specific recruitment strategies. Institutions can collaborate with EducationUSA to enhance their strategies in a wide variety of ways:

- Consult REACs, the first point of contact for advice regarding a specific region or country. REAC contact information is available to accredited U.S. HEIs that create a profile to log into the [EducationUSA website](#).
- Ask REACs about connecting with foreign government education ministries and scholarship-granting bodies in the region.
- Encourage prospective students to connect with EducationUSA advisers early in the college search and application process for guidance and to ensure they receive accurate information.
- Demystify the U.S. application and admissions process by directing

international students to *Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study* on the [EducationUSA website](#).

- Conduct market research to identify audiences of prospective students in regions or countries that fit your institution's recruitment priorities. Utilize the Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange and the *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets available on the [EducationUSA website](#).
- Visit EducationUSA advising centers to engage student audiences and gain exposure for your institution or

program. (Contact individual advising centers for details on reopening and options for in-person visits.) REACs and advisers can help you make the most of your international recruitment efforts, whether in person or virtual. Contact local centers in advance to arrange meetings or school visits, schedule presentations with students, or attend a college fair.

- Encourage international alumni to get involved with EducationUSA advising centers. Word of mouth is an important factor in building institutional name recognition overseas, and alumni can be

excellent ambassadors. EducationUSA advisers can assist in setting up alumni presentations.

- Leverage state and regional consortia relationships with the EducationUSA network to promote an institution to students abroad. EducationUSA works with state and regional consortia that promote U.S. cities, states, and regions as destinations for international students.

Enhanced Outreach and Networking

In addition to resources such as country reports and presentations on timely issues in the field, EducationUSA offers an array of services for U.S. higher education, including:

- Hosting or attending an EducationUSA Seminar: These day-long seminars, held virtually or in person, convene U.S. Department of State officials and other U.S. government representatives, higher education institutions, higher education associations, and other higher education experts to share best practices in campus internationalization, learn about U.S. government resources for promoting U.S. colleges and universities to students overseas, and discuss ways to build networks for international student recruitment and support. Institutions new to international student recruitment and underrepresented institutions are especially encouraged to attend.
- Accessing the EducationUSA network of advisers and REACs
- Connecting with EducationUSA staff based in Washington, DC
- Connecting with U.S. embassy representatives abroad
- Facilitating connections with foreign higher education institutions and organizations
- Participating in EducationUSA webinars as content experts
- Subscribing to the *U.S. Higher Education Monthly Update*
- Scheduling visits to EducationUSA centers



- Accessing special programming, such as EducationUSA Seminars, the Opportunity Funds program, regional fairs, and other events
- Providing social media platforms that help schools engage prospective international students

Dedicated Domestic Outreach Team

EducationUSA values its relationship with the U.S. higher education community and has created a dedicated domestic outreach team to engage U.S. HEIs through a variety of initiatives, including:

- Offering EducationUSA Seminars
- Hosting EducationUSA Dialogues webinars
- Expanding best practices in internationalization
- Identifying and sharing best practices in international student campus integration
- Supporting collaboration and networking among U.S. HEIs
- Featuring U.S. HEI representatives as guest speakers in EducationUSA Interactives, EducationUSA Seminars, or EducationUSA Dialogues
- Promoting the diversity of U.S. higher education, including the U.S. community college system and 2+2 model for international student transfer to a four-year college or university

Continued Collaboration with Stakeholders

EducationUSA is committed to working with the full array of institutions, organizations, and individuals that advance opportunities for qualified international students to study in the United States. This includes agents identified by accredited U.S. HEIs as their representatives overseas. EducationUSA content and other relevant resources – including this annual publication, *Global Guide*; *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* information sheets; *Open Doors*, and the EducationUSA website – are available to the public.



EducationUSA

By the Numbers

EducationUSA collects statistics to measure outreach to prospective students through center-based and outreach activities, and virtual and social media platforms.

Number of In-Center Contacts (both in-person and virtual), by Type

Individual advising appointments	68,873
Advising by phone or SMS (each conversation)	169,033
Advising by email	303,316
Group advising attendees	377,722
Walk-ins/library/computer users	88,289
U.S. institution representatives	26,156
Online Course attendees	15,952

Total 1,049,341

Number of Event Attendees, by Outreach Activity

Education fairs (in-person & virtual)	392,108
American Corners/Centers	11,464
Local universities/secondary schools	46,632
Other fairs/conferences/seminars	5,867
Host government events	466
Embassy/consulate events	2,447
Public locations	4,070
Other activities	4,154

Total 467,208

Number of Virtual/Social Media Contacts, by Type

Social networks - page likes	5,396,789
Instagram followers	526,904
Videos/video channels views	4,218,618
Skype/WhatsApp/IM advising	541,942
Blog visitors	178,259
Twitter/microblog followers	524,810
EducationUSA webinar participants	396,090
EducationUSA Interactive Session views	6,321

Total 11,789,733

Website visitors (center and flagship websites)

Total 4,343,930

Grand Total 17,650,212

**Changes in classification and methodology have resulted in variances that should not be interpreted as trends over time in specific categories.*

Regional Educational Advising Coordinator (REAC) Map





EducationUSA Worldwide Advising Centers

Levels of Service: Advising centers in the EducationUSA network offer one of three levels of service: Comprehensive, Standard, or Reference. To find an advising center, visit <https://educationusa.state.gov/find-advising-center>.

Types of Center (By color)



Reference Centers

Comprehensive Centers

Standard Centers



EducationUSA Advising Centers

Comprehensive

- Adheres to the [EducationUSA Principles of Good Practice](#)
- Maintains an up-to-date library of reference books and materials
- Offers individual and group advising, information on financial aid, and pre-departure orientations and information
- Employs advising staff who have college degrees (U.S. bachelor's degree or equivalent) and are proficient in spoken and written English
- Provides virtual advising and consulting through email, the web, social media, and instant messaging
- Maintains computers with internet access for visitors
- Organizes and participates in alumni group activities and college fairs, hosting the EducationUSA booth
- Maintains relationships with local high school counselors and university administrators, and conducts outreach to local high schools and higher education institutions
- Provides briefings on the local education system for visiting U.S. representatives
- Describes and compares U.S. and host country educational systems
- Provides information on Ministry of Education recognition and certification of local high schools and universities

- Facilitates communication between local secondary and tertiary institutions and visiting U.S. representatives
- Organizes public presentations at off-site locations for visiting U.S. representatives
- Hosts visiting U.S. representatives for thematic presentations on U.S. higher education
- Organizes general U.S. higher education orientation sessions, often featuring visiting U.S. school representatives
- Provides information on local government and foundation scholarships, as well as other financial aid
- Displays college- and university-provided materials

Standard

- Adheres to the [EducationUSA Principles of Good Practice](#)
- Maintains an up-to-date library of reference books and materials
- Employs, at minimum, one adviser, and offers hours sufficient to meet local demand
- Employs advising staff proficient in spoken and written English
- Offers individual advising
- Provides information on financial aid
- Describes and compares U.S. and host country educational systems

- Maintains relationships with local high school counselors and university administrators
- Displays U.S. college- and university-provided materials
- Provides access to internet-based videoconferencing equipment
- Offers pre-departure information and orientations
- Participates in college fairs, hosting the EducationUSA booth
- Provides briefings on the local education system for visiting U.S. representatives
- Provides information on Ministry of Education recognition and certification of local high schools and universities
- Organizes general U.S. higher education orientation sessions, often featuring visiting U.S. school representatives

Reference

- Adheres to the [EducationUSA Principles of Good Practice](#)
- Maintains an up-to-date library of reference books and materials
- Employs no adviser or offers minimal personal assistance to students

Social Media

Social media and other digital communication tools linking the EducationUSA network to students and U.S. higher education institutes (HEIs) are critical to EducationUSA's goal of promoting U.S. higher education around the world.

Platforms and Trends

Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn are the most widely used social media platforms by EducationUSA centers around the world. EducationUSA Twitter and YouTube pages are also popular. In 2021, the flagship EducationUSA Facebook page generated more than 180,000 engagements, while the flagship Twitter account's following grew to more than 26,000. The flagship EducationUSA Instagram account was relaunched in 2019, and over the course of 2021 saw its following increase by 27.5 percent to more than 96,000. The EducationUSA LinkedIn account had 14,390 followers at the end of 2021. EducationUSA continues to leverage Facebook Live and virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet to expand and enhance outreach.

EducationUSA advising centers have also embraced country- and region-specific social media platforms to better engage with the students they serve. For example, advisers in Russian-speaking countries reach students on VKontakte, while advisers in China connect with students via WeChat and the microblogging site Sina Weibo. Similarly, those in South Korea employ Kakao Talk and Naver, while Telegram is popular in Iran, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Finally, WhatsApp is widely popular in many regions of the world. Where an in-person advising presence is not feasible – as is the case in Iran, Libya, and Syria – EducationUSA advising centers operate exclusively on virtual platforms.

For downloadable PDFs listing EducationUSA-branded social media properties worldwide, visit the [social media page on the EducationUSA website](#).

Global Marketing Campaign

EducationUSA's global marketing campaign is focused on promoting the United States as the top study abroad destination for international students, with specific messaging on how a U.S. education can help position students for a successful future. The first phase of the digital advertising campaign – including [targeted video assets](#) and a [global anthem video](#) – was piloted across a myriad of social media platforms around the globe. The second phase of the marketing campaign is under way and includes additional promotional assets, multiple core messaging pillars, and digital tool kits designed to strengthen the EducationUSA brand while serving as a resource for the benefit of the U.S. higher education community.

EducationUSA Interactive Webinars

The EducationUSA Interactive series, produced in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Global Public Affairs Interactive Team, consists of studio-produced Facebook Live programs featuring international students, U.S. higher education representatives, and other experts discussing timely themes such as U.S. campus culture, the financing of U.S. study, college and university admissions, and the U.S. visa process. Other topics have included student athletics, Muslim student experiences, LGBTQI+ campus communities, support for international students with disabilities, and community colleges. The Interactives, which are hosted on EducationUSA's Facebook page, attract viewers from around the world, and viewers can engage with panelists in real time. Previous episodes are archived and available for viewing on [YouTube](#). In

addition to full episodes, there are several digestible clips highlighting key points for quick and easy reference. EducationUSA will continue working with colleagues across the U.S. Department of State as well as with subject matter experts from throughout the U.S. higher education sector to produce quality interactive programs for prospective students about the topics that matter most to them.

EducationUSA Website

EducationUSA's [mobile-friendly website](#) serves as the central information hub for the EducationUSA network. There, international students and their parents can find reliable information about studying in the United States. Advisers regularly post information about upcoming in-person and virtual events, making the site the best place to find listings of EducationUSA events worldwide. In addition, social media posts from EducationUSA's Instagram account are pulled onto the homepage, creating an interactive and dynamic site. Links to social media on each page allow users to share pertinent information about study in the United States with their own social network. The site also provides resources for U.S. HEIs, as well as foreign institutions and government users. Higher education professionals can request a login to access REAC contact information, subscribe to the monthly newsletter, and submit scholarship opportunities and news stories targeted to the international student audience for posting to the site. All users can now access yearly [Student Mobility Facts and Figures](#) sheets for countries and locations worldwide.



Facebook
Likes: 5.3 million+



Twitter
Followers: 524,000+



Instagram
Followers: 526,000+

EducationUSA Regional Reach

Contacts Made in 2021 by Region

Region	Sub-Saharan Africa	East Asia and Pacific	Europe and Eurasia	Middle East and North Africa	South and Central Asia	Western Hemisphere
Total contacts made through advising centers (both in-person and virtual)	161,518	139,491	150,855	99,289	234,646	263,542
Advising center-based contacts	157,106	135,307	147,310	98,469	230,714	254,279
U.S. institution representative contacts	4,412	4,184	3,545	820	3,932	9,263
Total contacts made through outreach activities	70,278	102,458	96,689	25,965	42,958	128,860
Education fairs (in-person & virtual)	43,229	78,650	89,651	15,620	37,268	127,690
American Corners/Centers	5,495	1,350	967	3,176	268	208
Local universities/secondary schools	18,773	18,200	4,196	2,329	2,891	243
Other fairs/conferences/seminars	1,636	737	1,033	502	1,904	55
Host government events	66	338	51	9	1	1
Embassy/consulate events	180	592	110	806	518	241
Public locations	192	1,501	319	2,039	2	17
Other activities	707	1,090	362	1,484	106	405
Total contacts made through virtual platforms	978,871	2,040,235	1,007,390	1,554,878	3,809,773	1,559,799
Social media platforms	919,543	1,962,268	966,408	1,548,591	3,669,006	1,489,609
Webinars	59,328	77,967	40,982	6,287	140,767	70,190
GRAND TOTAL	1,210,667	2,282,184	1,254,934	1,680,132	4,087,377	1,952,201

**Changes in classification and methodology have resulted in variances that should not be interpreted as trends over time in specific categories.*



The U.S. Departments of State and Commerce are committed to ensuring that the United States remains the top destination of choice for international students. The departments work toward the goal of supporting international student mobility to the United States and collaborate wherever possible to strengthen inbound student mobility through a diverse range of activities and events.

EducationUSA

EducationUSA is the U.S. Department of State's global network of more than 430 international student advising centers staffed by approximately 550 professionals in more than 175 countries and territories worldwide. EducationUSA is the department's official source of information on U.S. higher education and, in an increasingly competitive global environment, promotes the value of U.S. higher education to students, families, institutions, and governments abroad.

The EducationUSA network also provides strategic guidance on international student recruitment and support and campus internationalization to all accredited U.S. colleges and universities through a suite of basic services that are provided free of charge. EducationUSA works with the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) at U.S. embassies and consulates abroad to support the goals of visiting trade missions or U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs).

EducationUSA advising centers are based at a wide variety of host institutions, such as U.S. embassies and consulates, Fulbright Commissions, binational centers, and local universities. Advisers provide prospective international students with accurate, comprehensive, and current information about opportunities to study in the United States, application procedures, testing requirements, student visas, and financial aid.

To ensure that financial constraints do not limit highly qualified international students from opportunities to pursue their academic studies in the United States, the EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program assists academically talented and economically disadvantaged students who are likely to be awarded full financial aid from U.S. colleges and universities, but who lack the financial resources to cover the array of upfront costs associated with applying to and enrolling in U.S. HEIs.

EducationUSA also funds the annual *Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange* implemented by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The report is an annual survey of international students and scholars in the United States and of U.S. students studying abroad in credit-bearing courses.



U.S. Commercial Service

U.S. education ranked eighth among service exports in 2021. International students studying in the United States contributed more than \$31.8 billion to the U.S. economy in tuition and living expenses during the 2021 calendar year, for a trade surplus of \$26.2 billion.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration's (ITA) mission is to create prosperity by strengthening the international competitiveness of U.S. industry, promoting trade and investment, and ensuring fair trade and compliance with trade laws and agreements.

The U.S. Commercial Service is the trade promotion arm of ITA. The U.S. Commercial Service has 1,330 trade professionals located in Washington, DC, and more than 100 cities throughout the United States, and in U.S. embassies, consulates, and business centers in more than 75 countries. These professionals are dedicated to helping U.S. education service providers get started in exporting and developing partnerships in new global markets.

The U.S. Commercial Service and ITA's Global Education Team help U.S. educational institutions and organizations build a recruitment pipeline and partnership channels through various program offerings that are unique to the education sector. The U.S. Commercial Service provides counseling on market potential for programs and develops market research for the education industry. Support includes prescheduled meetings with potential partners, virtual events, trade missions, assistance at trade shows, and single-school promotions. The U.S. Commercial Service also supports the U.S. educational state consortia across the United States with development, promotion, and strategic planning for international recruitment and highlights their states as study destinations. ITA's Global Education Team launched the USA: A Study Destination campaign to assist the U.S. international education industry to compete, increasing trade and investment opportunities for institutions and study states. For a complete list of study states, please visit the ITA's [USA: A Study Destination website](#).

To find out more about how the U.S. Commercial Service and its Global Education Team can help you achieve export success, please visit the [ITA's Education and Training Services Resource Guide](#) on the ITA website.



Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Réunion, Rwanda, St. Helena, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

66

EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

32 Comprehensive
30 Standard
4 Reference

The EducationUSA network across Sub-Saharan Africa comprises 66 advising centers, including 32 comprehensive, 30 standard, and four reference centers, and 74 EducationUSA advisers throughout the region when fully staffed. Of the 66 centers in the region, 46 are located in U.S. embassies and consulates, 11 are at Global Youth Advising Centers in South Africa, six are located in American Corners, and one is at an independent organization. Most of the EducationUSA advisers in the region work part time as advisers and have other responsibilities within the public affairs sections at U.S. embassies or consulates.

All standard and comprehensive centers offer EducationUSA general information and subject-specific sessions, respond to queries from U.S. colleges and universities, offer opportunities for higher education institutions (HEIs) to make presentations to public audiences, and contribute to pre-departure orientations. Many comprehensive centers in the region offer EducationUSA Scholars Programs, a competitive cohort program that guides academically talented students through the entire *Your Five Steps to U.S. Study* process.

The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program, serving high-achieving prospective students who demonstrate financial need, currently operates at 18 advising centers in Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana (two centers), Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria (two centers), Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (three centers).

Regional Overview

More than one billion people live in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), almost 20 percent of whom are between the ages of 15 and 24. According to the United Nations, these young people will represent 42 percent of the world's college-age youth in ten years. This explosion in college-age youth is creating three scenarios: (1) Many SSA countries do not have the local capacity to provide tertiary education for qualified students. As a result, SSA students are highly mobile and seek higher education opportunities outside their home countries. (2) The cost associated with tertiary education at home or abroad is often a challenge. (3) Global competition for the recruitment of these students has increased.

Sub-Saharan African students are some of the most highly mobile students seeking higher education opportunities abroad.

According to the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, SSA saw the smallest change in mobility due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a drop of 6.3 percent in student mobility to the United States from the previous year. The pandemic's impact on SSA students in the United States was less than that experienced in other regions because more SSA students come to the United States for undergraduate and graduate degrees than for the short-term programs that were most impacted. Over the past five years, there has been a 10.5 percent increase in the number of students from the region studying in the United States. Ten countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, South Africa, Rwanda,

¹ "Africa" in this section refers to the 51 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa

An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>



for a declining number of U.S. students studying in the region. In AY 2019-2020, 5,444 U.S. students studied in Sub-Saharan Africa, 60 percent fewer than the 13,455 who studied in SSA during AY 2018-2019.

The rising numbers of young people and Sub-Saharan African students' interest in pursuing higher education abroad make the region an important recruitment destination for U.S. HEIs. Furthermore, technological advances have increased the need for coursework and training in STEM fields to meet local workforce development needs. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics, more than 371,000 students from Sub-Saharan Africa are currently studying abroad, with the top five destinations being France, South Africa, the United States, Morocco, and the United Kingdom. Additionally, a significant number of students from Sub-Saharan Africa are studying in China, which does not report statistics to UNESCO.

Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte D'Ivoire, and Cameroon) each send more than 1,000 students annually. They account for 78 percent (30,643) of the Sub-Saharan African students studying in the United States. The top five countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Africa) alone accounted for 63 percent of SSA students studying in the United States in academic year (AY) 2020-2021.

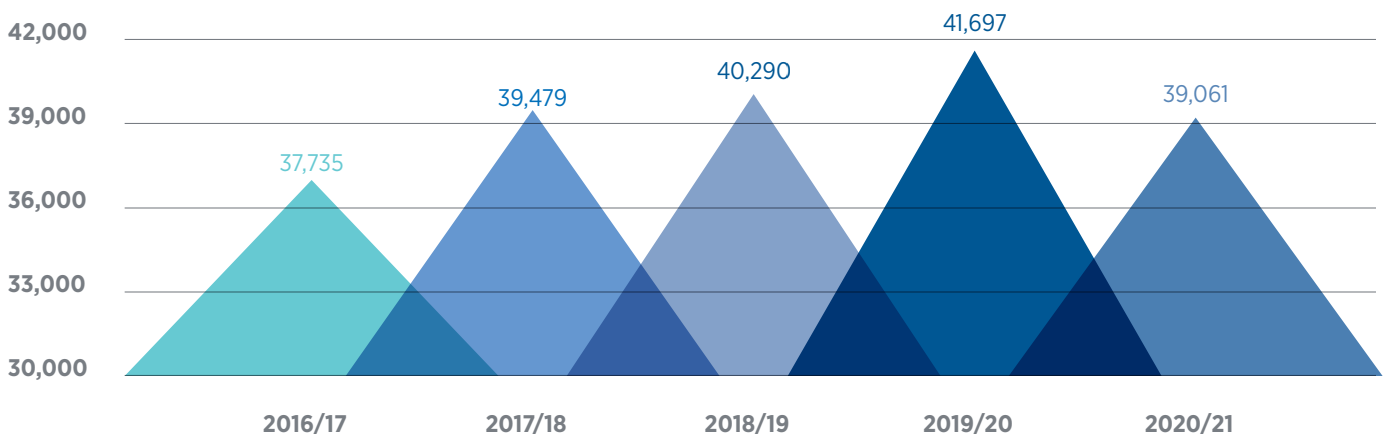
Over the past five years, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia, South Sudan, and Somalia have all experienced an increase of 50 percent or more in the number of students studying in the United States.

In AY 2020-2021, more than 39,000 Sub-Saharan African students studied in the United States. As with the rest of the world, the pandemic was responsible

As countries adjust to the "new normal," competition for SSA students will continue to increase. Expect countries like China, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany to recruit in SSA and offer scholarships to students. Before January 2022, Russia and Ukraine were also recruiting SSA students.

Sub-Saharan Africa includes several regional, economic, and political

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



Sub-Saharan Africa

organizations that bind nations across the continent together. For example, 15 countries in West Africa comprise the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) includes 16 countries in Southern Africa. The East African Community (EAC), is a regional intergovernmental organization that brings together seven countries. These subregional blocs encourage interregional trade and migration and offer educated youth an opportunity to seek additional employment opportunities.

Agriculture, oil and gas, banking, tourism, and technology are the dominant industries in the region, leading many students to pursue studies and careers in STEM fields. Expertise in agriculture and agricultural engineering, water dam construction, and irrigation development are particularly sought after in Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EducationUSA in Sub-Saharan Africa shifted to virtual advising to engage and support students. The region continues

to host U.S. recruiters and admissions representatives in virtual recruitment programs to showcase the strength and diversity of U.S. universities and colleges. Some of the platforms used for virtual advising include Facebook, Google Meet, Instagram, Twitter, Viber, WhatsApp, and Zoom. Prospective students in the region have continued to participate in virtual programs, with Facebook Live and WhatsApp being the preferred platforms as they use less bandwidth. Instagram is also growing in popularity.

While the region is home to diverse educational systems, most require students to sit for senior-year national exams. For example, in West Africa, students take the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Kenya requires the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), and South Africa mandates that students take “matric” exams. All francophone countries continue to require the French baccalaureate, or the “bac.”

Mobile phone usage is ubiquitous in Sub-Saharan Africa, and many students access the internet through their phones to research and apply to U.S. universities.

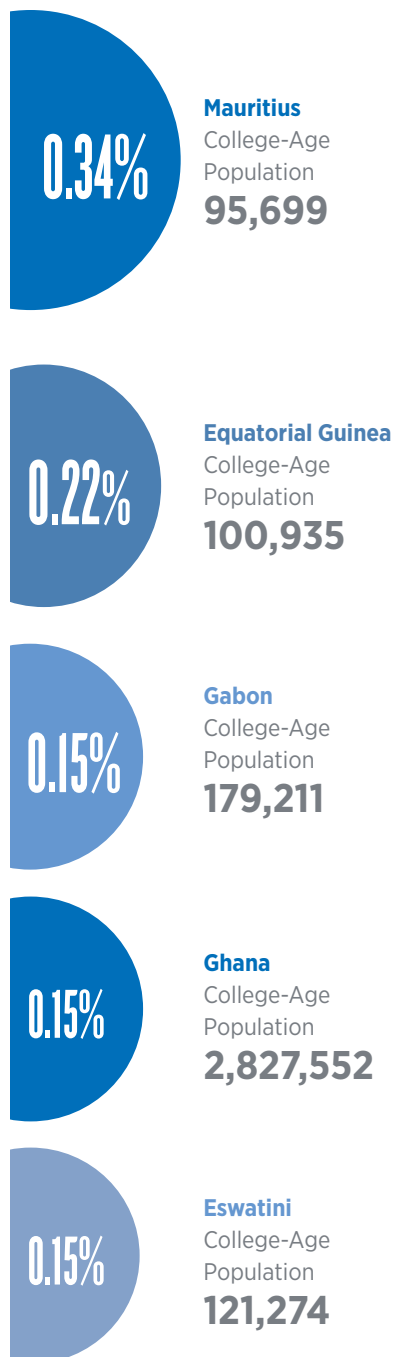
Mobile-friendly websites are critical to reaching these students and ensuring that institutional information is available and accessible. Because costs associated with mobile device data plans can limit the number of students able to participate in virtual activities and the amount of time they can remain engaged, shorter presentations are preferred. Unreliable electrical service can also present a challenge in some parts of the region. Many students rely on EducationUSA advising centers and American Spaces to access books, test preparation materials, technology, workstations, and free internet connections. However, as of mid-2022, most advising centers remain closed due to the pandemic with Embassies primarily focused on virtual methods. This presents a temporary barrier to student access. Despite the closures, many advisers are conducting in-person outreach at local schools and use American Spaces for advising activities.

Recent Trends

Interest in studying in the United States remains very high among both students and parents. The 6.3 percent decline in the number of students from Sub-Saharan



Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

Africa studying in the United States – a loss of 2,636 students – represented the lowest percentage decline of all regions. Most students from the region remained in the United States throughout the pandemic because they could not travel home.

Prior to COVID, Sub-Saharan Africa continued to send a growing number of students to the United States. In fact, from 2016 to 2020, there was a 64.4 percent increase, from 25,364 students in 2016 to 41,697 students in 2020.

COVID disrupted education for all students, but particularly for women. According to an *International Politics and Society* article published in March 2022 (“Africa’s Lost Girls”): “One of the most underreported effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is its adverse effect on girls’ education, especially in Africa. An entire generation of African girls has been lost after lockdown-induced disruptions in their education, as many girls did not return to school after they reopened last year.”

UNESCO reports that France continues to be the top study destination for students from Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by South Africa, the United States, Morocco, and the United Kingdom. China does not report data to UNESCO.

Competition in the region is real. The perennial competitors China, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom continue to draw large numbers of students from Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, Canada and Malaysia actively recruit in Sub-Saharan Africa. Prior to the war, Ukraine and Russia also demonstrated tremendous interest in recruiting students from the region. Canada has invested substantial funding in its recruitment efforts in the region and promotes the opportunity for permanent residency.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available on the [EducationUSA website](https://educationusa.state.gov).

1. **Nigeria**
2. **Ghana**
3. **Kenya**
4. **Ethiopia**
5. **South Africa**

6. **Rwanda**
7. **Zimbabwe**
8. **Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa)***
9. **Côte d’Ivoire**
10. **Cameroon**

*It is important to note that the majority of students from the Democratic Republic of the Congo apply to study in the United States from outside of their home country.

HEIs should consider the following locations in their recruitment plans to help diversify SSA students on U.S. campuses:

- There are several countries in East and Southern Africa that have experienced steady growth over the past five years: **Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Sudan, and Uganda**. Although travel to these countries may be restricted by time and budgets, EducationUSA advisers in these countries are prepared to offer virtual sessions.
- **Sierra Leone**. The EducationUSA Advising Center now has an EducationUSA Scholars Program.

What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

Sub-Saharan African students will continue to seek higher education outside

African Countries with More than 1,000 Students in the United States

Country	# Of Students	% Change
Nigeria	12,860	-6.6%
Ghana	4,229	0.2%
Kenya	3,502	-5.6%
Ethiopia	2,166	-8.1%
South Africa	2,079	-6.5%
Rwanda	1,333	-7.7%
Zimbabwe	1,304	-5.3%
Congo, Dem. Rep. of the (Kinshasa)	1,125	-6.1%
Côte d’Ivoire/Ivory Coast	1,115	-11.3%

Sub-Saharan Africa



of their home countries because the number of qualified students far exceeds the spaces available at local universities.

Continued population growth will exacerbate this capacity issue. Africa’s 2.45 percent population growth rate in 2021 is very high compared to the U.S. rate of 0.59 percent and is projected to remain above 2 percent for the next 20 years, according to *Statistics Times*. *The World Factbook* reports that 19.54

percent of people in Africa are aged 15 to 24. According to the United Nations, in 10 years 42 percent of the world’s youth aged 15 to 24 will live in Africa.

In addition to capacity constraints, students in most countries within Sub-Saharan Africa face being assigned to a field of study based on their secondary school leaving exams. Prospective students and their families appreciate the flexibility of being allowed to declare a

major after two years of undergraduate study in the United States. Prospective students and their families are likely to need substantial instruction to understand the U.S. educational system, because it is so dissimilar to their own.

Finally, interest in graduate study in the United States has grown and is expected to continue to increase. In 2019, 31 percent of all SSA students in the United States studied at the graduate level, and by 2021 that had risen to 34.2 percent. Sub-Saharan African students are seeking specialized advanced degrees that may not be offered in their home countries. Funding opportunities through graduate assistantships are another reason students seek graduate study in the United States.

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

Over the past two years, SSA has seen benefits and experienced constraints in virtual engagement and social media usage.

One significant benefit is the ability of advisers and HEIs to connect with students outside of major cities. Physical recruiting visits and fairs were often limited to major cities because of budget, time, and sometimes travel warnings. Advising centers offered local sessions, and REACs offered regional sessions. Now, many sessions are live-streamed on local Facebook pages and the EducationUSA Africa Connections page, allowing students, counselors, and other stakeholders to access the sessions. Advisers also use WhatsApp and Instagram to communicate with students, counselors, and other stakeholders.

African Students by Level of Study in the Region

Associate	5,274
Bachelor	20,104
Master	14,487
Doctorate	7,950
All Other	2,549

Source: SEVIS, May 2022

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2020/21	% Change
Nigeria	12,860	-6.6%
Ghana	4,229	0.2%
Kenya	3,502	-5.6%
Ethiopia	2,166	-8.1%
South Africa	2,079	-6.5%

HEIs can participate in local or regional sessions by contacting REACs or advisers.

Another benefit of increased opportunities for virtual engagement has been the expansion of virtual learning opportunities. According to a June 2021 [article](#) on the Oxford HR website (“Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Prospects”): “The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly offered a unique opportunity to conclude that digital distance education is increasingly proving its relevance to potentially unlock education opportunities and potential for Africa’s youth, including those in fragile or remote deprived rural settings, by reducing the costs of being physically at school, guaranteeing access to quality relevant modern content, and offering opportunities for collaboration especially in terms of sharing learning Open Education Resources. This collaboration is timely in Africa, especially between learning institutions in fragile settings and those in well-resourced settings.”

The global pandemic has also highlighted the importance of online connectivity for student recruitment. Mobile technology has proven to be the most affordable and accessible means to engage many Sub-Saharan African students. According to the [2021 GSMA Mobile Economy Report](#), by 2020, 495 million people had subscribed to mobile services in Sub-Saharan Africa, an increase of almost 20 million over 2019. Six hundred fifteen million people in Sub-Saharan Africa will subscribe to mobile services by 2025, equivalent to 50 percent of the region’s population.

Strong investor confidence and consumer interest in digital platforms point to a digital-centric future for Sub-Saharan Africa, highlighting the need for regional recruitment plans to accommodate mobile devices.

Despite the benefits, the global increase in social media and virtual activities still faces a socioeconomic and gender-based digital divide. EducationUSA advisers have made efforts to address this by using more affordable social media and virtual platforms and increasing the use of mobile phones.

According to a March 2021 [article](#) posted on the Borgen Project’s website (“Reversing the Sub-Saharan Africa

Digital Divide”): “Sub-Saharan Africa is slowly digging its way out of the digital divide it faces today. With the help of several organizations, more emphasis on economic growth through STEM and new financial-based breakthroughs, the region is constantly facing more opportunities for improvement. By catalyzing a technological revolution in sub-Saharan Africa, the world is ensuring that its inhabitants lead more enriching, productive and prosperous lives for years to come. Technology drives the future; Sub-Saharan Africa is taking one large step to embrace it.”

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- Travel is beginning to open up throughout the region, and students and their families look forward to the opportunity to meet in person with HEIs. Families want to know that HEIs are committed to the region and their students; therefore, plan to invest up to three years connecting with students and families in Sub-Saharan Africa before expecting a return on investment.

- Current students and alumni provide a valuable resource when recruiting in the region. Engage parents of current students and alumni whenever possible, as parents are usually the primary decision-makers on study abroad opportunities.
- Competition from countries with generous immigration policies, particularly Canada, makes it important for U.S. HEIs to highlight the Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) benefits of studying in the United States.
- All Sub-Saharan countries have a mixture of students whose families can pay a portion of the cost of attendance and families who cannot afford to pay any of the cost. When offering scholarships, consolidate multiple smaller ones into fewer more substantial awards to ensure more comprehensive support. This demonstrated commitment to the region will have a direct effect on others considering the institution.

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2019/20	% Change
South Africa	2,159	-59.1%
Ghana	797	-62.9%
Tanzania	602	-54.9%
Kenya	494	-46.7%
Uganda	318	-60.1%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Kenya	681	494	-27.5%
Senegal	281	183	-34.9%
Ghana	1,564	797	-49.0%
Tanzania	1,254	602	-52.0%
Uganda	722	318	-56.0%

Sub-Saharan Africa

Next, consider waiving application fees and/or enabling payment from mobile money accounts to mitigate additional expenses associated with bank checks and traditional money transfers. It is also important to disclose the full cost of attending your institution so families can plan properly.

- Prospective students are likely to use mobile phones to access HEI websites; therefore, be certain that websites are fully visible on a mobile device. In addition, having attached documents in mobile-friendly form allows students to dive deeper into their research while still using their phones.
- Partner with two or three colleagues to offer a Wednesday Webinar on a specific topic relevant to students at the time of the presentation and then provide information about the institution The interest form can be found [here](#). Review the [AF Tips for HEI Webinars](#) document to enable better communication with students in the region.
- Direct admitted students to EducationUSA pre-departure orientation sessions (usually held each July) in admissions letters. Many countries in the region include presentations by consular officers in their sessions.
- Finally, contact the REACs with questions. They are happy to assist and support HEI recruitment work in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Institutional Partnerships

EducationUSA recognizes the enormous opportunity posed by the projected doubling of Sub-Saharan Africa’s population by 2050 and the “youth bulge” it will produce. Therefore, HEIs are encouraged to reach out to public affairs offices interested in exploring academic partnerships. Developing existing links and promoting new partnerships at the university level will strengthen Africa’s educational institutions – enhancing regional prosperity, security, and stability. Moreover, successful partnerships are grounded in mutual benefits for U.S. and SSA academic institutions.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Governments in Sub-Saharan Africa have limited funds to support tertiary study abroad. Countries rely on support from host countries, and local government education ministry personnel may be unfamiliar with the decentralized organization of the U.S. higher education system.

The newsletter [Opportunities for Africans](#) contains various scholarship opportunities for African students.

Examples of both types of funding opportunities are listed by country below.

Botswana. The government of Botswana offers the Top Achievers Scholarship, which is administered by the Department of Tertiary Education Financing (DTEF).

Ghana. The [Ghana Education Trust Fund](#) (GET Fund) supports local and U.S. study

in fields of interest to the government, including public health, policy, and administration.

Togo. Togo’s Ministry of Higher Education and Research, through the National Agency for Scholarships and Internships, has begun supporting two Opportunity Funds students’ participation in the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program in partnership with Lane Community College. The total financial aid from the government of Togo is USD\$16,600 per year for each student.

Regional Economics and Market Demands

Although the fastest-growing employment sectors in the region vary by location, there are specific fields of study that are generally in greater demand. In 2020, Africa.com compiled a [list of the most in-demand fields in Africa](#), predicting that STEM fields, agriculture, and tourism, among others, will likely remain popular as students seek skills in sectors with strong employment prospects.

Agriculture is a crucial sector of the economy in Sub-Saharan Africa and is likely to become even more critical as the continent continues to face a rapidly growing population and the challenges that accompany urbanization. Mining is a key pillar of many economies in the region. It offers a broad array of employment opportunities, including careers for engineers, geologists, information and communications technology professionals, and human resource professionals. As Africa’s middle

Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2016/17	2020/21	% Change
Ghana	3,111	4,229	35.9%
Namibia	93	122	31.2%
Madagascar	143	181	26.6%
Rwanda	1,088	1,333	22.5%
Ethiopia	1,847	2,166	17.3%

35.9%

Ghana has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years (*with over 100 students*)

class grows, banking and finance are also likely to remain critical economic drivers. As a result, institutions offering MBA programs and programs in financial management, insurance, and banking are likely to interest students from the region.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is currently a significant driver of the economy on the continent, with mobile phone usage being the highest in the world primarily due to low internet connectivity. As infrastructure grows, investment in the growth of ICT infrastructure will increase rapidly, and the continent will see higher demand for software developers; systems and network administrators; business and system analysts and databases; technical and business architects; and business analysis.

Entrepreneurship on the continent has been growing significantly over the past few years and is expected to become one of the leading employment providers. Africa also leads the world in the number of women starting businesses, with an almost equal number of male and female entrepreneurs.

As the economy improves and businesses become established, transportation, logistics, and warehousing will become significant. A career in transportation requires sound knowledge of construction, architecture, town planning, logistics engineering, and business management.

Tourism is a booming industry in Africa, contributing 8.5 percent to the continent's GDP and over 2 percent of employment in hotels, travel agencies, airlines, passenger transportation services, restaurants, and leisure industries. Students entering this sector need to study in specialized tourism and hospitality management programs.

HEIs are encouraged to contact REACs and EducationUSA advisers to learn more about regional and country-level economics and educational programs responsive to local workforce development needs.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

EducationUSA Sub-Saharan Africa will offer its third virtual fair in September 2022, and the Sub-Saharan Africa

Regional Forum will take place during the first half of 2023.

HEIs are invited to participate in the Sub-Saharan Wednesday Webinar programs described above. Please contact the SSA REACs regarding upcoming engagement opportunities.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to data from the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*. In AY 2019-2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. U.S. study abroad programming declined primarily during the spring and summer of 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad programming in AY 2018-2019, decreased by 99 percent in AY 2019-2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to over 10,400 students.

According to data from the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational*

Exchange, in AY 2019-2020, Sub-Saharan Africa hosted 5,444 U.S. study abroad students. Almost half of these students studied in South Africa. There has been some rebound in study abroad demand in 2021 and 2022; however, it will take some time for this rebound to be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

In 2021, the USA Study Abroad branch at the U.S. Department of State gave U.S. embassies and consulates in Cabo Verde, Malawi, and Nigeria U.S. Study Abroad Engagement Grants. The grants will be used to carry out capacity-building projects in Africa to support U.S. study abroad and develop a strong rebound for the field. In addition, the State Department's [IDEAS program](#) awarded grants to three U.S. HEIs to develop or diversify study abroad programming in Kenya, Ghana, and The Gambia. The global webinar series "[Internationalization of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era](#)" also supported study abroad in the region.

U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their departure from the United States so that they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

The best times to plan in-person travel for recruitment are when schools are in session. The pandemic has created some changes in academic calendars and local national exams. It is best to contact advisers and REACs to check for the best times to visit and interact with students.

It is best to avoid travel to the region during Ramadan, Easter, Christmas, exam periods (April to June and November to December), and national elections. U.S. HEI representatives are encouraged to note U.S. Department of State travel warnings posted at travel.state.gov. Contact the EducationUSA adviser in your target country for additional guidance.

There is more flexibility with virtual engagement. HEIs are encouraged to contact advisers and REACs for best subjects and times for virtual sessions.

East Asia and Pacific

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Australia, Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, China, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vietnam

71

EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

29 Comprehensive
24 Standard
18 Reference



An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>

EducationUSA operates 71 centers across East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), which house more than 80 advisers. In addition to EducationUSA services offered across the global network, larger-scale events in EAP include university fairs, high school counselor and local educator training, and numerous events that often involve multi-country coordination. EducationUSA centers in EAP also offer robust virtual programming. Three EducationUSA Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) train and support advisers and provide regional expertise to U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs) and other stakeholders.

The majority of EducationUSA advising centers in EAP are located at U.S. embassies and consulates; others are based at Fulbright Commissions, American Spaces, local colleges, libraries, and other host institutions. EducationUSA centers in EAP enjoy a close working relationship with U.S. embassy public affairs sections, often conducting joint programs.

Regional Overview

EAP is home to a quarter of the world's population and includes many of the top-sending countries of international students to the United States. The region consists of the following subregions: East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. East Asia is the biggest sending region for the United States, and China alone sends nearly 70 percent of all students originating from EAP. Other major East Asia senders include the Republic of Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, with Mongolia emerging as a promising market and large per capita sender. For East Asia, the biggest motivating factors for overseas study are prestige and career advancement.

Southeast Asia presents the strongest potential as an emerging student recruitment market in EAP because of its high youth population (more than 200 million) and favorable socioeconomic climate. The region has some of the world's fastest growing middle-class populations, and many of the national governments prioritize youth development. Affordability is the most important factor to prospective students from Southeast Asia. They are less driven by prestige and consider a wide range of destinations, including those within the ASEAN region, leading to fierce regional competition for international students. The United Kingdom and Australia surpass the United States as the top study abroad destinations for Southeast Asian students. Major cities in Southeast Asia are easily accessible to international travelers, and virtual engagements are widely possible across the region.

While Australia and New Zealand have been strong senders of students to the United States, Oceania has yet to see significant engagement by U.S. HEIs. Distance and cost of travel may discourage recruitment, but many factors point to growth potential in the region. Australia was the number 32 sender to the United States, according to the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, and the United States is now the most popular study destination for New Zealanders (UNESCO, 2021). Although there is no U.S. HEI recruitment presence in Pacific Island countries, the language of instruction is English, interest in studying in the United States is strong, and there is government support for study abroad. Open Doors statistics may show few U.S.-bound students; however, the local situation shows a market waiting to be engaged.



Fiji has more than 70,000 English-speaking high school students, Papua New Guinea also has a large population of students seeking opportunities for higher education, and local institutions are seeking exchange partnerships.

Recent Trends

With a total sending population of 450,226 in AY 2020-2021, EAP accounts for nearly half of all international students in the United States. Student mobility to the United States from EAP fell 15.95 percent from the previous year, likely due to COVID-19, regional travel restrictions, health and safety concerns, concerns about anti-Asian discrimination in the United States, vaccination access, and overall economic conditions. Despite the decline, the proportion of international students from EAP studying in the United States compared to students from other regions is consistent with prior years.

While a shift to virtual learning options at the start of the pandemic served as a stopgap for students already enrolled in U.S. HEIs, prospective students were hesitant to submit applications if programs were expected to remain

online. Virtual learning proved difficult for students in EAP due to time differences and lack of social interaction. EducationUSA advisers have seen increased inquiries about transferring, both among students who opted to study at local universities and those currently enrolled in U.S. institutions, because of dissatisfaction with online coursework.

There have been some successes in virtual learning, however. Institutions with online learning infrastructure already in place and those that had strong curriculum coordination among partners saw growth and expansion of online programming. Even as higher education returns to physical campuses, institutional partners are considering continuing these programs, at least in part, into the future.

The pandemic has amplified concerns about affordability, and as East Asian countries and major study abroad destinations such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom revive their programs, competition will grow. In addition to financial concerns, parents and students may be attracted by new post-pandemic incentives in other

countries, such as more favorable visa policies and opportunities to work. Return on investment is a key consideration for families of potential students.

Although test-optional policies are in place at some U.S. institutions, many students from EAP still opt to take standardized exams such as the SAT and ACT. Test optional policies have benefitted many students, but others regard standardized testing as a necessary requirement for admission and scholarships.

Since academic schedules and national exam preparation prevent some students in EAP from properly preparing for the U.S. admissions process, U.S. HEIs might consider accepting national exams such as the Gaokao in China, the College Scholastic Ability Test in the Republic of Korea, or the Eiken English test in Japan.

In-person recruitment in EAP came to a near halt last year due to travel restrictions. However, U.S. schools with in-country representation in China, the Republic of Korea, and other countries were able to organize fairs, conduct

East Asia and Pacific

school visits, and participate in other events. Whether agents, staff of institutions with local offices, or alumni, these representatives filled a gap during windows of fewer COVID-19 cases and as students grew weary of virtual events.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

- 1. China
- 2. Republic of Korea
- 3. Vietnam
- 4. Taiwan
- 5. Japan
- 6. Indonesia
- 7. Hong Kong
- 8. Malaysia
- 9. Thailand
- 10. Australia

In addition to these top-sending countries, HEIs should consider the following locations in their recruitment plans.

Brunei. As part of a five-year [Digital Economy Masterplan](#), Brunei is prioritizing digital skill capacity building by providing funding for undergraduate and graduate study overseas in the sciences, medicine, social sciences and management, engineering, and technology. Brunei has expressed strong interest in developing local expertise at the graduate level in the areas of: environment and energy

studies; global peace and security studies (maritime security); critical and emerging technology; and finance and technology. The Bruneian government’s emphasis on developing technical and vocational skills that meet international standards presents an opportunity for U.S. community colleges offering associate’s degrees and short-term programs in data science, technopreneurship, the Internet of Things (IoT), and digital marketing. There is also growing demand for Bruneians to gain work experience and practical training abroad in these areas.

Burma. Since the February 2021 military coup, students from Burma have faced many challenges. Internet accessibility is limited, and there has been an uptick in long internet cuts and censorship. Students have reported difficulty obtaining documents such as transcripts, school profiles, and letters of recommendation. With teachers and administrative staff not working due to ongoing civil disobedience, there has been limited capacity to process student requests. For institutions that can be flexible on these fronts while offering targeted scholarship aid, there is a wide pool of prospective students from Burma who wish to study in the United States.

Cambodia. The number of Cambodian students studying at U.S. colleges and universities reached an all-time high in AY 2020-2021 according to the *Open Doors* report. Cambodian students are increasingly interested in community college options in the United States. Just

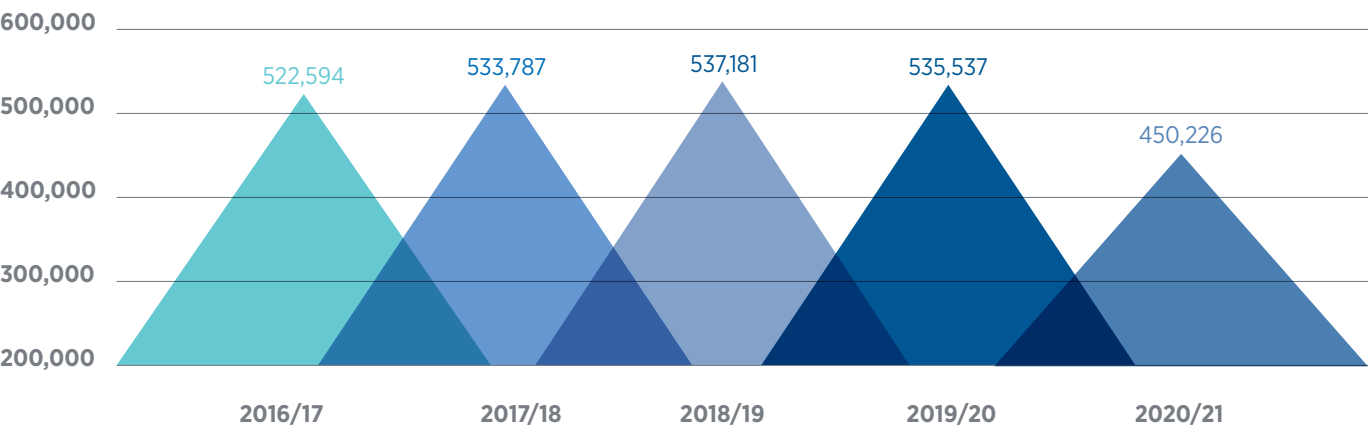
over 26 percent of Cambodian students currently studying in the United States are enrolled at community colleges, and Cambodians have come to better understand the benefits of pursuing U.S. higher education through the community college and 2+2 model.

The Freely Associated States (FAS).

Three Pacific Island countries, the [Republic of the Marshall Islands](#), the [Federated States of Micronesia](#), and [Palau](#), are under a Compact of Free Association with the United States, which allows citizens of these countries to work, travel, and study in the United States without a visa. While the annual *Open Doors* report consistently shows low student mobility from these countries (often fewer than 20), FAS students are eligible for U.S. Federal Student Aid, and statistics show that each year thousands of them access federal funds to study in the United States. Each country has a U.S. accredited community college as the highest level of education available in-country, presenting an opportunity for HEIs seeking transfer agreements. Government scholarships are also available for students pursuing higher education abroad.

Singapore. The city-state of Singapore is a consistent sender of international students to the United States, with the number of Singaporean students in AY 2020-2021 remaining in the 4,000s. The top reasons for Singaporeans to study in the United States include the freedom to explore ideas and choose their own academic programs and the option

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)





to work after studies. U.S. universities seeking partnerships may find plenty of opportunities in Singapore, which has a mature ecosystem for linkages, with more than 100 exchange programs with U.S. universities and more than 40 joint university or research partnerships. Extension schools and online programs may see a new window of opportunity as the Singaporean government issues credits to all Singaporeans over 25 years of age to reskill and upskill through short-term programs. The government has also implemented a program that ensures all secondary students have internet connectivity devices, which enhances access to online and distance learning programs.

What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

As EAP gradually recovers from the pandemic, non-degree programs and vocational training will attract more governmental attention and support as enhancing employability for the general population becomes a key goal throughout the region, particularly among

developing countries. This trend will offer a window of opportunity for U.S. institutions as government agencies seek qualified training providers, particularly institutions that can provide on-the-job training with U.S. companies.

Several governments in Southeast Asia have expressed interest in investing in advanced training for the next generation of workforces to support their transition from developing to advanced economies. In 2021, all ASEAN member states signed the 2025 Digital Economy Master Plan, which aims in part to improve and increase the workforce in digital economy fields. Many governments also seek to improve their domestic higher education systems, which will involve increasing partnerships with foreign institutions and supporting local university faculty to pursue master's degrees and doctorates (PhDs) overseas. The [Billion Futures](#) initiative, which aims to create opportunities and build human capital on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, will contribute to student mobility from the region.

Some universities in East Asia are successfully building capacity to provide instruction in English, and government initiatives will likely fuel demand for English programs abroad. In 2020, Japan adopted English education as an official subject in primary school starting from the fifth grade. The Japanese government is also considering incorporating tests to assess speaking and writing skills, in addition to listening and reading, into university entrance exams. Taiwan adopted a policy to become a bilingual English-Mandarin Chinese nation by 2030, from K-12 students and its civil service all the way up to university. This will offer opportunities for U.S. education technology companies, U.S.-Taiwan exchange programs, Chinese-language teacher training programs, and more.

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

Access to high-speed internet is a standard convenience in most metropolitan areas across EAP and even outside major cities. However, not all students have access to a stable

East Asia and Pacific

connection. Virtual and social media usage inequalities in EAP became more apparent with COVID-19 school closures and the shift to mass online learning. According to the October 21, 2021, United Nations publication *Situation Analysis on the Effects of and Responses to COVID-19 on the Education Sector in Southeast Asia*, “in the East Asia and Pacific region, 20 percent of girls and boys (80 million children in total) were not reached by distance learning delivered online or through TV or radio due to the lack of devices and or policies geared towards their needs.”

For students that remain connected, engagement through social media and virtual events has been the primary method of communication with U.S. school representatives for recruitment purposes. Many EducationUSA centers in EAP offer computers and stable internet connections to students who lack access at home.

Since China’s Great Firewall blocks many non-Chinese platforms, student engagement in China relies on local language websites, Weibo, and WeChat. According to a Statista research study on digital usage in China (“Share of Internet Users of the Leading Social Media in China as of 3rd Quarter 2021”), around 77 percent of respondents had used WeChat for social networking as of the third quarter of 2021. The study also showed that Sina Weibo and the short video apps Douyin and Kuaishou were among the most popular social network services in China. U.S. universities should consider investing in Chinese-language web

pages and maintain active engagement with high school counselors via WeChat messaging that includes updates, emails, and webinars in the local language.

Platform usage can vary from country to country, but Facebook, Instagram, Zoom, YouTube, and Google are widely used for engagement across EAP. In Papua New Guinea, where internet prices are among the highest in the world, Facebook is the platform of choice as it does not incur high data costs.

Some EAP countries utilize platforms that are unique to the region. For example, Zalo is a leading instant messaging platform in Vietnam, Line is popular throughout the rest of Southeast Asia, and Naver and KakaoTalk are ubiquitous in the Republic of Korea. EducationUSA advising centers in Mongolia and Australia have launched podcast series to attract youth and parents in a more engaging way. Mongolia’s podcast, which offers Mongolian Sign Language interpretation, has had over one million downloads, adding another layer of access to underserved students.

As in other regions, virtual fatigue is a challenge. To keep things engaging, several EducationUSA advising centers in EAP have conducted virtual events on metaverse platforms such as Gather. These platforms have been well received by students, and not only provide a fun user experience, but also allow users to interact with each other more freely, bringing back the social aspect of gatherings that is often lost in online programming. Some centers have

incorporated virtual reality (VR) tours into their advising toolkits, giving students the opportunity to experience campus life through VR goggles or mobile devices. Metaverse platforms, VR, augmented reality, and other developing technologies will only grow in the coming years, and U.S. HEIs may wish to explore integrating them into their outreach strategies.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- Use current students, alumni, and international student influencers to highlight campus life and opportunities. In Australia, the Pacific, and some Asian countries, students are attracted to the U.S. campus experience since most local universities offer a commuter experience. Advisers overwhelmingly agree that sharing the real experiences of EAP students is critical when recruiting in the region.
- Provide clear messaging about safety. Parents and students are concerned about COVID-19, campus safety, and negative news affecting Asian communities. U.S. institutions should incorporate these themes into their messaging, especially information on specific campus services that can alleviate concerns and dispel misconceptions.
- Consider student athlete recruitment in EAP, and particularly in Oceania, by reaching out to schools, athletic associations, and Olympic committees. Asia is not traditionally a major recruitment market for student athletes, but it may be a region to explore. In Oceania, particularly Australia and

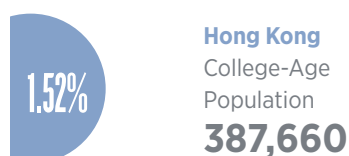
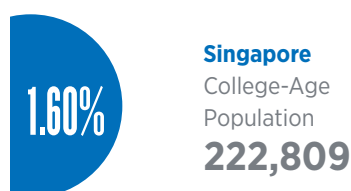
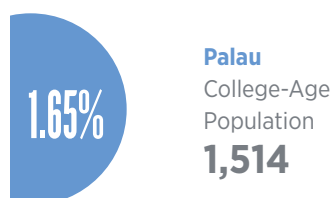
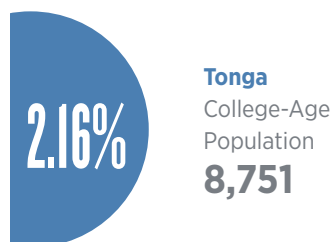
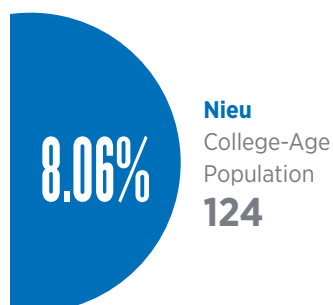
Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2016/17	2020/21	% Change
Samoa	56	106	89.3%
Cambodia	512	848	65.6%
Tonga	133	189	42.1%
Papua New Guinea	77	100	29.9%
Myanmar	1,351	1,698	25.7%

89.3%

Samoa has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years (**with over 100 students**)

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

New Zealand, the opportunity to play sports on campus is a key driver for undergraduate students. The Pacific is also home to successful athletes, and several governments offer support for athletes to train abroad.

- Provide clear information on Optional Practical Training and Curricular Practical Training, internship opportunities, and employability after graduation. This is crucial to helping students compare local opportunities with those in the United States.
- Highlight e-sports leagues and scholarships. E-sports are popular across EAP and were recently added to the Asian Games. U.S. HEIs that have e-sports will find competitive players interested in opportunities to study in the United States.
- Work with multiple institutions to plan workshops, master classes, career or soft-skill building, or other events that offer concrete takeaways and will attract a wider audience. East Asia is particularly saturated with information sessions, whether online or in person, so consider popular events to which HEIs may add a recruitment component.
- Include students with disabilities in recruitment strategies. Use inclusive language to welcome students and invite them to events, be sure materials are accessible, and work with local partners to provide opportunities to connect.
- Engage diaspora communities in the United States. Communities of people from EAP may have local organizations, newsletters, professional associations, social gatherings, or businesses where HEIs may be able to promote educational opportunities.

Institutional Partnerships

The Indo-Pacific Strategy of the United States aims to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific that is more connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient. As a result, increased focus on joint research, partnerships, English-language training, and educational exchanges across EAP has become a primary goal and area of support.

Higher education institutions across EAP are actively involved in partnerships with U.S. institutions. Periodic higher education conferences provide important platforms for engagement. The annual Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) conference is one such event. Every year, EducationUSA hosts a pavilion at the APAIE conference where interested U.S. HEIs may join the shared booth space to engage with stakeholders interested in developing and furthering partnership initiatives.

U.S. HEIs interested in partnerships with institutions in EAP should begin by contacting target institutions directly via the international relations or affairs department. Many partnerships begin via people-to-people connections. EducationUSA may be able to assist with identifying appropriate contacts at these departments. U.S. HEIs should have a clear understanding of their partnership goals and capabilities before entering discussions. A short statement outlining the mutual benefits of collaboration is helpful for generating initial interest with potential partners. For certain countries, translated materials may be helpful if buy-in from senior leadership at the institutional or governmental levels is needed. EducationUSA centers are capable of making general connections for U.S. institutions, but the capacity of each EducationUSA team varies.

EducationUSA centers in Malaysia and the Philippines have organized successful virtual networking events for U.S. and local university representatives to engage in initial partnership conversations. Once connections have been established,

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2020/21	% Change
China, People's Rep of	317,299	-14.8%
South Korea	39,491	-20.7%
Vietnam	21,631	-9.0%
Taiwan	19,673	-17.1%
Japan	11,785	-32.9%

East Asia and Pacific

respective parties identify a best way forward for formalizing relationships. Partnership collaborations in EAP have included emphasis on climate change, sustainability and clean energy, indigenous research and knowledge sharing, emerging technologies, STEM, the arts, and joint training with foreign partners at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral level.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Students in EAP benefit from a wide range of government and private funding. Many of the government scholarships are based on merit and designed to support a small group of high-achieving students. Some require recipients to return to their home countries after graduation to work in the civil service. It is common for local government scholarships to stipulate at which U.S. higher education institutions scholarship funding may be used based on an assortment of rankings. EducationUSA encourages stakeholders in the region to promote the inclusion of more U.S. institutions based on accreditation status and program offerings rather than rankings.

Many ASEAN countries focus scholarship programs on developing skilled workforces to promote national priorities and educational goals. The Thai government provides more than 500 scholarships per year to Thai citizens under the [Office of Civil Service Commission](#) Royal Thai Government Scholarship Program. The Vietnamese government's [Project 89](#) finances about 300 master's and 7,300 doctoral degrees for Vietnamese lecturers at Vietnamese institutions and overseas. Over the past two years, the Indonesian government has piloted a wide range of new scholarship programs through the [Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan](#) (LPDP) program.

In September 2021, the Quad partners of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States announced the launch of the newly established [Quad Fellowship](#). Quad Fellows will receive a one-time award of USD\$50,000 to cover educational expenses, and the program will include additional fellowship benefits for selected students to focus on STEM degrees.

The [Australian-American Fulbright Program](#) is one of the largest Fulbright operations in the world,

with approximately 100 graduate scholarships distributed annually in prior years. Additional graduate scholarship opportunities for Australians to study in the United States include the [Ramsay Postgraduate Scholarships](#), the [American Australian Association Graduate Education Fund](#), and [General Sir John Monash Foundation](#) scholarships.

The [China Scholarship Council](#) offers government scholarships for Chinese and American students and faculty, and the People's Republic of China (PRC) government has increased efforts to attract foreign students to its own institutions by providing full scholarships and financial support to international students around the globe – especially from countries who further their Belt and Road Initiative.

The [Taiwan Ministry of Education](#) offers 140 scholarships for students pursuing graduate degrees (mostly doctoral level) in 92 subject areas. The scholarship ranges from USD\$32,000 to USD\$90,000 per person.

The Mongolian government's [Educational Loan Fund](#) supports high-achieving students who score among the top tier in the national college entrance examination.

In the Republic of Korea, the [Kwanjeong Educational Foundation](#) provides full scholarships for students pursuing degrees overseas up to USD\$60,000 per year for undergraduate students and USD\$20,000 to USD\$30,000 for graduate students. The [ILJU Academy and Culture Foundation](#) provides scholarships up to USD\$120,000 for students in doctoral programs. The [Korea Student Aid Foundation \(KOSAF\)](#) provides up to USD\$60,000 per year for students pursuing undergraduate degrees abroad.

Regional Economics and Market Demands

Tourism and tourism-related business have traditionally been a major economic driver of many Southeast Asian countries, especially Thailand. As technology-based industries and multinational companies become more prevalent in the region, countries have struggled to prepare workforces outside of the tourism and service sectors to meet the growing market demand. COVID-19 disruptions caused a decline in revenue for many tourism-dependent countries. Students

and parents who can afford overseas education are interested in cost-effective options that will guarantee a return on investment. ASEAN leaders want more graduates with specialized skills that can help alleviate the shortage of skilled laborers. Economic recovery from the devastating impact of COVID-19 will be a key priority for most EAP countries and governments, with a renewed focus on talent pool development.

The Oceania region is an emerging market that values U.S. degrees. Countries in the Pacific have been focusing on building infrastructure, strengthening education systems, and identifying ways to combat the effects of pollution, climate change, and natural disasters. Cybersecurity has become a major area of interest across Oceania, as recent upgrades to internet infrastructure in the Pacific have resulted in increased potential security risks. Students are interested in becoming experts in these fields to improve their professional prospects after graduation, and governments are interested in forging partnerships with leading institutions to initiate training in these fields. In New Zealand, many academic high achievers have shown interest in pursuing medicine or law degrees whether or not they want to actually practice. Students in Oceania are becoming more socially aware, further bolstering the growing demand for expertise in climate change issues, sustainability, human rights, and public health. STEM programs that specifically train students in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and quantum science are also popular.

Major contributors to the larger economies of Northeast Asia include manufacturing, the automobile industry, construction, and technology-based industries such as telecommunications, electronics, and semiconductors. Mining is particularly important in Mongolia. The pandemic severely impacted tourism in Northeast Asia, but the hospitality industry will likely make a comeback as COVID-19 mitigation measures are eased. An aging population has led to increased demand for support in the medical and health services sectors. In Mongolia, government capacity-building initiatives and financial support cover a wide variety of fields, including law and education. Government plans in Japan and Taiwan to expand English-language instruction may



be a boost for both intensive English and education-related programs. The Republic of Korea Ministry of Science and ICT has launched several initiatives, including the [Digital New Deal](#), which aims to develop a wide range of technologies to improve digital infrastructure and create new jobs. It has also announced an [action plan to foster talent in science and technology](#), which will include building educational programs, expanding opportunities for women in the workforce, and enhancing global exchanges.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

The EAP region hosts a wide range of events throughout the year. Most EducationUSA centers focused on virtual engagements from 2020 to 2022, but some centers are now open for in-person activities depending on local conditions. The EAP regional network

plans to resume in-person EducationUSA fairs beginning in October 2022. These may include a series of in-person fairs in countries with open borders, plus virtual options for other countries in EAP. Individual EducationUSA advising centers in EAP also run their own country fair events targeting niche markets such as community colleges, law schools, STEM, and business programs.

November is a prime time to collaborate with EducationUSA. In celebration of International Education Week and the release of the annual Open Doors report, the EducationUSA network collaborates with U.S. institutions on a wide range of programs and social media campaigns promoting U.S. higher education. In 2021, in addition to programs offered by individual EducationUSA centers, the EAP REACs organized a weeklong video showcase program including daily

highlight videos featuring different types of U.S. higher education institutions.

The EAP REACs organize biweekly training sessions on U.S. higher education topics for EducationUSA advisers from across the region. U.S. university representatives often join these sessions as guest speakers, engaging with multiple advising teams at once. These sessions often lead to further collaboration with individual advising centers.

The EAP REACs routinely organize virtual meet-and-greet events for U.S. higher education representatives and EducationUSA advising teams in the region. The March 2022 event included 14 EducationUSA teams and more than 80 U.S. higher education representatives engaging in lively conversations about regional trends, recruitment strategies, and ideas for collaboration.

East Asia and Pacific

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to the most recent *Open Doors* data. In AY 2019-2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. Declines in U.S. study abroad programming occurred primarily during spring and summer 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad programming in AY 2018-2019, decreased by 99 percent in AY 2019-2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to over 10,400 students.

According to 2021 *Open Doors* data, more than 24,059 U.S. students studied in the East Asia Pacific region in AY 2019-2020. Prior to March 2020, the most popular destinations included Australia, Japan, New Zealand, China, and the Republic of Korea. Australia was the top receiver of U.S. students in EAP with 8,252 students and the fifth largest in the world. In 2021 and 2022, there has been some rebound in study abroad demand; however, it will take some time for this rebound to be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

In 2021, U.S. embassies or consulates in Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Timor-Leste, New Zealand, Fiji, and Australia received multicountry Study Abroad Engagement Grants from the USA Study Abroad branch at the Department of State. The grants will be used to carry out capacity-building projects to support U.S. study abroad and develop a strong rebound for the field. In addition, the State Department's [IDEAS program](#) awarded grants to six U.S. HEIs to develop or diversify study abroad programming in China, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan. Study abroad in the region was also supported through the global Internationalization Post COVID-19 Webinar Series, which focused

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

EAP is accessible for student engagement opportunities year-round. Most U.S. higher education representatives will plan their own itinerary, set their own meetings with local stakeholders and schools, and plan to host a few key student recruitment events for the general public in target cities. Spring and fall are generally the best times to visit most EAP countries, but visiting recruiters should check with either an EducationUSA center or in-country contacts to ensure outreach plans are feasible. Guests should avoid lunar calendar holidays and religious and cultural events and remember to differentiate between local and international school academic calendars. In some countries, observed school holidays, term breaks, and student exam periods have shifted due to pandemic-related delays.

For planned virtual sessions, HEIs must operate within EAP time zones to better encourage student participation. For most U.S.-based colleagues, this means hosting sessions during the late evening or early morning hours in an attempt to reach prospective students when they are most available. EducationUSA centers in the EAP region may have longer waiting times than in other regions for HEIs to plan information sessions. For example, Vietnam has a two-month waiting period for information session requests. Countries like Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, and Singapore may be able to schedule information sessions in three weeks or less. The ability to honor requests to EducationUSA centers depends on team capacity and available virtual programming slots.

For in-person engagements, advising centers in EAP have begun to cautiously identify appropriate outreach opportunities, local events, and student programming. Most EAP centers continue to plan on virtual engagements, while anticipating a possible resumption of some in-person events starting in fall 2022.

Times to avoid travel:

Country calendars and U.S. embassy holiday calendars list major holiday seasons that may predict heavy travel, business closures, and fewer opportunities to meet prospective students and parents. HEIs may also wish to contact EducationUSA for information on exam or vacation schedules, which vary and sometimes change.

- The Lunar New Year holiday (based on the lunar calendar and holiday period varies by country) – January 22, 2023.
- New Year holiday in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand – Celebrations and cultural ceremonies typically last for three days, but are known to extend past a week in some locations.
- Ramadan (fasting month) and a vacation period afterward of approximately two weeks should be considered in countries with large or predominantly Muslim populations like Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia, among others.
- Chuseok or Autumn Festival holidays in the Republic of Korea, China, Taiwan, and other places that celebrate this holiday.
- Major exam periods for high school students across EAP – Undergraduate recruitment may be difficult before and during these periods. Exam schedules vary by country, so HEIs are encouraged to refer to fact sheets on the [EducationUSA website](#) and confirm ideal times to visit with EducationUSA advisers and local contacts.
- Winter holidays in East Asia – Advanced planning and promotion are necessary to ensure an audience during this period.
- In Australia and New Zealand, avoid mid-April (around Easter), early to mid-July, late September to early October, and late December to the end of January. These blocks of time mark the main school holidays.



on: indigenous exchange, educational exchange, and entrepreneurship in the Pacific; strategies for creating greater diversity, inclusion, and access in study abroad in Oceania; the impact of climate change on international education; and university partnership matching workshops to foster more diverse partnerships. Session recordings are available on the [International Student Exchange Program \(ISEP\)](#) website.

U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their departure from the United States so that they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students.

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2019/20	% Change
Australia	8,252	-22.6%
Japan	3,406	-61.9%
New Zealand	3,096	-26.9%
China, People's Rep of	2,481	-78.7%
South Korea	1,942	-57.4%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Singapore	969	1,064	9.8%
Australia	9,536	8,252	-13.5%
New Zealand	3,806	3,096	-18.7%
Philippines	460	303	-34.1%
Indonesia	597	369	-38.2%

Europe and Eurasia

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bermuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom

101

EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

35 Comprehensive
36 Standard
30 Reference

In Europe and Eurasia, EducationUSA centers are located at Fulbright Commissions, local nongovernmental organizations, universities and high schools, American Councils for International Education offices, binational centers, U.S. embassies and consulates, and American Spaces. EducationUSA offers advising programs in 46 countries and territories in the region and is staffed by 152 advisers across the region.

Regional Overview

As a region, Europe and Eurasia saw the largest drop in student mobility to the United States as reported in the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, a decrease of 24.3 percent from the previous year. Decreases from the top-sending countries such as the UK, Turkey, Germany, and Spain ranged from 14.5 percent to as high as 42 percent, resulting in large declines in student mobility for the region. Many students from these countries participate in exchange programs or non-degree programs. When institutions canceled in-person classes, students no longer had the option to participate in these programs, which have traditionally fostered student mobility between the region and the United States.

The number of graduate students coming to the United States from Europe and Eurasia also continues to decline. There was a 10.1 percent decrease over the past year, and the five- and 10-year trends show decreases of 18.4 percent and 28.7 percent respectively. The number of undergraduate students from Europe and Eurasia studying in the United States during the academic year (AY) 2020-2021 also decreased, but only by 15.4 percent. Some of these declines can be attributed

to ongoing population declines, access to shorter undergraduate and graduate degree options in the region, and more options at local and regional institutions for English-language academic programs in non-English speaking countries. However, the global pandemic proved to be the major driver of declines between the 2020 and 2021 *Open Doors* reports, in large part because short-term and non-degree program mobility dropped by 84.4 percent.

As travel resumes between the region and the United States, Western and Northern Europe will continue to be strong markets for short-term academic programs, many of which are facilitated through institutional partnerships. Institutions and governments in other parts of Europe and Eurasia are keen to develop linkages with the United States, especially in less traditional study abroad destinations across the region. EducationUSA advisers and their host institutions frequently offer training and workshops for local institutions on local post-secondary sectors and strategic partnerships.

With high vaccine rates and easy access to WHO-approved vaccines in most countries except Russia, students in Europe and Eurasia are expected to follow through with their plans to study in the United States. U.S. embassies have also resumed consular services in all countries except Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. The cost of flights has increased with rising fuel costs, and students now face higher Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fees than in previous admissions cycles.

After nearly two years of the pandemic, 2022 started with the promise of a return



An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>



to in-person programming. However, new challenges to U.S. student mobility arose in a number of countries. Even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many of the countries in Europe and Eurasia experienced, or expected to experience, significant domestic challenges caused by changes to local political and economic systems. In FY 2022, there will be 20 major elections in the region, some of which are highly competitive and will impact the political, social, and economic circumstances that influence student mobility. Additionally, competition for students between U.S. and international higher education institutions (HEIs) is increasing as many families face financial challenges caused by the pandemic and seek less expensive study opportunities.

The war in Ukraine has introduced new challenges to the region. Ukraine most acutely bears the burden of the war, with millions of displaced Ukrainians inside and outside the country, billions of dollars in damage to infrastructure, hospitals, and schools, and a loss of wages and closed businesses that impact the personal finances of families wishing to send their students to study abroad. Ukraine was one of the few countries in EUR with increasing student mobility prior to the global pandemic. The

consequences of this war will be felt for years after the fighting stops and Ukraine is able to rebuild. U.S. institutions that seek to recruit and/or retain Ukrainian students are providing them with additional assistance and support through financial aid, grants, on-campus work opportunities, and scholarships.

Countries in the rest of Europe and Eurasia, particularly those in the European Union (EU), share the burden of supporting millions of Ukrainian refugees, the majority of whom are in Poland. The EU has provided temporary status for Ukrainians for up to a year, allowing them to work, obtain medical care, and continue their education. Aside from the difficulties of securing financial resources to study in the United States, Ukrainians will face challenges in applying to U.S. institutions if they did not carry their academic credentials with them when they fled or were not able to complete their senior year in high school or a term as a university student. Many Ukrainian institutions have been destroyed and key personnel are displaced, so Ukrainian students likely will not be able to access their academic records or secure recommendation letters from instructors. The United States will continue to face competition from institutions in Europe that are responding quickly to

accommodate displaced Ukrainian and other international students in their countries.

Even as EducationUSA advising centers in many countries resume in-person advising in spring 2022, virtual outreach will continue to be a major priority for the region. Advisers offered virtual cohort programming throughout the pandemic, with programs receiving record numbers of applications in AY 2021-2022. The EducationUSA Competitive College Club (CCC) and Opportunity Funds programs continue to provide comprehensive support to students in Europe and Eurasia. CCCs are offered in 14 countries in the region and assist students in preparing for the admission process and U.S. classroom experience. The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program, serving high-achieving prospective students who demonstrate financial need, is available to citizens and officially recognized refugees in 10 countries and provides assistance to students who are academically gifted but unable to afford the initial costs of applying to and enrolling in accredited HEIs in the United States. Engaging with EducationUSA cohort programs is an excellent way to identify talented students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to U.S. study. Please contact

Europe and Eurasia



EducationUSA Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) for details on cohort programs in the region and guidance on how to leverage them.

Recent Trends

The past several years have been tumultuous for Europe and Eurasia, with significant events like BREXIT, the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in the Caucasus, the war in Ukraine, currency volatility (particularly in Turkey), and other events that are negatively impacting student mobility trends both within the region and to the United States. New programs to support international education, such as the UK's

Turing Scheme and the EU's Erasmus+ Program, are expanding in Europe. To successfully engage students during the recruitment process and attract them to U.S. campuses, it is important for U.S. HEIs to understand the shifting higher education landscape in the region and how it impacts student mobility.

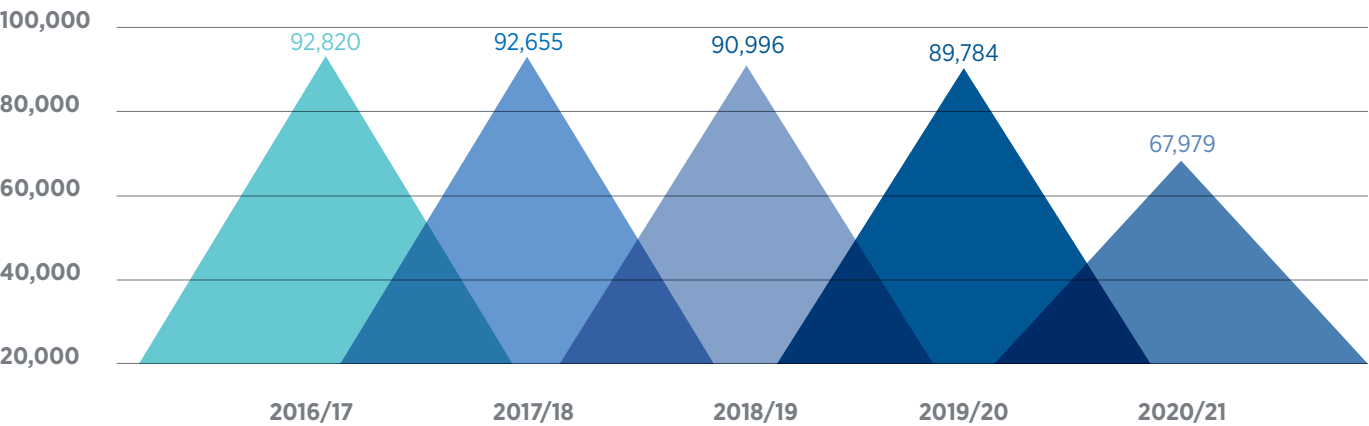
The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have deep and long-lasting implications across Europe and Eurasia. Although restrictions are relaxing, uncertainty persists about whether restrictions will be put back in place, whether vaccination travel requirements will continue or be lifted, and/or how student attitudes

toward study in the United States may shift. Economic challenges resulting from the pandemic may also result in fewer public and private financial resources to support study abroad, including personal funds. The pandemic has pushed learners, educators, and institutions to embrace technology and online programs, and modalities such as Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) may become increasingly prominent moving forward.

Perceptions about the cost of studying in the United States remain a challenge, especially given the prevalence of high-quality, lower-cost academic programs across Europe. Additionally, Erasmus+ programs provide robust support for study abroad closer to home, although European students may apply some support from that program to study in the United States. U.S. institutions with EU institutional partners should reach out to them for more information on these opportunities. Inflation and currency volatility will also contribute to economic uncertainty, in the short term at least, and should be factored into institutions' recruitment strategies.

EducationUSA advisers in the region report growing interest in study abroad in countries other than the United States. China, for example, continues to strengthen its recruitment of students from Europe and Eurasia and is offering increasing numbers of scholarships while also establishing

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



a post-secondary school presence in the region. Increased competition with China and other top-sending countries in Asia will make Europe and Eurasia an essential recruitment destination for U.S. institutions in the years to come. The impact of BREXIT as it relates to international education and student mobility is also coming into clearer focus. In 2022, the UK achieved its goal of 600,000 international students, 10 years earlier than expected, according to the UK's higher education statistics agency. It is not yet clear whether this rate will remain stable or whether the UK's withdrawal from the EU's Erasmus+ program will eventually result in a decline in student mobility.

Demographics over the past five years vary across the region, with some countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, facing significant declines in the number of young people aged 15 to 24. Meanwhile, Turkey, the third-most populous country in the region, is home to a rapidly increasing number of people in this age group. Populations, including college-age young people, in other countries have stabilized and have even grown in Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. This could be due to more programs offered in English, which attract students from other parts of Europe who may later choose to remain in those countries, large immigrant and refugee populations, and other factors.

Students in the region commonly study and achieve high levels of proficiency in English. Spain has made an effort to increase students' English-language proficiency by expanding bilingual education programs in primary and secondary schools. Mobility to countries where students' native languages are spoken remains appealing to some students, as well, such as French students who choose to study abroad in Quebec, students from Francophone Africa who study in France, and Spanish students who study in Latin America. Argentina, for example, is the largest recipient of Spanish students from the region.

There are large scholarship programs for secondary-level students, including the Department of State's Future Leaders Exchange Program (FLEX) that serves students primarily from former Soviet countries and some countries in Central

Europe. Other sponsored programs include the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange & Study (YES) program in several countries in the Balkans, the Amancio Ortega Foundation in Spain, and the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) program for German students. Countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Luxembourg offer national financial aid programs that are portable to cover the cost to study in the United States. These programs will continue to influence student mobility trends at the postsecondary level throughout the region.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available [on the EducationUSA website](#).

1. [Turkey](#)
2. [United Kingdom](#)
3. [Spain](#)
4. [France](#)
5. [Germany](#)
6. [Italy](#)
7. [Russia](#)
8. [Greece](#)
9. [Sweden](#)
10. [Netherlands](#)

In addition to these top-sending countries, HEIs should consider the following locations in their recruitment plans.

Azerbaijan. Student mobility from Azerbaijan remained resilient even with the additional challenges of the global pandemic. While the overall decline was just 2.6 percent, or 15 total students, the number of undergraduate students increased by 6 percent. The areas for decline follow global trends, with a 4.3 percent decrease in graduate students and a 62.8 percent decrease in students participating in non-degree programs. With an increasing youth population and talks of relaunching a government scholarship, Azerbaijan will continue to be a growing market for U.S. higher education. Colleges and universities in Azerbaijan are eager to develop institutional partnerships to establish dual degree programs and short-term exchange options for students and faculty.

Czechia. EducationUSA has expanded its presence in Czechia to include a new

reference advising center in the university city of Ústí nad Labem. In 2022, the American Corner network in the country also grew with a new American Space in Olomouc. Engagement with students in Prague and other cities has grown in the past two years via an active Instagram account, virtual webinars, library of digital materials and video content, and ongoing advising activities. Interaction with local teachers and guidance counselors through Czechia's extensive Fulbright English Teaching Assistant program and alumni network, as well as the establishment of a Czech Advisors Network, have further supported these efforts.

Ireland. The EducationUSA advising center in Ireland is based in the Fulbright Commission's new offices in Dublin. Students and representatives of U.S. institutions can book an appointment for consultations or to access resources online through educationusa@fulbright.ie. Interest in international study is high among Irish students. Many wish to undertake degree programs abroad or complete part of their degrees through exchanges. The Irish Times Higher Options event takes place in Dublin every September. In 2022, it will run September 21-23. Around 7,500 students attend each day to learn more about third-level options. There are usually around 150 exhibitors, comprised of Irish, European, UK, and international universities, along with admissions bodies and information stands. Contact the EducationUSA advising center for more information about this event or about other ways to engage with students and institutions in Ireland.

Serbia. The EducationUSA advising center in Serbia is based in the International Academic Center (IAC) offices in Belgrade. The recent graduation of the first class of Serbian public high school students to complete the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) was a major educational event in Serbia. These students graduate having completed the first two years of the classical public gimnazija program of 12 to 15 required subjects each school year, topped off with two years of the IBDP program. In addition, Serbian public universities continue to grow their English-language instruction programs with international departments that are

Europe and Eurasia

prepared to join university partnership programs such as those supported by the U.S. embassy in Belgrade. Banner events for U.S. higher education professionals are the Southeastern Europe fair tour, which features nine countries from the Balkans, and EducationUSA's Europe and Eurasian Forum, which will take place in Belgrade September 19-21, 2022.

What to expect in the Next Three to Five Years

Europe and Eurasia will feel the consequences of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine for some time. The war in Ukraine is likely to negatively impact the economic situation for many families across the region. This may decrease students' ability to pay for study in the United States, but at the same time it may increase students' desire to find other countries in which to study and work. Due to the war, currency fluctuation and higher fuel prices are new concerns, even in countries that have a stable economy, such as Germany. Other EU countries, like Hungary, have suffered significant devaluation of their national currency, which will likely make it more difficult for students to pursue studies abroad.

Joint degree programs and other forms of virtual collaboration create opportunities to revive institutional partnerships. Some Balkan countries, like Serbia and Montenegro, now have a strong focus on building these partnerships. Institutional partnerships in Serbia will most likely have a strong bearing on student mobility to the United States. First, public universities in Serbia are rapidly moving

forward with full degree programs in English and are prepared to host student and faculty exchanges. These exchange experiences will likely have a multiplier effect in terms of students and families becoming more aware of the value of the U.S. higher education experience at all levels. In Luxembourg, the University of Luxembourg is expanding mobility options to include additional programs in the United States, specifically between Luxembourg and Wisconsin. More and more students and French institutions are looking for joint degrees (Franco-American degrees) so that their U.S. degree is recognized in France and in the United States.

The Flemish government recently announced a new scholarship that will provide funding for Belgian students from the Dutch-speaking region of Flanders to pursue graduate study abroad, including in the United States. The United States remains a popular destination for short-term exchanges for countries in Western and Northern Europe. Unfortunately, a limited number of institutional partnerships with U.S. colleges and universities means that only a small number of students can travel to the United States. An increase in institutional partnerships could lead to a massive increase in student mobility.

UK universities are keen to demonstrate their international outlook in the wake of Brexit, and study abroad options continue to be a way that they can distinguish themselves, especially given the competitive domestic landscape.

The focus on the Turing Scheme may also increase mobility, particularly where exchange agreements mean that the UK student is paying UK fees to their UK institution. Furthermore, the UK's birth rate increased in the mid-00s, which may lead to an increase in students interested in U.S. study who are finding it trickier to find places at UK universities.

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

Social media engagement and virtual programming continue to be major components of EducationUSA outreach and advising, and their importance will continue even as centers resume in-person activities. Lessons learned during the pandemic remain in force – sessions that are shorter and interactive are the most popular, as are those that feature alumni, insights into the admissions process, and workshops on practical skills.

Facebook and Instagram are the most commonly used platforms for EducationUSA Europe and Eurasia, though advisers in the region have noted that Facebook's popularity is waning, especially among younger audiences. EducationUSA advisers use a variety of other platforms to engage students. For direct communication with students, the most common platforms include WhatsApp, Viber, and Telegram. Discord and TikTok are popular with younger audiences, though their use has not been officially adopted in the EducationUSA network. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet are used frequently for webinars. As of April 2022, all social

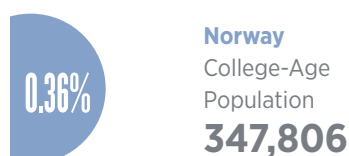
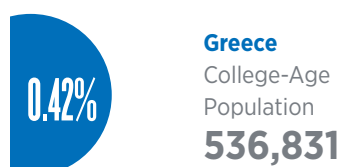
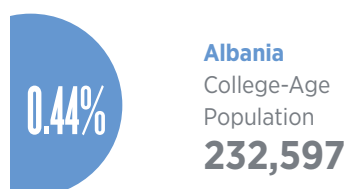
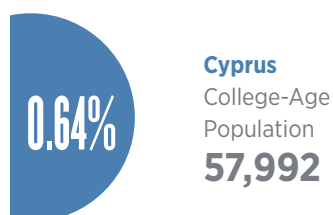
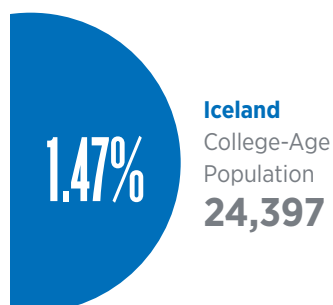
Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2016/17	2020/21	% Change
Azerbaijan	386	556	44.0%
Albania	781	1,053	34.8%
Montenegro	101	121	19.8%
Armenia	280	318	13.6%
Belarus	319	356	11.6%

44.0%

Azerbaijan has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years (with over 100 students)

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

media platforms are banned in Russia except for VKontakte or others created in Russia.

Effective virtual and social media engagement should include student success stories, student-led Facebook and Instagram live events, Instagram takeovers by students studying in the United States, information about scholarship opportunities, and Optional Practical Training (OPT). The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies in much of the region and governs the collection and storage of personal data gathered through engagement on virtual and social media platforms. Non-EU countries also have restrictive privacy laws, so U.S. institutions should review these rules and requirements when engaging. Virtual and social media practices vary across the region. EducationUSA advisers can recommend the most effective platforms for reaching students and can provide instructions for sharing social media content or scheduling virtual events.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- After two years of the pandemic, in-person events are resuming throughout the region, and vaccination and booster rates are generally high. A series of in-person events is planned for fall 2022, including the European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference and exhibition in Barcelona, Spain; the EUR Regional Forum in Belgrade, Serbia; and a suite of recruitment fairs. In-person engagement remains a critical component in a successful recruitment strategy for the region, and U.S. HEI representatives should visit the region when possible. As always, the U.S. Department of State provides [information and travel advisories](#) to make informed decisions about traveling to the region.

- EducationUSA advising centers in Europe and Eurasia have a robust social media presence and have the capacity to host virtual events. Due to increased demand, and to maintain audience engagement, advisers often collaborate to host regional events. U.S. HEI representatives should contact REACs to learn more about participating in these multicountry, virtual programs. REACs can representatives to a sign-up sheet on which to indicate interest and

ability to present on specific topics, such as sports scholarships or graduate admissions.

- U.S. HEIs should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach, and should tailor outreach to the locations in which they have prioritized recruitment. In an age of information overload, students and advising centers are less interested in PDF or hardcopy versions of "look books" or brochures. Social media content is most effective and should include short summaries, URLs, video links, and hashtags. Alumni profiles, social media takeovers, and scholarship information are also particularly useful in engaging prospective students. U.S. HEIs are encouraged to develop their own social media influencers among students, alumni, and faculty to help promote the institution and the United States as a study destination.
- Holistic messaging focused on an institution's return on investment and the variety of programming offered (regardless of duration) is particularly effective for students in the region. Marketing materials should feature alumni and demonstrate the ways in which their career paths were informed by their experiences at the institution. As applicable, institutions are also encouraged to highlight steps they are taking to simplify the application process for international students, such as waiving application fees or offering test-optional policies. High school students and parents continue to express trepidation about test-optional admission policies and how they are implemented on campus, so HEIs are encouraged to clearly articulate any flexibilities in their admissions process.

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2020/21	% Change
Turkey	8,109	-14.5%
United Kingdom	8,028	-25.4%
Spain	5,781	-27.3%
France	5,643	-33.4%
Germany	5,364	-42.0%

Europe and Eurasia



U.S. institutions can also benefit from sharing ways that international students can earn and/or save money while on U.S. campuses, including on-campus work, teaching or research assistantships or fellowships, and by leveraging student discounts. Institutions are encouraged to promote 2+2 transfer agreements between community colleges and universities and short-term programs, including certificate-bearing programs. Consult with advisers to determine which types of programs to promote to students in different countries.

- Students and parents may be apprehensive about traveling to the United States due to media coverage of openly debated social and political issues and general safety concerns, including gun violence. U.S. HEIs should

be transparent and candid about how their campus addresses these issues to ensure the safety and well-being of all students (including COVID-19 related safety protocols). For example, it can be helpful to highlight text and email alert systems that your institution employs.

Institutional Partnerships

A growing number of countries in Europe and Eurasia are investing in partnerships that support educational mobility and exchange for students and faculty. In addition to economic pressures and rapid technology changes stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, several countries in Southern and Eastern Europe are concerned about “brain drain,” prompting governments to invest in short-term exchange programs that will make students more competitive in the local job

market upon their return. Other countries in the region, such as Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Luxembourg, allow students to apply support from their respective public financial aid programs to the cost of studying in the United States, especially for short-term experiences including exchanges.

EducationUSA is uniquely positioned to facilitate engagement between U.S. institutions and HEIs in the region. U.S. HEIs are encouraged to be mindful that saving significant sums for education-related costs is not part of the culture in most countries in the region, or not possible because of socioeconomic factors. Directly addressing those considerations with institutional partners will help improve engagement. Virtual and hybrid partnership configurations – like Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) models – are becoming increasingly common in countries like Armenia, Serbia, and others.

Credit transfer continues to be a major concern for institutions in the region. European and Eurasian HEIs are advocating for simpler and more flexible reciprocity regulations. Some countries continue to pursue transfer agreements for students in three-year bachelor’s degree programs to attend their senior year in the United States and obtain a U.S. undergraduate degree. In some countries, like the Netherlands and Kosovo, international exchanges are increasingly woven into higher education curriculum.

Fulbright Commissions in Europe and Eurasia are enhancing their programs to initiate mobility collaboration with local institutions. Individual connections between research groups and faculty can be the best strategy to develop long-term partnerships that include student exchange agreements and tuition waivers. Czech universities in particular have been actively internationalizing, thanks in part to support from Fulbright capacity-building programs and the Czech National Agency for International Education and Research. Other successful examples include the Transatlantic Mobility Program in France and the Fulbright International Education Administrators Program.

When identifying prospective partners, consider institutions that may have been left out of the institutional partnerships

arena, including institutions that offer a number of professionally oriented bachelor's degrees. In some cases, there are also unique opportunities for larger-scale partnerships, such as the regional higher education initiative between the U.S. state of Georgia and Bavaria. EducationUSA advisers and U.S. embassies and consulates can advise U.S. institutions on potential partnership opportunities. A variety of new partnerships are also taking shape. The European University Alliance for Global Health (EUGLOH), for example, brings together five European universities, including one from Szeged, Hungary. This alliance aims to create a joint degree issued by all partner institutions, allowing students to attend any university in the agreement.

The Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) is active in the region, and education is a primary focus in some countries, such as Austria, Bulgaria, France, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey. FCS can offer matching programs to help identify prospective local higher education partners or organize U.S. pavilions at some of the largest higher education fairs in the region. Advisers are well-apprised of partnership-related resources that might exist in their respective countries. A national organization in Germany, for example, maintains a countrywide, searchable database of institutional partners, as does Poland with its Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) initiatives. U.S. HEIs can also receive support from the Erasmus+ program, and should engage directly with EU institutional partners for details. It is essential that partnerships be actively managed. There should be regular check-ins between partners about needs and opportunities.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

All 46 countries in Europe and Eurasia offer Fulbright awards for students and scholars. For more information, please visit each country's EducationUSA advising center website.

Erasmus+. Erasmus+ provides a wide range of opportunities to students, educators, and administrators. Visit the [Erasmus+ website](#) to learn more. Signature initiatives include Jean Monnet Actions, Horizon 2020, and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships. All EU countries have Erasmus+ program administrators that can provide additional information

about how U.S. HEIs can engage with these programs.

Albania. The Albanian-American Development Foundation fully funds master's degrees for selected fields of study.

Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani government intends to reopen scholarship opportunities for citizens to study in undergraduate and graduate programs abroad. Relevant updates will be shared on the global EducationUSA website when an official announcement is made.

Armenia. More than 15 private foundations provide scholarships for Armenians to study in the United States. Details are provided on the [EducationUSA Armenia website](#).

Austria. The Marietta Blau Grant is available for doctoral students, and the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education, Science and

Research offers additional support that can be accessed through a [comprehensive grant database](#).

Baltic-American Freedom Foundation.

The Baltic-American Freedom Foundation provides scholarships to citizens of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to support participation in research and internships in the United States that are focused on economic growth and democratic processes. Awards range from USD\$30,000 to USD\$60,000.

Belgium. The Belgian American Educational Foundation provides scholarships for graduate studies, the Fernand Lazard Foundation offers interest-free loans, and the National Research Foundations support doctoral studies. Starting in 2022, a new program will provide up to 2 million euros in scholarships for 20 to 30 graduate students from Flanders to study in the United States and other countries.

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2019/20	% Change
Spain	19,792	-41.5%
Italy	19,731	-49.5%
United Kingdom	19,147	-51.4%
France	8,528	-53.8%
Ireland	4,712	-60.0%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Cyprus	125	148	18.4%
Portugal	523	528	1.0%
Finland	396	328	-17.2%
Hungary	1,086	815	-25.0%
Luxembourg	334	230	-31.1%

Europe and Eurasia



Bermuda. Bermuda has a [comprehensive website](#) that provides information on all private and government-funded opportunities.

Croatia. U.S. Mobility Micro-Grants cover up to USD\$500 for application costs to U.S. universities (for bachelor's and master's programs). The [Bepina Sabalic Kunin Endowed Scholarship Fund](#) at Georgetown University supports graduate and professional education. The [Zlatko i Joyce Baloković Scholarship Fund](#) supports graduate education. Additional details on scholarships are available on the EducationUSA Croatia center website.

Czechia. Several private foundations offer scholarships for study abroad: Bakala Foundation, the Kellner Family Foundation University Scholarship, the Scholar Foundation, and the Krsek Foundation. Amounts vary, but all programs provide as much as USD\$30,000.

Denmark. The State Educational Grant and Loan Scheme supports study abroad, and Scandinavia Grants provide support to Danish students at the graduate and postgraduate levels up to USD\$20,000.

American Scandinavian Foundation supports graduate and postgraduate students with awards ranging from USD\$2,500 to USD\$10,000.

France. The French government gives financial aid to students for exchange programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Depending on the regional government, students can receive around 400 euros per month. The Monahan Foundation provides funding up to approximately USD\$50,000 for master's or doctoral degrees in STEM fields.

Finland. The League of Finnish-American Societies (SAM) provides funding for doctoral students. The Finnish government also supports study abroad, up to USD\$490 per month as a living allowance and USD\$860 per month for academic expenses.

Georgia. The Georgian government's Center for International Education awards study abroad scholarships to Georgian citizens pursuing master's and doctoral studies overseas. The number of scholarships and funding levels vary from year to year. Students studying in

the United States are typically eligible for scholarships in the range of USD\$20,000 to USD\$40,000.

Germany. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provides scholarships for non-degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Arnold Heidsieck Scholarship covers one year of undergraduate studies in the humanities. The Foundation of German-American Clubs provides 30 scholarships each year that cover most fields of study. Baden-Wuerttemberg scholarships provide support for students at universities in that German state.

Greece. Greece offers scholarship support for U.S. study at the graduate level only. Additional details on scholarships are available on the [EducationUSA Greece website](#).

Hungary. The government of Hungary offers the Stipendium Peregrinum to support undergraduate or graduate studies abroad. The [Hungary Foundation](#) provides full funding and living stipends for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as internships. Additional details

on scholarships are available on the EducationUSA Hungary center website.

Iceland. [Fara Bara](#) posts general information about studying abroad. The Thor Thors program awards scholarship funding ranging from USD\$2,000 to USD\$5,000 for graduate studies. The Leifur Eiriksson Foundation awards USD\$25,000 for graduate studies.

Ireland. The Irish Research Council provides support to researchers across all disciplines. George Moore Scholarships provide comprehensive support to students in master's programs.

Italy. The Fulbright Commission and the Zegna Foundation provide full scholarships to economically disadvantaged graduate students.

Kosovo. The [Kosovo American Education Fund](#) (KAEF) is dedicated to the long-term economic development of Kosovo through the education of its people. KAEF provides up to eight graduate fellowships per year for degrees at select U.S. universities.

Lithuania. The Lithuanian government's Next 100 program (Kitas 100) provides funding to students applying to, or already studying at, select institutions around the world. Scholarships cover up to four years of study, with a maximum funding level of approximately USD\$22,500 per year.

Luxembourg. The Information and Documentation Centre for Higher Education (CEDIES) has changed the name of its financial funding office to [MengStudien.lu](#) and has a new online application and processing platform. Residents can receive from USD\$5,000 to USD\$14,000, provided in the form of grants and minimal-interest loans with generous repayment provisions.

Montenegro. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport provides scholarships for a limited number of graduate students in the fields of science and math, technology, medicine, agriculture, social sciences, and humanities. The scholarships amount to 500 euros per month.

North Macedonia. The [Ministry of Education and Science](#) awards academic scholarships of up to USD\$40,000 per year to support study in a limited number of fields. Additional details on scholarships are available on the EducationUSA North Macedonia center website.

Netherlands. Low-interest loans are available through the government's Dienst Uitroering Onderwijs (DUO) program. KHMW-Eizenga scholarships provide up to USD\$50,000 to pursue a degree in economics or a Master of Business Administration (MBA). The Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, VSB-fonds, and Vrijvrouwe van Renswoude foundations also provide support for graduate students.

Norway. Lånekassen provides non-merit-based financial aid for Norwegian students through a loan and grant package for full-time academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Poland. The [National Science Centre of Poland](#) offers funding for pre-doctoral and doctoral students. The [Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange](#) supports research at the doctoral, post-doctoral, and experienced researcher levels. The [Kosciuszko Foundation](#) provides support for Polish nationals to pursue research or study in the United States. The Visiting Research Graduate Traineeship Program ([BioLab](#)) offers research traineeships to graduate students in the biomedical sciences.

Serbia. The Ministry of Youth and Sports awards graduate scholarships and scholarships for designated performing arts schools around the world. The funding is as much as USD\$11,000 per year.

Slovenia. The [Ad futura Scholarship for Study Abroad](#) offers students as much as USD\$33,000 annually for the duration of their academic program. This scholarship program funds undergraduate studies in STEM fields or graduate studies in all fields except the fine and performing arts.

Slovakia. The Martin Filko Scholarship supports graduate study in economics, mathematics, statistics, and public policy. The [Tatra Banka Foundation](#) offers grants at all academic levels. The maximum

funding amount is 5,000 euros per student to support IT projects.

Spain. La Caixa, Rafael del Pino, and Fundación Ramón Areces all provide support for graduate studies. The Banco de España provides grants of up to USD\$29,000 to support graduate-level study in economics.

Sweden. The Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN) is the government's academic financial aid program. It provides grants and low-interest loans covering tuition, fees, and living expenses.

Switzerland. The [Swiss Benevolent Society of New York](#) offers the Medicus Student Exchange Program, the Sonja Streuli Maguire Outstanding Scholastic Achievement Award, and the Swiss Benevolent Pellegrini Scholarship. Students can apply for stipends and loans to support semester- or year-long study abroad.

Turkey. The Turkish Ministry of Education offers scholarships supporting graduate-level study at select institutions around the world. The [Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey](#) offers scholarship funding for doctoral-level study. The [Turkish Educational Foundation](#) offers scholarships supporting master's-level study in select fields. All three of these funding sources provide transportation, health insurance, tuition, and living expenses.

United Kingdom. The [Sutton Trust Programme](#) supports economically disadvantaged students with outstanding academic qualifications who aspire to study at U.S. colleges and universities. The [British Universities North America Club](#) (BUNAC) provides support in the form of partial scholarships for British students applying to graduate programs in the United States.

Ukraine. [WorldWideStudies](#) provides up to USD\$50,000 to cover tuition, books and materials, and health insurance for students in master's degree programs. Priority fields include agriculture, environmental studies, ecology, law and public administration, alternative energy, and aerospace engineering.

Europe and Eurasia

Regional Economics and Market Demands

The Europe and Eurasia region has been hit hard by the pandemic. As in other regions, Europe and Eurasia have seen a rise in the need for medical personnel and those skilled in technical fields such as IT and engineering. Italy is at the forefront of a radical reshaping of its medical community-based services, in which e-health will play a pivotal role. This is thanks to a large national and European funding campaign that started during the pandemic. The goal is to use e-health strategies in a redesigned health-care provision system to meet specific patient needs. This creates new educational needs: specialized health services, such as nursing, rehabilitation, and social support; data and software management; and device conception and operationalization. Health care and personal care for children and the elderly is a priority for France and Portugal, as well. Slovenia is in need of specialists in family medicine. Belgium and Greece also face a lack of qualified health-care workers, increasing the need for trained doctors, nurses, and technicians.

In some countries in the region, such as North Macedonia, there is a dearth of STEM professionals. The country's labor market lacks high-school graduated professionals in the fields of biology, chemistry, and other sciences with manual scopes of work. STEM is on the margin in Slovakia, as well. Many students lack a deep knowledge of mathematics, reasoning, and logical deduction. In Spain, there is a need for more investment in vocational programs as opposed to traditional higher education. In addition, there is an emphasis on continuing studies and academic opportunities to help professionals who are already working in their fields level up with university degrees. In the UK, there is a policy focus on technical skills, which includes reform of **post-16 qualifications** and new **training routes into careers**.

The IT sector continues to grow in Armenia. The biggest gap in the workforce for IT is in leadership and management. Both agriculture and hospitality have been identified as key areas to grow in the next five to 10 years. Research in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning is a priority for the Armenian government.

For many countries in Europe and Eurasia, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Poland, Russia, and Latvia, the most in-demand professions are in the field of construction and construction engineering. The war in Ukraine will further increase the need for qualified workers in this field.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

The Europe and Eurasia region offers a wide variety of opportunities for HEI engagement, and advisers plan events throughout the year. Visit the **EducationUSA website** to find information about upcoming fairs, webinars, conferences, and other activities. The events listed below are hosted by EducationUSA or are EducationUSA-organized pavilions at national fairs. EducationUSA advisers can share a full list of commercial fair offerings through which U.S. institutions can reach target audiences.

EducationUSA will host a full U.S. pavilion at the 2022 **European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference** in Barcelona, Spain, from September 13-16. U.S. HEIs report that exhibiting at the EducationUSA pavilion leads to an increase in their institution's visibility, more students from Europe on their campuses, and an increase in exchange-related income for their institutions. Contact REAC Assistant **Eleonora Kolomiets** for more information.

The **EducationUSA Europe and Eurasia Regional Forum** will take place immediately after EAIE, September 19-21 in Belgrade, Serbia. Advisers from across the region are expected to attend. This event is an excellent opportunity to gather in-depth information about trends in the region and network with U.S. government colleagues and local higher education counterparts. This regional forum will also offer specialized conference workshops and opportunities for U.S. HEIs to represent their institutions at a student recruitment fair.

The **Annual EducationUSA Eurasia and Central Asia Tour** takes place in October. For updates, visit the **"Find an Event"** page on the EducationUSA website.

The **Annual EducationUSA European LLM Tour** takes place in November. For

updates, visit the **"Find an Event"** page on the EducationUSA website.

The **10th Annual Virtual EducationUSA Southeastern Europe Tour** is scheduled for June 15. The tour will include a student recruitment fair with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Sign up to receive the EducationUSA monthly newsletter on Europe and Eurasia to keep abreast of recruiting events planned in the region, as well as information about emerging trends. These events will also be shared via the Global EducationUSA HEI newsletter.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to the most recent *Open Doors* data. In AY 2019-2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. U.S. study abroad programming declined primarily during spring and summer 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad programming in AY 2018-2019, decreased by 99 percent in AY 2019-2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to over 10,400 students.

According to 2021 *Open Doors* data, in AY 2019-2020, Europe and Eurasia hosted over 90,000 U.S. students, accounting for more than half of all U.S. study abroad. The top five destinations globally were Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia. Other European countries in the top 25 worldwide include Ireland, Germany, Denmark, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Greece, and Austria. In 2021 and 2022, there has been some rebound of study abroad demand in Europe; however, it will take some time



before this rebound will be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

In 2021, U.S. embassies, consulates, or Fulbright Commissions in Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Ukraine received U.S. Study Abroad Engagement Grants from the USA Study Abroad Branch at the U.S. Department of State. The grants will be used to carry out capacity-building projects to support U.S. study abroad in the region. In addition, the State Department's [IDEAS program](#) awarded grants to six U.S. HEIs to develop or diversify study abroad programming in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

EducationUSA centers have collaborated with local universities, embassies, and Fulbright Commissions to support these initiatives. U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA

programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their departure from the United States so that they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other

events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students. A growing number of Virtual Student Federal Service (VSFS) interns have been assisting advisers in Europe and Eurasia with their virtual programs. More than 20 countries in the region work with U.S. VSFS interns to diversify their advising services.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

In general, the best times to interact with students are from September to November and February to May. Avoid recruitment travel or virtual programming in July and August, or over the Christmas, New Year, and Easter holidays. Please note that Christmas and Easter are observed according to the Roman and Eastern Orthodox calendars, so the dates of these holidays may differ by country. Advisers in each country can advise on national holidays and other factors, such as examination dates, that might affect students' ability to attend events. As always, institutions should check with EducationUSA advisers in the country they want to visit before making any travel or virtual outreach plans.

Middle East and North Africa

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

27

EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

17 Comprehensive
9 Standard
1 Reference

EducationUSA advising centers in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are located at U.S. embassies and consulates; America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST) offices; American Centers; and a World Learning center in Algeria. Although all centers currently offer virtual advising, EducationUSA advising centers for Iran, Libya, Syria, and Yemen are 100% virtual operations. The region includes 27 centers (17 comprehensive, nine standard, and one reference) in 19 countries and territories with 30 advisers who provide up-to-date services and programming.

EducationUSA advisers across MENA provide expertise, support, and information about local higher education systems and the broader post-secondary sector landscape in the region. In addition to advising students and college counselors, EducationUSA centers offer U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs) and governmental partners opportunities to engage student audiences through tailored programs and activities that support increased student mobility. Gulf countries such as Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) offer government scholarship programs to their citizens. EducationUSA advisers maintain contact with scholarship offices to connect them with prospective HEI partners' students interested in U.S. study.

MENA is a dynamic and complex region divided into three subregions: North Africa, the Levant, and the Gulf. Students

across North Africa have historically chosen study options in Europe, while many countries in the Gulf are striving to expand capacity and retain domestic students. Newly developed higher education options are likely to attract some MENA students.

EducationUSA advisers in the MENA region are working in an environment of frequent change and opportunity. Despite a decade of overall population growth, the *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange* indicates a 20.4 percent decrease in students from the region studying in the United States during the academic year (AY) 2020-2021 compared to the previous year. This is the fifth consecutive year of decline in the number of students from the region, with Iraq (-20.2 percent), Libya (-21.8 percent), Qatar (-16.1 percent), Saudi Arabia (-29.2 percent), and the UAE (-16.2 percent) all decreasing as a result of scaled-back government scholarship programs, recent changes in mandatory military service requirements, growing higher education options in the region, and increased competition from other countries. After a decade of consistent growth, student numbers from Kuwait have also dropped for the third year in a row (-18.3 percent). Student mobility from the following locations also declined: Egypt (-4.8 percent), Lebanon (-0.5 percent), Morocco (-13.7 percent), the Palestinian Territories (-11.3 percent), Algeria (-8.4 percent), Bahrain (-10.8 percent), Israel (-17.2 percent), Jordan

An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>



(-4.2 percent), Syria (-8.2 percent), and Yemen (-8.4 percent).

The region boasts many EducationUSA Competitive College Clubs (CCCs) through which advisers meet regularly with highly motivated and engaged high school students to prepare them for study on U.S. campuses and guide them through the college application process. Advisers support students in identifying their best institutional fit by exploring their academic, cultural, geographic, and financial needs and preferences. CCC activities include community service projects, book clubs, virtual programs, lectures from guest speakers, test preparation activities, and information sessions on the application process. All CCCs foster student leadership skills. EducationUSA advising centers in Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia currently manage CCC programs. The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program, serving high-achieving prospective students who demonstrate financial need, operates at advising centers in Egypt and Lebanon.

EducationUSA advising centers in MENA conduct strategic outreach in

collaboration with public affairs and consular sections of U.S. embassies and consulates. Half of the advising centers in MENA are based at an embassy or consulate and are located within the public affairs sections. Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) and EducationUSA advisers hold regular education briefings and webinars for U.S. HEIs about local educational systems, trends, opportunities, and recruitment strategies.

Regional Overview

The United States remains a top higher education destination for students from MENA, despite recent declines in the overall number of students from the MENA region enrolled at U.S. institutions. The decline in enrollment is partly due to economic pressures, currency devaluation, and the rise in locally and regionally available options. Some governments have also narrowed the lists of approved institutions or areas of study for scholarship programs. For example, Saudi Arabia's Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Program eliminated phase three of its award, which included an elite scholarship. Kuwait eliminated dentistry and pharmacy scholarship

programs to the United States. However, scholarship opportunities remain available to many students in the region and are designed to support emerging labor market demands.

Local and regional institutions are attractive to students across the region because of their cost, location, and partnerships with international institutions, especially given travel challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Opportunities for growth in student numbers from MENA depend partly on labor market demands driving the need for specialized training not available in the region. The growth of online study opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic has created interest in hybrid programs, online degrees, and partnerships between U.S. and regional institutions. The future of online higher education will continue to influence students' study abroad plans and preferred coursework modalities. Beyond the pandemic, recognition of online coursework and online degrees is unclear in countries that require degree attestation. Countries that successfully leverage digital education will likely see more opportunities to attract and retain international students in the years to come.

Middle East and North Africa

Over the past decade, MENA has experienced one of the highest population growth rates of any region in the world. Demand for postsecondary education far exceeds the capacity of local universities in many countries. In addition, variability in the quality of higher education systems leaves some students without local options to develop the skills necessary to enter competitive labor markets at home. Science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) fields are in high demand, and there is growing interest in health fields, including medicine, health sciences, and public health. Students in North Africa and the Levant are increasingly interested in exploring the benefits of community colleges, including lower costs, transfer flexibilities, and limited standardized test requirements. Students in Gulf countries are largely interested in studies in aeronautics, cybersecurity, tourism, antiquities, and a broad range of medical fields.

Most countries in the region have engaged with the U.S. government and U.S. colleges and universities to expand local higher education capacity through institutional linkages. Many universities in the Gulf are interested in collaborating with U.S.-educated faculty to develop institutional capacity and are eager to connect with U.S. institutions for joint research and teaching opportunities. Although students in the Gulf region have adequate access to universities in their home countries, they are also interested in U.S. study, particularly at the graduate level. U.S. institutions are encouraged to

collaborate with the region's ministries of education to implement programs that create pipelines of students equipped with skills that will prepare them for educational opportunities in the United States.

Recent Trends

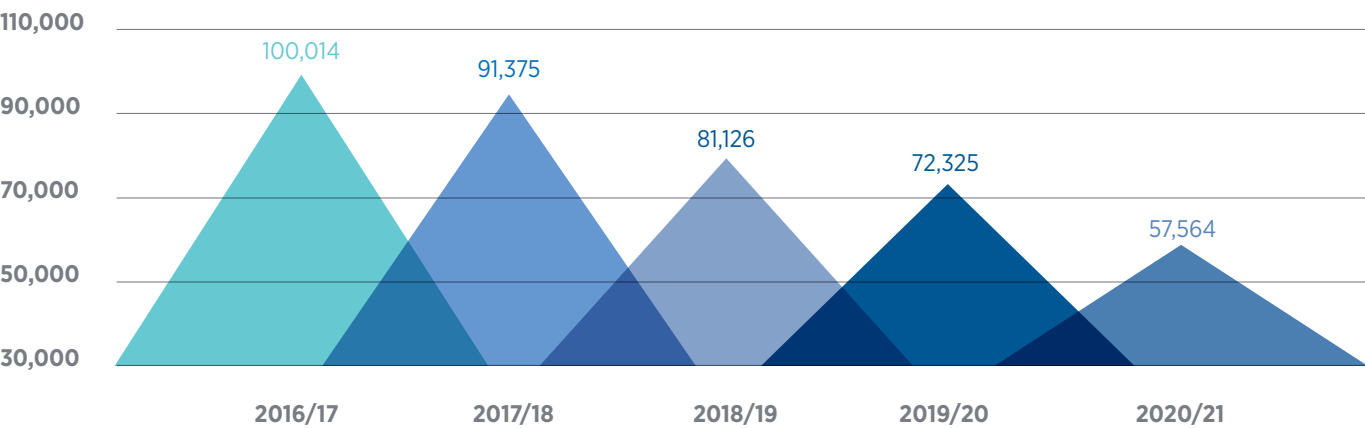
Many countries in the region are eager to include U.S.-trained professionals in their workforce development efforts. Governments support scholarships, short-term grants for local faculty to experience U.S. study tours, research projects, and short-term training programs for government officials and administrators. Scholarship programs link government objectives and priority fields of study to meet national labor market needs. Other programs encourage work experience through internships, Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and Optional Practical Training (OPT) in the United States.

Students across MENA pursue study abroad in a range of countries. Some choose Canada because of the perception that the country offers lower tuition rates and a less complex student visa process. The UK is attractive to some students because of its geographic proximity and solid historical ties to Gulf countries like Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE. France remains a viable option for students from North Africa due to geographic proximity and linguistic affinity.

Compared to five years ago, students in the MENA region now have more opportunities to study closer to home, and increasing numbers are choosing

institutions in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the UAE. Kuwaiti universities are adding new degree programs and improving physical capacity. Competition for international students in the Gulf is growing as Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia establish themselves as educational hubs in the region. Over the past year, several Gulf nations eased visa and employment restrictions on foreign nationals, allowing them to remain in the country while working to support their studies. For example, the UAE is home to 60 globally recognized international university campuses. At over half of these universities – 34 of them in Dubai – 28 percent of the student body is made up of students from outside the country. This trend is growing, with a 3.6 percent annual enrollment growth and more than 29,000 students in these programs. (Khaleej Times, April 13, 2022) Outstanding students in the UAE are eligible for a five-year student visa extended to family members. This visa change is attractive to students from Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Egypt. U.S. branch campuses in the region – including six in Qatar and three in the UAE – are growing in popularity. Many American-style HEIs in the region have recently attained accreditation from one or more U.S. accrediting organizations, including one in Egypt, two in Lebanon, one in Morocco, one in Qatar, one in Saudi Arabia, and six in the UAE. Qatar introduced a new model of live-to-classroom distance learning, and three U.S. institutions currently offer undergraduate and graduate programs locally under this Global Studies Institute (GSI) umbrella.

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



Student recruitment practitioners from U.S. HEIs are often required to seek local government permission before entering secondary schools. The security process takes time, especially in STEM-focused and other government schools. Though some students demonstrate significant financial need, these secondary institutions prepare highly qualified students for merit-based U.S. scholarships. Countries such as Jordan, Kuwait, and the UAE require student recruitment fair organizers to collaborate with local agencies. Government permission is also often necessary to host virtual fairs, especially in countries with approved institution lists.

Students and parents in the MENA region express concern about Islamophobia, safety, and other social issues in the United States. Recent social media campaigns, including the EducationUSA #StudyWithUS hashtag and the #WhyUS program, started by Temple University, have been widely shared to engage broader audiences and address many of these concerns. Personal connections are critical to establishing positive, realistic impressions of the United States. HEIs are encouraged to consider in-person visits to the region as travel restrictions are lifted and conditions allow.

Online learning, distance learning, and homeschooling were widely available and accepted in most Gulf countries during the pandemic. In response to COVID-19 restrictions, several countries in the region quickly assembled task forces to develop strategies for online instruction and secure platforms to support remote learning. Schools in

some countries lacked the resources to provide online education and completely halted all public-school instruction for weeks or months. Many countries did not anticipate how long the pandemic would limit in-person instruction. The inability to provide consistent access to education has widened the digital divide and exacerbated educational disparities.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

- 1. Saudi Arabia
- 2. Iran
- 3. Kuwait
- 4. Egypt
- 5. Oman
- 6. Jordan
- 7. Israel
- 8. United Arab Emirates
- 9. Lebanon
- 10. Morocco

What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

Kuwait is the region’s third-largest sender of international students to the United States. Although qualified students can receive fully funded government scholarships, students must achieve a minimum score on a standardized English exam to qualify for the benefit, limiting the pool of eligible students. Recent pandemic-related interruptions to the academic year contribute to a decrease in qualified scholarship applicants in the short term.

Saudi Arabia will support education programs that address national development requirements and labor market demands. Priorities include improving learning environments, stimulating creativity and innovation in the classroom, and welcoming foreign investment in education. Continued efforts to support Vision 2030 lead to the growth of smaller niche scholarships not only through Giga projects, ministries, and universities but also through businesses. More specialized fields will be in demand based on the country’s market needs, but tourism and health will still be popular. The Ministry of Education intends to add fields like music and performing arts to the specific scholarship-approved lists.

Due to recent domestic economic challenges and evolving regional relationships, governments across the region have made changes to scholarship designs, titles, and foci while establishing stricter eligibility requirements and limitations on study location. In many cases, scholarship recipients are limited to specific fields of study at institutions on government-approved lists, significantly limiting choice of academic disciplines and study destinations. HEIs should highlight programs that support priority fields, as identified by the ministries of education, and be prepared to offer documentation that demonstrates student compliance with scholarship requirements. In Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, students no longer apply directly to scholarship programs, and an offer of admission must be granted from an eligible institution before students can apply for financial aid. This change has resulted in fewer students studying in the

14.1%

Algeria has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years **(with over 100 students)**

Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Algeria	192	219	14.1%
Lebanon	1,556	1,700	9.3%
Jordan	2,312	2,338	1.1%
Palestinian Territories	423	424	0.2%
Egypt	3,715	3,672	-1.2%

Middle East and North Africa



United States and a corresponding decline in students enrolling in U.S.-based English language institutes before their studies.

U.S. institutions should expect more interest in partnerships, linkages, and U.S. faculty visits to the region. Local institutions see their U.S. counterparts as institutional structure and curricular development models. STEM fields are the highest priority across the region. Many institutions in the region have allocated funding to send faculty to the United States for training and advanced research. There is also interest in earning accreditation from U.S. accrediting bodies.

Loss of jobs, weakening currencies, and higher food costs in countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Yemen continue to make academic options viable for many students only if full scholarships are

offered. In contrast, many Gulf countries such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE have experienced greater currency stability, resulting in more flexibility for students to explore study opportunities abroad regardless of financial aid. However, economic challenges have not affected all families equally, and many continue to have the resources to support their children's higher education. HEIs should consider the MENA region's broad range of economic situations in their outreach strategies to attract a diverse array of top students (government scholarship recipients, self-funded students, and those requiring financial support).

Many governments sponsor college and university fairs and value the participation of U.S. institutions. During the pandemic, these programs were fully

online. As travel restrictions are lifted, more in-person visits to the region are possible. EducationUSA advisers can provide guidance on local conditions, participate in events, help obtain required approvals from local authorities, and facilitate communication with higher education ministries. U.S. institutions can also send faculty to EducationUSA-sponsored events. EducationUSA advisers can arrange faculty-to-faculty dialogues and provide strategies for engaging counterparts in collaborative research projects and other joint ventures. Provided that they have authorization from the college or university, alumni of U.S. institutions are also welcome to attend and represent their alma maters.

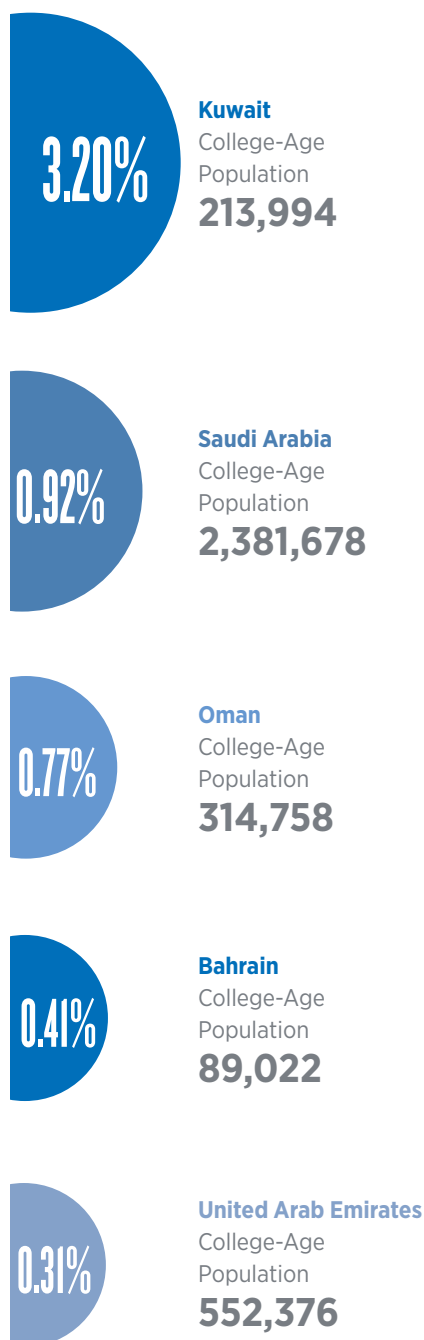
Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

According to the *Digital 2022 report* by We Are Social and Hootsuite, there were 316.1 million internet users in the MENA region in January 2022. Internet connectivity is widely available in the region, although Yemen, the Palestinian Territories, and Libya have the lowest levels of connectivity. Before the pandemic, many people accessed the internet in public spaces like cybercafes or university campuses. Mobile device usage has increased over the past year due partly to COVID-19-related limits on access to public spaces. Bandwidth sufficient to participate in webinars or download large files is a challenge for those in areas affected by power outages, slow connection speeds, or limitations on connectivity. These issues are particularly pressing in Algeria, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.

As local conditions permit, centers are reintroducing face-to-face programming while maintaining a virtual presence. Virtual programming's broader engagement and reach to previously untapped regions and audiences has proven that sustaining a combined approach will be necessary. The most popular platforms used for webinars include Zoom, Facebook Live, and Google Meet. YouTube is popular for viewing pre-recorded sessions, and Instagram Live and IGTV have also become more widely used in the region. WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger are frequently used for texting.

Even before the pandemic, EducationUSA advising for Iran was an exclusively

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

virtual operation, so advisers were well positioned to build on an already robust online presence. With an updated website, new student videos, and a series of webinars, the EducationUSA Iran office provides information about U.S. higher education via a dedicated website in Farsi (Persian) and English. The adviser meets with Iranian students and school representatives through virtual campus visits, online consultations, and EducationUSA conferences. To effectively reach Iranian nationals residing worldwide, EducationUSA Iran has also leveraged global advertising campaigns through outlets such as Radio Javan.

Iranian students' interest in U.S. graduate studies remains solid, with 75.2 percent of Iranian students in the United States enrolled in graduate programs. Telegram and Instagram are top platforms for Iranians whose access to some social media platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, is limited. It is strongly recommended that HEIs keep social media platforms updated and boost posts related to Iranian students. HEIs can gather more information and additional guidance on the [EducationUSA Iran website](#).

EducationUSA webinars offer opportunities to engage students creatively while informing them about educational opportunities in the United States. EducationUSA centers in the MENA region continue to develop innovative approaches to student outreach, including the recent launch of mobile applications in Bahrain and the UAE that provide students and parents with information about upcoming EducationUSA programs.

Online webinars and programs are not as popular in Kuwait as in neighboring countries. Instagram and YouTube have the most traction, with 3.62 million users at the beginning of 2022. In-person engagement with Kuwaiti students goes far, and when face-to-face meetings are safe and permitted, in-person recruitment will be essential.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- HEIs are encouraged to consider high school guidance counselors as a resource and conduit to reach larger student audiences. The EducationUSA network has enhanced efforts to

engage these key stakeholders and to provide them information about the U.S. higher education sector and college advising resources. Local counselors frequently meet to share best practices in the admissions process and to discuss topics such as applying for student visas, writing school profiles, meeting institutional application deadlines, and identifying institutions that best meet students' needs. When possible, coordinate with other recruitment colleagues to organize virtual school visits, as not all schools can accommodate the high demand for engagement. In Kuwait, the U.S. embassy is working with the Ministry of Education and local providers to introduce a robust college advising program in government public schools. Six trained counselors, alongside EducationUSA, are working directly with these schools to educate students about studying in the United States. Eighty percent of government scholarship recipients are from public schools. This program has the potential to be a driving force toward increasing the numbers of Kuwaitis pursuing study in the United States.

- In spring 2022, Kuwait began lifting COVID-19 restrictions and slowly allowing people into the country who do not have residency, including U.S. HEI representatives. EducationUSA, based at the U.S. embassy, launched several new initiatives to promote study in the United States, including outreach at Kuwait's largest mall and a wide-ranging social media campaign that set an embassy record for YouTube views. The funding of new grants to increase access to Kuwaiti schools helped create college

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2020/21	% Change
Saudi Arabia	21,933	-29.2%
Iran	9,614	-16.0%
Kuwait	6,846	-18.3%
Egypt	3,672	-4.8%
Oman	2,433	-13.3%

Middle East and North Africa

advising positions in high schools and sponsored the participation of a large group of students in the EducationUSA Academy Connects virtual pre-college program.

- It is helpful to translate websites and promotional materials into Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew, and/or Kurdish and record videos featuring currently enrolled students from MENA to engage parents and students with limited English-language skills. High-quality video and photo content can convey a sense of the campus and local communities that will resonate with students and their families. Students, particularly those at the undergraduate level, are eager to learn about campus life, including housing arrangements and dining options that meet religious needs. Institutions are also encouraged to highlight student support services, such as academic tutoring, extracurricular activities, social programs, public safety precautions, and medical services on campus.

- Parents and family members in the MENA region often play essential roles in students' decision-making about institutions and programs of study. In some cases, graduate students will be accompanied by dependents and will seek institutions that can accommodate their families. Institutions should consider crafting recruitment messages with these audiences in mind.
- U.S. HEIs can benefit from relationships with international alumni and from visiting alumni when recruiting abroad. Alumni may offer helpful insights into their experiences as students, hold key positions in the public and private sectors, and appreciate the opportunity to engage with admissions officers from their alma maters. Don't underestimate word of mouth when it comes to recruitment plans.
- Engaging currently enrolled international students during recruitment and student orientation is

another helpful strategy for reaching prospective students. EducationUSA invites all students and alumni to submit an [interest form](#) to connect with EducationUSA advisers who are eager to develop joint programming, student success profiles, and other engagement opportunities.

- Although EducationUSA advisers can offer guidance and advice about Gulf scholarship programs, U.S. institutions are encouraged to reach out directly to scholarship organizations with specific questions.
- North Africa is a largely untapped market for international students. HEIs are encouraged to contact EducationUSA for assistance in planning a trip or virtual engagement focused on Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, or Tunisia.

Institutional Partnerships

HEIs throughout MENA are eager to explore partnerships with U.S. institutions that provide opportunities for reciprocal student and scholar exchanges, joint research ventures, and dual-degree programs. EducationUSA REACs and advisers can provide information to local institutions about the U.S. higher education sector and strategic guidance on establishing successful partnerships. Beyond EducationUSA advising services, the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs facilitates other in-person and virtual exchanges to support student mobility, institutional partnerships, and higher education capacity building, including the [Fulbright Program](#) and the [International Visitor Leadership Program](#).

In contrast to the United States, national governments across the MENA region include ministries that centralize the curriculum, accreditation, training, and strategic priorities for each country's education sector. As a result, governments are critical stakeholders for institutions seeking to establish partnerships with local universities. EducationUSA REACs and advisers can facilitate engagement among institutions interested in collaboration in the region. In many cases, the U.S. embassy or consulate in that country can also connect interested parties. There is a growing interest in

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region		
Destination	2019/20	% Change
Israel	1,893	-46.4%
United Arab Emirates	1,222	28.0%
Morocco	810	-53.7%
Jordan	603	-43.3%
Egypt	374	50.8%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)			
Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Egypt	124	374	201.6%
United Arab Emirates	718	1,222	70.2%
Israel	2,435	1,893	-22.3%
Jordan	969	603	-37.8%
Morocco	1,403	810	-42.3%



establishing partnerships with technical colleges, aviation institutions, 2+2 programs, and short-term programs in Kuwait. Saudi universities are interested in Arabic-language programs, study abroad partnerships, training, faculty exchange programs, and U.S. academic programs based in the Kingdom. Universities in the UAE seek partnerships with higher education institutions in surrounding emirates, beyond Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

While many institutions in the region are interested in establishing partnerships, it is crucial that all parties clearly outline goals and expectations. In the Palestinian Territories, one idea to help facilitate these connections is the creation of a database of the specific types of collaboration available from U.S. institutions (such as curriculum development or student or faculty exchange) that would include information on how local institutions can contact them for further discussion. U.S. HEIs should be prepared to highlight their strengths and offer suggestions for mutually beneficial arrangements. For example, many countries in MENA are interested

in partnerships for English-language instruction, which could be accomplished through faculty exchanges, specific in-country workshops, or virtual initiatives. While virtual exchanges in some cases may be a great approach, in countries like Yemen, issues with connectivity or staff continuity could present a challenge.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE currently fund government-sponsored scholarship programs. These governments maintain lists of approved receiving institutions. One strategy to raise awareness of U.S. institutions and increase the chance of inclusion on these lists is to visit these countries' cultural missions in Washington, DC, and conduct outreach by email or phone. Proactive engagement can offer U.S. institutions the opportunity to inform government authorities about their programs of study, express interest in hosting students from the region, and explain how U.S. institutions are prepared to be effective and qualified hosts for their students. In many of these countries, the number of scholarships

available for students to study in the United States declined in the last few years due to budget constraints. U.S. HEIs should highlight both the quality and affordability of their programs and work closely with the funders and organizations offering scholarships to these students.

Bahrain. Through the Crown Prince's International Scholarship Program (CPISP), the government of Bahrain provides scholarships supporting overseas study for 10 students, most of whom choose to study in the United States. All scholarship students enter at the undergraduate level and can receive full funding through a doctoral degree.

Oman. Since 2012, Oman's Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) has offered scholarships for Omanis to pursue undergraduate and graduate studies in the United States. More than 500 students study abroad annually and go to 21 scholarship destinations, with the United States and the United Kingdom hosting the largest numbers of students. Most scholarships are awarded to support "Omanization," an initiative to increase

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the number of Omani citizens employed in industries of strategic importance to Oman. Over 75 percent of Omanis studying in the United States are on a scholarship program. The number of undergraduate and graduate scholarships decreased in the last year, with the Direct Entry Scholarship (DES), an external undergraduate scholarship for students, placed on hold in fall 2021. Despite this, many Omani students continue to pursue higher education studies in the United States. For undergraduate study, there are two types of government-funded scholarships: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education (STEM); and Education, Social Sciences, Art, and Management (ESAM). The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) selects receiving institutions for all students on these scholarship programs. At the graduate level, the MoHE offers a National Postgraduate Scholarship supporting study in key subjects at select institutions. To be eligible for a National Postgraduate Scholarship, applicants must have received an unconditional offer of admission at an MoHE-approved university. Visit the [MoHE website](#) for more information on approved U.S. universities that can receive Omani government-sponsored students.

Kuwait. The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) offers a scholarship for undergraduate studies that includes an initial year of English-language instruction to ensure proficiency. In 2018, the Kuwaiti government began requiring that all scholarship recipients earn a score of five or higher on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or a 45 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) to receive a scholarship to study abroad. This policy shift reduced the number of students eligible for scholarships. There is a generally low standard of English-language proficiency among Kuwaiti public-school students, who formerly comprised approximately 85 percent of scholarship recipients. Pharmacy studies is no longer an approved field of study for Kuwaiti scholarship recipients in the United States, and rigorous requirements for admission to U.S. medical and dentistry schools have caused more Kuwaiti students to pursue these fields in other countries, mainly the UK and Ireland. The MoHE also offers graduate

scholarships to qualified applicants who have already received funds from the ministry's undergraduate scholarship program. Additionally, government agencies and private institutions such as Kuwait University, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the Civil Service Commission, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, and the Kuwait Investment Authority offer scholarship opportunities for graduate students.

Libya. The Libyan government continues to grant scholarships to top students; however, due to the processing time for funding (in some cases taking years), many students have been left unable to pursue study overseas.

Qatar. The government of Qatar offers scholarships to Qatari students pursuing studies outside of Qatar. Factors considered for eligibility include high school exit scores, English language proficiency, and unconditional acceptance to a government-approved U.S. university and field of study. In addition, male students must complete one year of national service or be given a waiver before pursuing post-secondary studies. While female students have the option to complete national service, they are not required to do so before continuing their education. Scholarship recipients must also commit to working at one of 30 government entities upon graduation. Other companies, such as Qatar Airways and Sidra Medical Center, and industries such as the banking sector and the gas and petroleum sector, offer scholarships; most of which adhere to the government program requirements.

Saudi Arabia. The government of Saudi Arabia has restructured its scholarship program to better align with its economic and workforce development goals. Saudi Arabia launched the strategy of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Program on March 7, 2022, supporting high-achieving high school and university graduates in one of four tracks: Pioneer Path, Supply Path, Research and Development Path, and Promising Path.

The Pioneer Path (Alrwad) supports students pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees in various fields at 30 higher

education institutions around the world. The goal is to increase competitiveness in disciplines that support sustainable development and contribute to the Kingdom's Vision 2030 initiative.

The Supply Path (Imdad) targets training, bachelor's, and master's degrees in fields that meet the needs of the labor market. It supports students pursuing study at 200 higher education institutions around the world.

The Research and Development Path supports students pursuing doctoral degrees in select fields at 200 higher education institutions around the world.

The Promising Path (Waaed) track supports students pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees in sectors and fields that are growing in demand.

For more information about the program, visit the [Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques Scholarship Program website](#).

Other scholarship programs include the Ministry of Culture Scholarship, the Saudi Space Commission Scholarship, Al-Ula, NEOM, Mawhiba, MISK, and the Institute of Public Administration (IPA). Companies like ARAMCO and SABIC also provide employees with scholarships to study abroad, focusing on the United States.

UAE. Of the 1,737 Emiratis studying in the United States in AY 2020-2021, 80 percent were at the undergraduate level, while just over 13 percent studied at the graduate level. A majority of students received full scholarship support. 10 scholarship programs offering full funding are available to UAE students to support study in the United States. Some scholarships are specific to a particular emirate, and benefits differ depending on the government entity awarding the scholarship. The Ministry of Education (MOE) scholarship program is open to all UAE students; recipients receive full tuition support, a monthly stipend of more than USD\$3,200, an annual airline ticket, funds for books and clothing, medical insurance, and other benefits. UAE students on scholarships must attend one of the 50 U.S. universities on the MOE-approved list and pursue majors approved by the scholarship-granting institution. To qualify, students must gain



admission at an approved institution, meet English-language proficiency requirements, and achieve a high grade-point average in grade 12. Similarly, the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) provides scholarships for study at select U.S. HEIs. Approved majors, many of which are in STEM fields, are determined by anticipated UAE job market needs.

Many oil companies and other private firms in the region offer scholarships to current and future employees working in STEM fields. Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, Saudi Basic Industries Company (SABIC), and Saudi Aramco all have programs for high school students who are on track to become employees after obtaining a bachelor's degree in the United States. Companies in Qatar, such as Qatar Airways, Sidra Medicine, and Qatar Petroleum, implement similar programs.

Regional Economics and Market Demands
Students in the MENA region have traditionally prioritized STEM fields when

exploring programs of study. In Gulf countries, most government scholarship programs specify approved majors based on labor market and workforce development needs. Nationalization practices have been developed to reduce the need for expatriate labor. Qatari and Emirati nationals, for example, are minority groups in their country's population. As a result, expatriates fill many roles, but ministries of labor seek to expand the employment of citizens in priority fields and encourage their citizens to pursue key fields of study. These include innovation, entrepreneurship, space science, alternative and renewable energy, engineering, artificial intelligence, hospitality, culinary studies, health, music, performing arts, sciences, and business information technology.

In addition to popular STEAM fields, some emerging sectors, including cybersecurity and English-language instruction, offer opportunities for U.S. recruiters. Saudi students may be interested in short-term English language programs to prepare for graduate studies, achieve eligibility

for scholarships, and attain a competitive advantage in the labor market. Peace studies are also gaining prominence as a discipline, especially in current and former conflict zones. New fields of study are emerging in Saudi Arabia as the country opens its borders to visitors and tourists, whose presence drives demand for expertise in managing historical sites, national parks, theme parks, and concerts. In March 2020, the Saudi Ministry of Tourism launched the Your Future Tourism campaign, which aims to create 100,000 jobs by the end of 2021 and one million jobs by 2030.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

EducationUSA centers in the region organize in-person and virtual events throughout the year. Consult the [EducationUSA website](#) and Facebook pages for information about the growing number of webinars, fairs, and workshops offered in specific countries across the region. REACs also share regular updates via the MENA newsletter for HEIs, which is issued six times per year, and via a

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closed Facebook group, “[EducationUSA in the Middle East and North Africa](#).” Throughout the year, EducationUSA advising centers offer country briefing webinars with information about local education systems, challenges and opportunities, and country-specific developments that impact student recruitment. EducationUSA hosted the first virtual fair for the MENA region in December 2020, and advisers plan to offer more opportunities to engage virtually in the future. U.S. HEI representatives can further engage by meeting with U.S. embassy public affairs and consular staff (subject to scheduling availability), presenting at an EducationUSA advising center, and visiting local high schools or universities. HEI representatives are encouraged to contact EducationUSA centers to explore options. Upcoming fairs and exhibitions in which EducationUSA is participating are listed below.

EducationUSA REACs maintain a [list of regional fairs and opportunities](#) in which U.S. HEIs may participate.

Bahrain. The [EDUTEX Bahrain Education and Training Exhibition](#) is usually held in March at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Center. The [University of Bahrain Career Fair](#) takes place in April.

Oman. The [Global Higher Education Exhibition \(GHEDEX\)](#) in Muscat and Sohar is Oman’s largest higher education expo and takes place annually in October and April. The virtual [Education and Training Exhibition \(EduTrex\)](#) and the IDP education fair held in September are also popular. This year’s [EduTraC](#) Oman exhibition will be held October 11-12, 2022.

Saudi Arabia. The International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education is an MOE-hosted university fair that draws the participation of hundreds of local and international universities. The fair is held every other year but has been temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Education and Conference Exhibition (ICEE) resumed in May 2022 and drew a global presence.

UAE. [NAJAH](#), the official government-sponsored education expo, typically attracts more than 1,600 visitors. It will occur in Abu Dhabi on October 16-18, 2022, and in Dubai on October 23-25. In addition, the Sharjah International Education Fair will take place October 19-20, 2022, at the Sharjah Expo Center.

All Countries. EducationUSA centers host regular web chats and video conferences for students in the region. Advisers offer focused online discussions on study options and undergraduate and graduate admissions issues. Advisers also present

regular weekly or monthly sessions on financial aid, personal statements, and standardized tests.

All advising centers conduct pre-departure orientations in the summer, and some centers also conduct orientations in January. U.S. institutions are encouraged to advise accepted students to visit the [EducationUSA website](#) or contact their local EducationUSA center for dates and times. Even students who are new to EducationUSA or first-time visitors are welcome to attend a pre-departure orientation.

Many centers host monthly meetings with guidance counselors from surrounding secondary schools. These meetings offer opportunities for U.S. HEIs to engage with local schools and prospective students. Interested representatives should contact an adviser.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to the most recent *Open Doors* data. In AY 2019-2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. Declines in U.S. study abroad programming occurred primarily during spring and summer 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad programming in AY 2018-2019, decreased by 99 percent in 2019-2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to more than 10,400 students.

The number of U.S. students studying in the MENA region has generally been relatively small compared with other regions. According to 2021 *Open Doors* data, just over 3 percent of all U.S. study abroad students in AY 2019-2020, or 5,134 students, studied in the region. In 2021 and 2022, there has been some rebound

of study abroad demand in the region; however, it will take some time for this rebound to be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

U.S. students sometimes study or participate in exchange programs at the six American universities in Qatar. These universities have exchange programs with their home campuses and see a flow of students between the U.S. and Doha campuses throughout the year. There are fewer opportunities for U.S. students to study at other HEIs throughout the country because instruction is predominantly in Arabic. Recently, universities in Saudi Arabia have begun expressing interest in foreign student exchange programs and research partnerships.

In 2021, the U.S. embassy in Lebanon received a Study Abroad Engagement Grant from the USA Study Abroad Branch at the U.S. Department of State to carry out capacity-building projects to promote U.S. study abroad in the region. In addition, the State Department's [IDEAS program](#) can provide U.S. HEIs funding to develop or diversify study abroad programming in the region.

Although EducationUSA advising centers in the region do not host study abroad programs, some centers offer internship opportunities and are eager to work with American student volunteers. Study abroad staff can inform students about potential internships and connect students with a local advising center.

U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their departure from the United States so that they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

Algeria. The best time to visit is from November to February. Avoid traveling during Ramadan and the Eid holidays.

Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar. The best time to visit is from October to February. Avoid traveling during Ramadan and the Eid holidays. There are many international school calendars due to the large expatriate community. Consider the Indian school timetable as well as exam preparation times.

Egypt. The best times to visit are from October to December and mid-February to March. Avoid visiting during Ramadan, Eid, and other major holidays, including Sham el Nessim (April) and Sinai Liberation Day (April 25).

Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. Travel is not advised (at the time of publication). Virtual interaction is recommended. Consult travel.state.gov for more information.

Israel. The best times to visit are from November to January and March to May. Avoid significant holidays, such as New Year and Passover, the dates for which can vary each year.

Jordan. The best times to visit are from October to November and February to May. Avoid traveling during major religious holidays, such as Ramadan, Eid, Easter, or Palm Sunday.

Lebanon. The best time to visit is from mid-October to March. First-term exams take place in early January. Avoid visiting during major religious holidays.

Morocco. The best times to visit are from October to November and March to April. Avoid visiting during Ramadan and the Eid holidays.

Oman. Visit during the Global Higher Education Exhibition, Oman's largest [higher education expo](#), typically held in April. Another good time to visit is during [EduTraC](#), in October in Muscat.

Palestinian Territories. The best times to visit are from September to November and February to April. Avoid traveling during Ramadan, Eid, major exam periods (January, May, June, October, and December), and the summer break (June to August).

Saudi Arabia. The best time to visit is from October to February. Avoid traveling during Ramadan and the Eid holidays. There are many international school calendars due to the large expatriate community. Consider the Indian school timetable as well as exam preparation times. In AY 2021-2022 Saudi Arabia moved to three semesters instead of two, resulting in long weekends and shortened summer vacation in July and August.

Tunisia. The best time to visit is from October to November and from January to mid-February. Avoid major exam periods (early December and late February to early March).

UAE. The best time to visit is from October to February. Avoid traveling during Ramadan and the Eid holidays. There are many international school calendars due to the large expatriate community. Consider the Indian school timetable as well as exam preparation times. At the beginning of 2022, the UAE transitioned to a 4.5-day work week, with weekends consisting of Friday afternoon, Saturday, and Sunday. Some schools extend daily school hours to ensure students receive sufficient instructional time.

South and Central Asia

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

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EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

23 Comprehensive
7 Standard
3 Reference



An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>

EducationUSA advising centers in South and Central Asia (SCA) are located at U.S. embassies and consulates, Fulbright Commissions, American Councils for International Education offices, and local nonprofit organizations.

There are 80 advisers at 37 EducationUSA centers in SCA, with several countries hosting multiple advising centers at various host institutions. Uzbekistan recently added new centers in response to demand for academic advising services and interest in U.S. higher education. The largest concentration of centers is in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Kazakhstan. There are more than 40 advisers in India across eight centers, 14 advisers in Pakistan across three centers, six advisers in Bangladesh across three centers, and four advisers in Kazakhstan across four centers and one virtual adviser. Advisers in SCA function as mentors and local experts on the U.S. higher education sector, providing advising sessions, engaging with students virtually and in person, and conducting outreach activities.

Given the current safety and security situation, EducationUSA is not able to offer in-person advising services in Afghanistan. The U.S. embassy in Kabul suspended operations in Afghanistan on August 31, 2021. Before the security situation deteriorated, the U.S. Department of State provided in-person EducationUSA academic advising services in Kabul, Herat, and Mazar-i-Sharif.

The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program, serving high-achieving prospective students who demonstrate financial need, operates at advising centers in Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Turkmenistan. Nepal and Pakistan host Opportunity Funds cohorts for

undergraduate students. Cohorts engage in robust mentoring activities over two years and interact with Opportunity Funds alumni. Sri Lanka and Turkmenistan host Opportunity Funds cohorts for graduate students, offering mentoring activities for one year. U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs) are encouraged to reach out to the advising centers to learn more about supporting Opportunity Funds students through virtual programs and specialized scholarships.

EducationUSA advising centers in SCA conduct strategic outreach in their respective countries in close collaboration with public affairs and consular sections at U.S. embassies and consulates. U.S. HEI representatives assist advising centers in engaging public audiences by joining visits and participating in webinars for students, high school counselors, and local postsecondary institutions. In addition, visits to advising centers by U.S. college and university representatives allow EducationUSA to highlight outreach opportunities with local HEIs and facilitate personal interactions with students, parents, and local educational institutions.

Regional Overview

SCA is a region of vast cultural and geographic diversity, and it is home to one of the largest youth populations in the world. Young people in the region are driven and eager to enter the workforce. Limited access to higher education is a significant challenge. People-to-people ties and international student exchanges are crucial in this region. South Asian economies are among the fastest-growing globally, and the region is a tremendous market for recruiting highly qualified students. Despite the growth, challenges



include high inflation and volatile economic conditions in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and other South and Central Asian countries; widespread pandemic lockdowns; rising food costs; and regional and domestic security situations. Turmoil in Afghanistan has also affected neighboring nations. U.S. higher education costs are becoming increasingly unaffordable for students in countries with declining currencies like Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Pakistani rupee fell nearly 12 percent against the U.S. dollar in 2021 and plummeted to an all-time low as of April 2022. (Source: [Livemint](#))

While SCA stretches from Kazakhstan in the north to the Maldives in the south, students from this region share common traits: They seek similar fields of study (notably STEM and business) and look for the development of practical skills that prepare them for future careers. Prospective students and their parents view the award of a scholarship – even a partial tuition award – as a prestigious achievement. SCA has many educational

systems, including local government-supported schools and private English-medium schools. Students from Central Asia are likely to seek intensive English-language programs abroad, while those in India and the rest of South Asia have opportunities to achieve English proficiency in their home countries. In Uzbekistan, the U.S. government has invested millions of dollars to partner with the Uzbek government to promote English language education, focusing on improving textbooks, curriculum development, teacher training, and access to English-language study opportunities. There continues to be a growing interest in English-language programs amongst the populations of Central Asia. With a median age of less than 26 years, the burgeoning youth population faces limited postsecondary capacity and barriers to access to quality higher education locally, thereby driving demand for academic opportunities abroad.

In many parts of SCA, the internet is widely and easily accessible, with most users accessing the web through mobile devices. According to the *January 2022 Digital Global Overview Report*, internet use grew by 6.7 percent in Central Asia and 9.1 percent in South Asia in 2021. Internet connection speeds vary significantly across the region and between rural and urban areas. Disruptions to electrical service are becoming less frequent; however, some countries continue to face outages during peak summer and winter months. In addition, government-imposed restrictions limit online activity in some countries. Government limits on internet speed, specific applications, and services impact students' ability to access some online content, conduct research, sit for exams, and interact virtually. EducationUSA centers in the region are equipped with computers, offering students an alternative, reliable way to connect to the internet. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted many

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students' access to the internet in physical EducationUSA centers. Many people throughout the region lack internet access at home, meaning many students cannot access virtual learning options or participate in virtual programming. The U.S. higher education system is well positioned to provide training in fields that will equip graduates with practical skills to address these challenges.

Although the United States remains the top study destination for students from the region, students and families are attuned to political developments and discourse. Students are attracted to countries in which they anticipate the ability to obtain student visas, work, and in some cases, transition to permanent residency. Traditionally, students from the region have gravitated toward the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. However, over the past few years, China, Japan, Malaysia, and India have begun to attract more students by offering government scholarships, affordable tuition, and employment opportunities. Such offers, combined with proximity to the students' home countries, make these options increasingly attractive. Linguistic and cultural ties drew many Central Asians to study in Russia and the former Soviet Union. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in particular, have expanded higher education capacity in recent years and are becoming attractive to students who wish to stay closer to home. The Arab Gulf States are also an option for students from the region, given their

proximity, multicultural environment, and more flexible student visa regulations.

Reliance on consultants or agents is common among prospective students, especially in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Consultants and agents provide a range of services, from basic advice to the full completion of applications for students. Representatives of U.S. institutions should highlight their institutional recruitment standards and criteria as a strength when speaking with parents and students. Institutions are encouraged to publicize their relationships with consultants and agents to ensure international students are fully informed.

Recent Trends

According to the Institute of International Education's (IIE) *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*, just over 22 percent of international students in the United States in the academic year (AY) 2020-2021 were from the SCA region. *Open Doors* reported a 12.5 percent decrease in mobility from this region, with 201,260 students from SCA studying in the United States in AY 2020-2021.

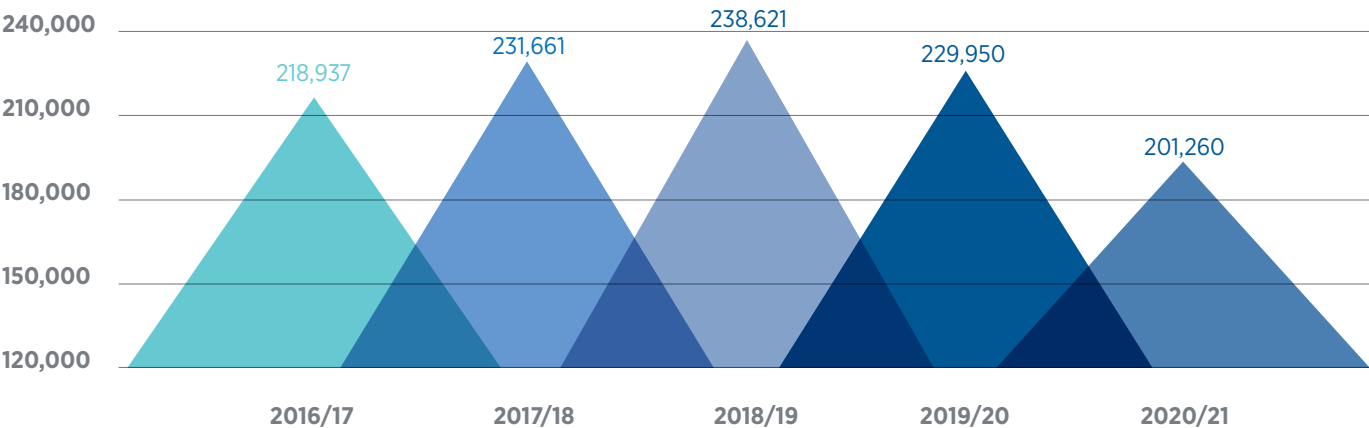
Of the SCA students studying in the United States, approximately 42 percent are in graduate programs, and 39.5 percent are enrolled in Optional Practical Training (OPT). Undergraduate students represent 18 percent of international students from SCA. Student mobility to the United States declined in AY 2020-

2021 across the 11 countries in SCA, with the steepest drops in Bhutan (-24.7 percent), Maldives (-20.7 percent), and Tajikistan (-15.3 percent). According to Open Doors data, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan were among the top 25 sending countries in the world to the United States in AY 2020-2021. India and Nepal are the second- and 12th-largest senders in the world respectively, while Bangladesh and Pakistan are the 14th- and 18th-largest senders.

Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka were among the top 25 sending countries of graduate students to the United States in AY 2020-2021. India (-5.7 percent) and Nepal (-4.1 percent) saw declines after years of steady increases.

Political unrest in the region has impacted mobility and will be a challenge for the foreseeable future. In January 2022, widespread protests in Kazakhstan led to internet shutdowns for several days, directly impacting students' ability to meet U.S. institutions' application deadlines. In Turkmenistan, restrictive measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic include a ban on all international commercial flights and reduced mobility within the country. Since March 2020, roughly 20 students have been able to secure charter flights. All students were required to submit individual petitions to the government for exit permits. The ban on international commercial flights will be largely unavailable, likely through 2022. In Tajikistan, border conflicts

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

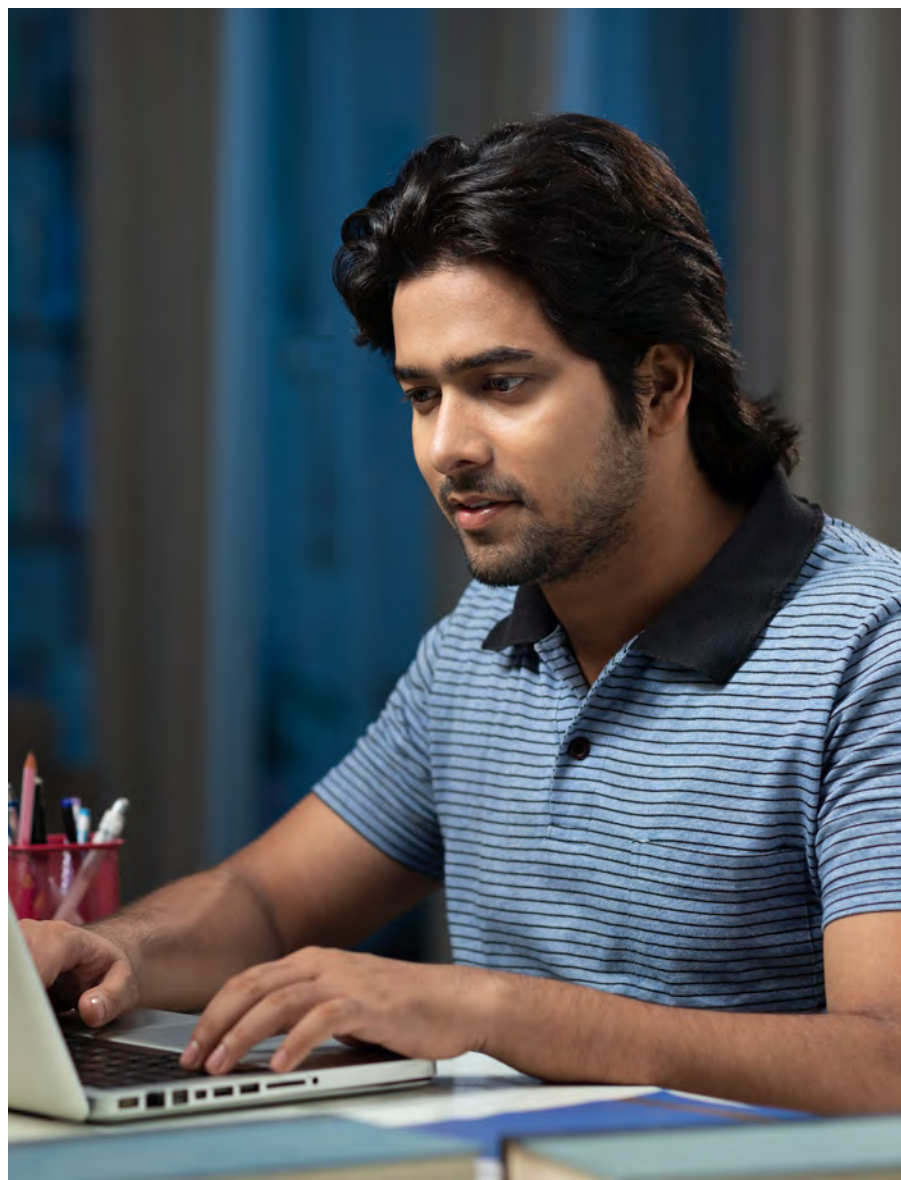


with Kyrgyzstan have affected students seeking affordable American-style education at the American University in Central Asia, located in Bishkek.

Sri Lanka continues to face a political and economic crisis. Defaults on foreign debt have led to crippling power cuts and an extreme scarcity of food, fuel, and other essential items such as medicines. One of Sri Lanka's significant sources of income, tourism, has been impacted heavily. In 2021, the country welcomed just 173,000 tourists, down from 2.3 million in 2018.

Several factors contributed to increasing numbers of graduate students from the region. Local HEIs often require a foreign terminal degree when hiring faculty, fueling interest in foreign doctoral programs. A lack of opportunity to pursue research in their home countries also leads many students to seek foreign research opportunities, especially in the United States. Savvy students understand that connections made during graduate studies can build careers, leading many to pursue graduate degrees abroad to expand their professional networks. The high cost of U.S. undergraduate education is also an important factor that can drive students to pursue fully or partially funded graduate study in the United States.

Private English-language secondary schools prepare students for undergraduate study abroad in some countries. Although such schools hesitate to sacrifice class hours to accommodate visiting college and university representatives, EducationUSA advisers may be able to assist institutional representatives in securing a meeting. Advisers are well-placed, well-connected, and able to invite qualified students to meet U.S. HEI representatives at EducationUSA advising centers or during a college fair. Students and their families are increasingly concerned about safety on U.S. campuses and in local communities. Many opt to apply to states and institutions with existing diaspora communities or sizable international student populations. Institutions are encouraged to address safety concerns and share success stories of international students thriving on campus and in the community.



Gap years are increasingly common among prospective students from the region.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

1. [India](#)
2. [Nepal](#)
3. [Bangladesh](#)
4. [Pakistan](#)
5. [Kazakhstan](#)
6. [Sri Lanka](#)
7. [Uzbekistan](#)

8. [Afghanistan](#)
9. [Kyrgyzstan](#)
10. [Turkmenistan](#)

What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

South Asia has a huge population of youth, many of whom will pursue study abroad. Across the region, competition for limited seats in engineering and business programs at respected local undergraduate institutions may increase the number of undergraduate applicants to the United States.

Central Asia's most populous country, Uzbekistan, is home to more than 34 million people, 64 percent of whom are

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younger than 30. Close to half of Uzbek students in the United States pursue an undergraduate degree, including many students at community colleges. English-language instruction is improving in the country, paving the way for more students to pursue educational opportunities in the United States.

As the country develops and the economy grows, more families will have funds to pay for quality education and will consider sending their children abroad. Uzbekistan's educational vision and priorities continue to evolve. In 2019, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary-Specialized Education introduced a five-year education sector plan focused on expanding English-language curriculum, increasing technical and vocational training, opening new educational institutions, and diversifying available fields of study. The public affairs section at the U.S. embassy in Tashkent recently awarded a \$5 million grant to create the English Speaking Nation (ESN) program. The number of private high schools continues to increase, with many focusing on STEM education. Uzbek universities seek partnerships with foreign institutions to support their internationalization efforts. Recently, several U.S. institutions have signed agreements around teacher training and geological sciences.

The new EducationUSA Center at American Corner Qarshi opened its doors to students from the Qashqadaryo region in March 2021, with an additional center opening in Namangan in May 2022. The EducationUSA Qarshi and Namangan advisers work closely with

Fulbright English Teaching Assistants and other American teachers involved in EducationUSA activities and events. EducationUSA plans to open three more centers to meet the country's needs.

Shared linguistic and historical roots have long made Russia a study destination for Central Asian students; however, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and resulting economic instability and political concerns are prompting families to look elsewhere for study and work opportunities. Affordable options and community colleges with articulation agreements with four-year institutions are attractive. In Turkmenistan, there are limited seats in STEM and business programs at the undergraduate level, making foreign institutions attractive. Due to limited access and slow or unreliable internet, flexibility around testing is essential for students from Central Asia.

Steady economic growth and a growing middle class in Bangladesh are leading to increased demand for quality higher education. Interest in graduate studies overseas is expected to increase as political instability and economic challenges impact higher education in SCA. Many students and families realize that obtaining a foreign degree confers prestige and affords the opportunity to develop valuable professional networks. The improving COVID-19 situation and reopening of local schools will allow U.S. HEIs to resume in-person recruitment efforts in the region.

In India, the new [National Education Policy \(NEP\)](#), which replaces the

34-year-old previous version, prioritizes establishing connections with HEIs in the United States. The shift from a three-year system to a four-year degree option bodes well for students applying to U.S. universities. More students from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities in India will seek higher education opportunities in the United States. The [University Grants Commission](#), the Indian government's regulatory body for education, released a draft curriculum framework for four-year degree programs to be implemented in the 2022-2023 academic cycle.

The new policy also shifts focus to a multidisciplinary education that will better align with the pedagogical model in foreign universities, allowing students to transition more easily from one education system to another. Furthermore, the NEP opens up the possibility for top-ranked foreign universities to set up their International Branch Campuses (IBCs) in India.

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

The internet is widely available in the region, but there are significant disparities in speed and accessibility outside major cities. According to [DataReportal.com](#), the percentage of the population using social media has grown. Between 2021 and 2022, total internet users increased by 35.9 percent in Pakistan, by 7 percent in Afghanistan, and by 18.1 percent in Tajikistan. Virtual programming in countries with low connectivity was nonexistent before the pandemic. However, advisers in the region report that over the last year students in smaller

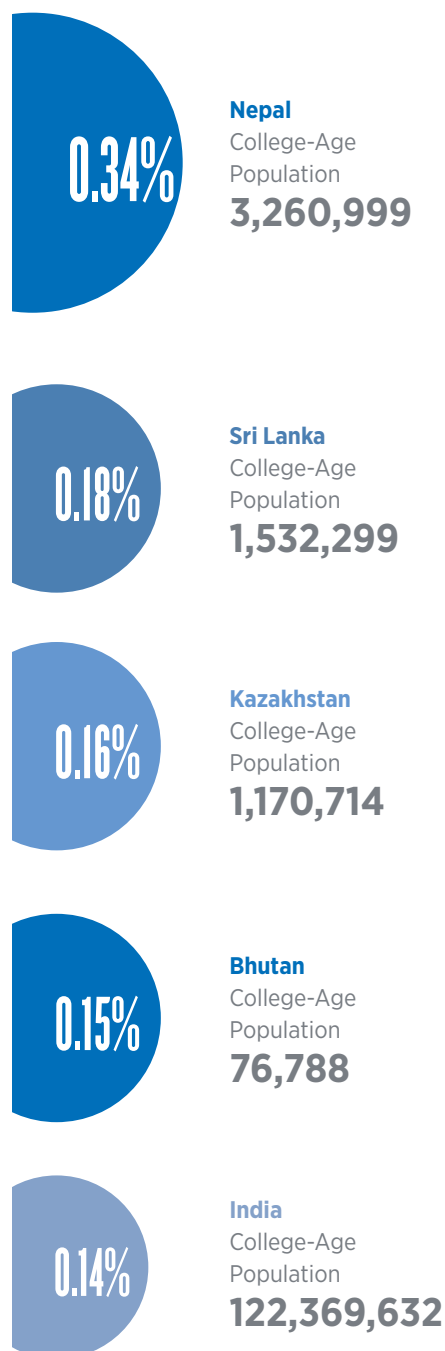
Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2016/17	2020/21	% Change
Kyrgyzstan	216	328	51.9%
Bangladesh	7,143	8,598	20.4%
Turkmenistan	231	269	16.5%
Pakistan	7,015	7,475	6.6%
Uzbekistan	505	538	6.5%

51.9%

Kyrgyzstan has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years **(with over 100 students)**

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

towns and cities have connected with EducationUSA centers and programs online for the first time.

Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Zoom are popular social media platforms throughout the region. They are among the most effective ways for institutions to promote opportunities for international students. The messaging app Telegram is also a popular communication platform in Central Asia. Internet bandwidth in some locations cannot always sustain webinars and video conferencing sessions; however, messaging tools and social media announcements remain highly effective. Messages highlighting student success stories and short, engaging pieces of information are the most popular.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, EducationUSA increased engagement in India via popular social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. The EducationUSA India Instagram account has more than 194,000 followers. EducationUSA Bangladesh's official Facebook page has more than 1.3 million followers.

The Indian government introduced a new Digilocker service that allows citizens virtual access to authentic and official documents as part of an official digital empowerment initiative. Several state boards and Indian universities are gradually opting to use the Digilocker service to provide official documents such as transcripts, diplomas, and letters of recommendation. This service addresses the issue of document authentication for school/university-issued documents, although many Indian HEIs are yet to opt into the service.

Turkmenistan has eased restrictions on popular social media platforms in the past year, and EducationUSA centers increasingly offer webinars and virtual meetings. Students primarily rely on traditional advising methods: in-person sessions, telephone, and email. Instant messaging platforms like Skype or Google Meet have proved highly effective in the past year. Highlighting current student success stories from the region on social media platforms is an effective strategy for gaining visibility. With limited testing options available, flexibility around testing

will be critical to students interested in applying to the United States.

Pakistan is the fifth-most populous country in the world. As of January 2022, the total population was 227 million, with a median age of just over 23. More than 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas. There were nearly 83 million internet users in Pakistan in January 2022, an approximately 36 percent increase over the number in 2021. Nonetheless, over 63 percent of the population is offline, and the majority of internet users are in major metropolitan areas. Internet service is generally reliable in these areas, and less reliable in smaller cities, towns, and remote regions of the country.

Videoconferencing has increased significantly in Pakistan since the COVID-19 pandemic. YouTube is the most popular social media platform, followed by Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram. TikTok has gained momentum since the government lifted a ban in November 2021. Podcasts are also becoming increasingly popular. The recent introduction of Spotify offers a new platform to access a range of podcasts.

Pakistan marked the beginning of 2022 with the EducationUSA Pakistan Mobile App launch. The free digital tool complements EducationUSA's efforts to bring information to students, parents, and educators about study opportunities at accredited postsecondary institutions in the United States. In addition to its user-friendly interface, the EducationUSA app is a timely resource that takes audiences through its content in a smooth, logical flow. India and Nepal have

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2020/21	% Change
India	167,582	-13.2%
Nepal	11,172	-12.2%
Bangladesh	8,598	-2.7%
Pakistan	7,475	-5.8%
Sri Lanka	2,770	-13.6%

South and Central Asia



also implemented a mobile app to reach students and parents.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- Connect with students through EducationUSA college and university fairs throughout the region. Graduate and undergraduate applicants appreciate the opportunity to meet institutional representatives virtually or in person, discuss study options, and pose questions to HEI representatives to ensure that they are well-informed when deciding where to apply.
- Consider organizing summer pre-college programs to create a pipeline toward degree-granting programs. These programs also help students learn about the institution, engage with other international and American students, and connect with faculty.
- Participate in informational seminars that showcase the breadth of U.S. higher education, highlight the strengths of U.S. educational institutions, and offer insights into specific fields of study.
- Organize webinars that are interactive and go beyond a presentation with a question-and-answer period. Look for opportunities to build a connection with students and offer tangible and measurable ways to engage.
- Combine multiple partial financial aid awards into more significant awards for fewer students. Providing more prominent awards attracts quality students who share their positive experiences with peers, encouraging them to apply. Word of mouth is the most effective recruiting tool in the region.
- Engage alumni and train them to promote their alma mater at EducationUSA recruitment fairs. Parents of prospective students are keen to send their children to study in the United States at universities and towns where they know other people from their home country or region have studied.
- Offer opportunities for parents of enrolled students to meet parents of prospective students to provide a sense of security to families anxious about sending children abroad.
- Share information about internship opportunities and other practical training experiences. Students in the region are highly motivated by opportunities to advance their career prospects.
- Research virtual platforms that can facilitate communication with prospective applicants and parents. Students appreciate opportunities to speak directly to admissions representatives or other students. Contact EducationUSA Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) and advisers in the region to organize a webinar for a specific country or group of countries. Collaborating with other HEIs is recommended to help centers accommodate programming.
- Showcase alumni success stories and career trajectories, emphasize the value of a degree from your institution, and highlight affordable financing and

scholarships options. These topics generate strong interest on social media.

- Communicate any test-optional policies or flexibilities your institution offers. Local curricula are rigorous, making it challenging for students to find the time to prepare for admissions tests.
- Connect with high school counselors in specialized private and public schools, conduct workshops for school counselors, teachers, and students, and organize fly-ins. In Kazakhstan, the students at these high schools are eligible and competitive to study in the United States; some possess sufficient resources to fund a U.S. education. EducationUSA Kazakhstan advisers have established productive relationships with counselors at high schools across the country and conduct short-term virtual or in-person workshops for counselors, providing free, accurate information and resources.

Institutional Partnerships

While countries in SCA are eager to establish formal partnerships with U.S. institutions, needs and scope vary. Interested U.S. institutions are encouraged to work with REACs and EducationUSA advising centers, in collaboration with U.S. embassies, to assess and understand the needs of specific countries regarding institutional partnerships. Effective and successful partnerships are those in which both institutions invest time and resources while developing strategies to ensure the sustainability of these academic linkages.

India. U.S. institutions interested in partnerships in India should be prepared to invest time in developing such connections. Institutional partnership grants most frequently supported by the U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) are those where the principal U.S. institutional representative had significant prior association with the Indian partner university. Previous association with HEIs in India and experience navigating complex institutional bureaucracies can be helpful to both parties. U.S. university representatives are encouraged to explore mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborative opportunities, such as twinning programs, faculty and student academic exchanges, research

and secondary school internships, and summer programs.

Pakistan. The U.S.-Pakistan university partnership initiative, funded by the public affairs section of the U.S. embassy in Islamabad, established 23 long-term relationships between Pakistani and American HEIs. Through sustainable peer-to-peer relationships, these three-year partnerships promoted faculty professional development, curriculum reform, joint research, and mutual understanding between Pakistan and the United States. In 2020, the U.S. embassy public affairs section launched a follow-on program, the U.S.-Pakistan University Partnerships Grants Program (UPGP) 2020-2023, in collaboration with the U.S. Educational Foundation in Pakistan, which serves as the implementing partner. Under this program, previous grant recipients are eligible to apply for funding of up to USD\$50,000 to support follow-on projects focused on disseminating the knowledge and expertise acquired

during the partnership program to other Pakistani universities. To participate in this program, university partners may [contact the U.S. Educational Foundation in Pakistan \(USEFP\)](#).

Central Asia. Institutions in Central Asia are eager to explore partnerships focused on enhancing teacher preparation, teaching methodology, and training to support language teaching and learning. U. S. Embassies throughout the region support partnerships through the University Partnerships in Central Asia (UniCEN) program to build capacity for substantive international engagement between HEIs in the United States and Central Asia. Since 2017, the program has supported 70 projects led by U.S. HEIs to improve teacher training.

Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan was the first country in Central Asia to allow international branch campuses, ushering in Russian, British, and U.S. campuses. Through partnerships

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2019/20	% Change
India	1,736	-48.4%
Nepal	351	-45.7%
Bhutan	83	-32.0%
Kyrgyzstan	31	-56.3%
Kazakhstan	22	-55.1%

Five Countries (with over 25 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Nepal	370	351	-5.1%
Bhutan	114	83	-27.2%
Kyrgyzstan	59	31	-47.5%
India	4,181	1,736	-58.5%
Kazakhstan	56	22	-60.7%

South and Central Asia

with U.S. universities, the UniCEN program provides Central Asian universities an understanding of the U.S. higher education system and strategies for successfully engaging and internationalizing. For example, in 2021 the University of California, Davis, and the National University of Uzbekistan organized the Central Asia Genomics Symposium. Purdue University and Urgench State University's collaboration on Ecotourism opportunities in Uzbekistan resulted in a new Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) focused on increasing awareness of ecotourism opportunities in Uzbekistan.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Many national governments across SCA allocate funding each year for students to pursue higher education overseas. Despite such assistance, students with government funding often attend institutions closer to home – in countries such as India, Turkey, and the UK – because of lower tuition, geographical proximity, and familiar cultural traditions. However, many students are eager to study in the United States, and institutions able to offer competitive tuition or discounts have a recruiting advantage.

Bangladesh. Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), the country's premier higher education institution for STEM education, recently announced it would provide three-year-long fellowships to 30 master's and 20 doctoral students to encourage research and innovation.

Kazakhstan. Since 1993, the government's Bolashak International Scholarship has funded postgraduate training to address a shortage of specialists in priority fields. Scholarships are available for those admitted to top global institutions to study toward master's and doctoral degrees and internships in engineering, medicine, and teaching. In AY 2019-2020, 329 students studied in the United States with Bolashak International Scholarship support. The program provides full funding for study in the United States, including a monthly stipend for living expenses, roundtrip airfare, textbook allowances, and health insurance.

In 2022, grants for technical and IT specialties in the Bolashak program will increase from 36 percent to 60 percent

of total grants. The program has also expanded the [list of approved foreign universities](#).

India. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has offered the [National Overseas Scholarship](#) since 1954. The scholarship supports overseas graduate study for low-income students who are recognized as belonging to the following groups: Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, Landless Agricultural Laborers, and Traditional Artisans. The government has invested USD\$206 million annually in this scholarship program.

In 2021, Quad partners Australia, India, Japan, and the United States announced the [Quad Fellowship Program](#) designed to build ties among the next generation of scientists and technologists. This program will sponsor 100 exceptional American, Japanese, Australian, and Indian graduate students in STEM fields to study in the United States. The fellowship will be operated and administered by Schmidt Futures in consultation with a nongovernmental task force.

Nepal. Nepal's Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology and the World Bank launched a USD\$60 million Nurturing Excellence in Higher Education Program. The program seeks support study in fields that address labor market needs, boost collaborative research and innovation, and enhance access for underprivileged and disaster-affected groups in Nepal. This is a five-year program that can help students plan for further studies.

Pakistan. The U.S.-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor, established in February 2017, supports high-level human capital development as outlined in the government of Pakistan's Vision 2025 policy document. This initiative supports Pakistan's efforts to strengthen its university system by increasing the number of Pakistani faculty who obtain a doctoral degree from U.S. universities. Over the next 10 years, the initiative aims to send 10,000 Pakistani scholars to U.S. universities. The Public Sector Development Programme will support 1,500 scholarships in the first phase. Currently, 235 U.S. institutions are on the [approved scholarship list](#) for this program. The scholarship covers travel and living

expenses, and for some scholars, it also covers partial tuition.

Turkmenistan. EducationUSA Turkmenistan offers a year-long cohort model program with a build-up and top-up scholarship. The U.S. embassy in Turkmenistan fully funds the top-up scholarship. It provides a maximum of USD\$20,000 for 16 to 20 alumni annually, to be paid out during the first two years of study at any U.S. institution. In addition, cohorts are eligible for the Opportunity Funds scholarship, which can cover the upfront cost of studying in the United States based on demonstrated talent and needs.

Uzbekistan. The Islam Karimov Foundation, established in 2016 in honor of the late president, organizes a competition to select promising young people to study in U.S. and European master's programs. The foundation's grant supports study in natural sciences (renewable energy and chemistry), water and land resource management, engineering technology, food technology, food safety, food production and marketing, architecture (urban development, and protection and restoration of architectural monuments), design (product design, industrial and architectural design), and fine arts. The grant covers full tuition and living expenses for up to two years.

The El-Yurt Umidi Foundation's government scholarship program introduced new scholarships for the undergraduate level. The foundation offers scholarships for doctoral programs, master's programs, short-term professional development programs, and six-month internship programs. In 2022, the foundation plans to provide scholarships to 125 bachelor's, 180 master's, and 120 doctoral degree students. In early 2022, the foundation administration visited U.S. HEIs to discuss sending more students from Uzbekistan to the United States. Currently, 82 El-Yurt Umidi Foundation scholarship holders are studying at 29 universities in the United States and Canada.

Regional Economics and Market Demands

Many students in the SCA region gravitate toward STEM fields. Over 75 percent of Bangladeshi students in the United States in AY 2020-2021 were pursuing degrees



in STEM fields, with many receiving partial or full funding for graduate degree programs. English-language proficiency is strong in India and Pakistan, and the local postsecondary sector offers high-quality undergraduate programs. As a result, many students complete undergraduate degrees at home and pursue graduate study overseas to enhance their career opportunities. Program quality, research opportunities, and competitiveness are all factors that students consider when applying to U.S. institutions.

India continues to be one of the world's fastest-growing economies. The rise of the middle class has led to growing workforce needs in several areas, including the service sector, technology finance (banking and insurance), information technology (robotics, cybersecurity, data science, machine learning, and blockchain), manufacturing, e-commerce, media, and entertainment. U.S. universities offer cutting-edge programs with specializations catering to these industries' current and future

needs and much-needed expertise and training for both new entrants to the job market and mid-career professionals. The number of startups in India is growing, and many aspiring business leaders are choosing programs that integrate tech and entrepreneurship.

Economic and workforce needs in Central Asia, such as English-language proficiency, differ from those of the subcontinent, where English is widely spoken. Central Asian countries are establishing programs to ensure teachers and students have the skills needed to enter the global market, including English-language proficiency. Key areas of interest are oil and gas, STEM, agriculture, education, and health care. In Nepal, expertise is needed in infrastructure development and management, tourism and hospitality, and information and communication technology.

China's Belt and Road Initiative will leave an indelible mark on the region for years to come. This large-scale infrastructure

investment will expand China's economic influence in the region, creating jobs and attracting students from SCA to study in China to develop the expertise needed to support the initiative.

Many countries in SCA have struggled with weakening economies and currency devaluation. For example, the Kazakhstani tenge has lost nearly half its value against the U.S. dollar since 2014, resulting in significant financial barriers to U.S. study for Kazakh students. Pakistan faces similar economic challenges; while students and parents value the quality of a U.S. education, they are eager to learn about opportunities that meet their educational needs at a more affordable cost. Students from Central Asian countries have shown growing interest in community colleges as a more affordable option to study in the United States. Over 13 percent of Kazakh, 37 percent of Kyrgyz, and 30 percent of Tajik students studying in the United States were at community colleges.

South and Central Asia

For students in Turkmenistan, affordability is the main factor in educational decisions. Countries such as Australia, Canada, Turkey, and Malaysia that offer robust funding and job placements are strong competitors for international students. U.S. HEIs interested in recruiting in Turkmenistan should contact the EducationUSA advising center and highlight the affordability of their programs and/or return on investment to make a compelling case to prospective students.

The birth rate in Kazakhstan has been relatively high since 2003, with the highest numbers of children born in 2005-2007. This demographic will increase the number of applicants for undergraduate programs. The number of highly selective private and public high schools is growing; they employ school counselors and offer college prep programs in addition to a rigorous curriculum and a range of extracurricular activities. In 2022, the U.S. embassy organized a school counselor program with the IC3 Training Institute. In addition, some schools sponsor professional training led by leading U.S. institutions. Kazakh school counselors actively participate in the International Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC), improving their expertise and enlarging their network.

In 2022, more high schools plan to introduce Advanced Placement (AP) classes, with some schools serving as AP centers where students from other schools can take AP classes. This change may lead to an increase in the quality of applicants from Kazakhstan in the next few years. In the past two years, the EducationUSA Almaty and Nur-Sultan centers have developed virtual programs (some open to the public and some only for Competitive College Club participants) that cover all regions of Kazakhstan. Advisers have already seen growing higher interest from students in underserved areas and expect this trend to continue.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

HEIs can find country-specific information about upcoming in-person and virtual events, including fairs and webinars, on the [EducationUSA website](#). REACs regularly host in-person and virtual

workshops and training in the region. Contact the REACs to learn how you can participate in these activities.

In addition to the many in-person and virtual student recruitment opportunities offered through participation in EducationUSA fairs and conferences, EducationUSA advisers provide country briefings, facilitate meetings by U.S. embassy public affairs and consular staff (subject to scheduling availability), give welcome presentations at EducationUSA advising centers, and arrange visits to local high schools or colleges for representatives of U.S. HEIs. Contact the EducationUSA staff to explore options for participating in upcoming events.

Bhutan. In March, the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry organizes an annual International Education Fair in Thimphu.

Central Asia. The EducationUSA Central Asia tour includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. The tour consists of college and university fairs, secondary school visits, cultural activities, and visits to local universities. Many advising centers in the region have strong cohort advising programs composed of students seeking opportunities at the undergraduate level. The tour visits multiple cities including Almaty, Nur-Sultan, and Atyrau in Kazakhstan; Bishkek and Osh in Kyrgyzstan; and Tashkent, Uzbekistan. EducationUSA Central Asia has hosted virtual fairs over the past year, with some events highlighting community colleges and 2+2 options.

India. The EducationUSA India fair tour, traditionally held in the fall, visits as many as 12 cities. EducationUSA India hosts Chalo America, small-group tours in the spring across different cities, and alumni fairs in December and January. EducationUSA India hosts separate undergraduate and graduate virtual fairs in the fall. In collaboration with EducationUSA centers in Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan, EducationUSA India organizes virtual fall graduate and undergraduate fairs, reaching over 13,000 participants. For details about these events, contact IndiaFairs@educationusa.org.

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. EducationUSA advising centers

participate in an array of locally organized international student fairs, the Begin Group's spring and fall international education fairs, and the fall [Bolashak Development Fund](#) Program, with 300 HEIs from around the globe visiting six cities across Kazakhstan.

South Asia. The South Asia tour includes Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The tour offers college and university fairs, secondary school visits, cultural activities, and visits to local universities relevant for graduate-level recruiters. EducationUSA advisers across South Asia leverage social media networks to reach diverse student audiences. Costs are kept as low as possible to offer an affordable recruitment opportunity. The tour traditionally takes place in the spring and fall each year. For details, contact SouthAsiaTour@educationusa.org.

Turkmenistan. The government of Turkmenistan sponsors an annual international exhibition and scientific conference in Ashgabat each November. The EducationUSA advising center in Ashgabat reaches thousands of high school and university students, parents, teachers, professors, and various organizations at this event.

Uzbekistan. Twice a year, Expocontact, under the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, organizes an education and career fair with support from the Ministry of Higher and Secondary-Specialized Education Uzbekistan. More than 30,000 high school students, university students, and faculty attend. This fair is in early April and mid-September. For more information, contact Tashkent@educationusa.org.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to 2021 *Open Doors* data. In AY 2019-2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. Declines in U.S. study abroad programming occurred primarily during spring and summer 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad

programming in 2018-AY 2019, decreased by 99 percent in 2019-2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to over 10,400 students.

According to *2021 Open Doors* data, in AY 2019-2020, South and Central Asia hosted 2,262 U.S. study abroad students. India and Nepal were the largest study abroad destinations in the region. In 2021 and 2022, there has been some rebound of study abroad demand; however, it will take some time before this rebound will be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

Learning a language is a common reason for U.S. students to study abroad in the region. Russian is widely spoken in Kazakhstan, making this a destination for Russian-language learning for foreign students. Tajikistan historically has been a popular destination for students to study Farsi. The government of Kazakhstan sponsors *Go Nomads*, a volunteer program for U.S. citizens to spend one to six months teaching English at local universities and colleges. The program supports the country's initiative to enhance trilingual capacity and increase the number of English-language speakers.

In 2021, U.S. embassies and Fulbright Commissions in India, Nepal, and Tajikistan received Study Abroad Engagement Grants from the USA Study Abroad Branch at the U.S. Department of State to carry out capacity-building projects to promote U.S. study abroad. In addition, the State Department's *IDEAS program* awarded grants to two U.S. HEIs to develop or diversify study abroad programming in India.

U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their departure from the United States so that they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their

institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

U.S. HEI representatives are encouraged to note U.S. Department of State travel warnings posted at travel.state.gov. Regarding holidays, note that the Muslim calendar is lunar-based, and dates vary from year to year. Please check U.S. embassy websites and consult EducationUSA advising centers for a complete list of annual holidays. Exam periods and religious holidays can vary due to multiple academic calendars. Advisers try to accommodate U.S. HEI representatives' needs and plans throughout the year.

Bangladesh. The best times to visit are February, March, August to November. Avoid public holidays, such as Ramadan and Eid holidays.

Bhutan. The best time to visit is from March to June.

India. The best times to visit India for recruitment are July, August, October, and November. States observe local and national holidays, and U.S. HEI representatives are encouraged to check the U.S. embassy in New Delhi's list of holidays for more information.

Kazakhstan. The best times to visit are October to December and late March to April. Avoid visiting during significant exam periods, from January to February and May to June.

Kyrgyzstan. The best time to visit is October to February. Avoid exam times and school holidays from May to August.

The Maldives. The best times to visit are February to July. Avoid holidays.

Nepal. The best time to visit is mid-winter and spring, but avoid exam season, from May to June, and the festival season.

Pakistan. The best time to visit is September to March. Avoid holidays, exams, and school holidays between May and August.

Sri Lanka. The best times to visit are January and February, May to July, and September to November. Avoid visiting during local exams and holidays in March, April, June, August, and December.

Tajikistan. The best times to visit are September to October and April to May. Students are out of school in March, from June to August (for summer break), and December.

Turkmenistan. The best time to visit is from the end of June to November. The primary exam period runs from late May to approximately June 20 and should be avoided.

Uzbekistan. The best times to visit are September to November and February to May.

Western Hemisphere

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela

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EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

77 Comprehensive
58 Standard
28 Reference



An electronic version of this publication containing hyperlinks is available at <https://educationusa.state.gov/us-higher-education-professionals/recruitment-resources/global-guide>

EducationUSA advising centers in the Western Hemisphere (WHA) region are located at U.S. embassies and consulates, binational centers (BNCs), American Spaces, Fulbright Commissions, local higher education institutions (HEIs), national government ministries, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations. Eleven new centers opened within the past year in the following places: Antigua (St. John's), Argentina (Buenos Aires), Brazil (four: Acre, Ceará, Paraná, and Rondônia), Canada (one in Toronto and one in Vancouver), Ecuador (two centers in Guayaquil), and Paraguay (a new tri-border office in Hernandarias). In total, 165 advisers are employed throughout the region, over 40 percent of whom are based at BNCs.

EducationUSA advising centers in the region offer at least one annual pre-departure orientation, which is open to the public, either in person or virtually. During these orientations, advisers collaborate with consular officers, U.S. higher education admissions offices, international student services offices, and alumni to offer comprehensive information to students and their families.

EducationUSA fairs attract many qualified students at all levels of study and take place at least once a year in the Caribbean, Central America, North America, and South America. A key public diplomacy tool for U.S. and local governments, fairs often feature high-profile government officials. EducationUSA centers frequently support education trade missions and state educational consortia visits organized by the U.S. Department of Commerce. EducationUSA advisers also organize and support U.S. embassy- and

consulate-organized alumni fairs, at which U.S. government officials share their experiences as college or university students with the public and distribute information about their alma maters. In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHA region organized its second region-wide virtual fair in lieu of in-person fairs. The fair featured more than 80 U.S. HEIs and attracted more than 9,000 students. Also in 2021, the WHA Master of Laws (LLM) fair was transformed into a webinar series with 40 U.S. law schools and over 3,000 lawyers and prospective law students participating online.

EducationUSA advisers also participate in local fairs organized by private sector organizations to promote student mobility and exchange opportunities in the United States. At these fairs, EducationUSA advisers host information sessions and interact with the public in exhibit halls.

Hosting visits for U.S. HEI representatives is a high priority for EducationUSA advising centers. During these visits, advisers arrange group presentations, open houses, one-on-one appointments, and specialized workshops for tailored audiences at EducationUSA centers and/or local institutions, including secondary schools. Advisers also organize webinars to connect U.S. college and university representatives with local students, parents, and counselors to provide information about opportunities to study in the United States and offer insights on application processes. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EducationUSA implemented more virtual opportunities for U.S. HEI engagement with local audiences, including frequent webinars, showcases, open houses, college days,



Facebook and Instagram Live interviews, and virtual workshops.

Advisers report that the expansion of virtual engagement during the pandemic has increased the volume of requests for advising services from more diverse student audiences. Advisers continue to find innovative ways to assist students virtually by providing them with the support they normally offer through in-person interactions. Advisers rely on social media tools (such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp) to promote and deliver EducationUSA services.

Advising centers in the region connect with currently enrolled international students in the United States as well as international alumni of U.S. institutions and U.S. government exchange programs to support activities such as alumni fairs, cohort advising, outreach to

prospective students, and, more recently, video campaigns through which alumni share their experiences as international students. Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETAs), Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs), Gilman Scholars, and other Americans studying or working abroad also collaborate with EducationUSA on various activities, including writing workshops, English tutoring, and outreach visits in remote areas.

Many universities overseas continue to express interest in developing and strengthening partnerships with U.S. HEIs to increase academic exchanges and support research collaboration between the United States and institutions in the WHA region. To strengthen internationalization efforts, EducationUSA advisers in several countries facilitate engagement between U.S. and local universities, offering capacity-building workshops on best practices for study

abroad that are funded by the USA Study Abroad Branch of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA).

The EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program, serving high-achieving prospective students who demonstrate significant financial need, is available to students in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. During the past year, 170 students from across the region were enrolled in the program.

Regional Overview

The Western Hemisphere is a diverse region of 35 countries and a population of approximately 900 million. Five countries in WHA are among the global top 25 senders of international students to the United States (Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela). The

Western Hemisphere

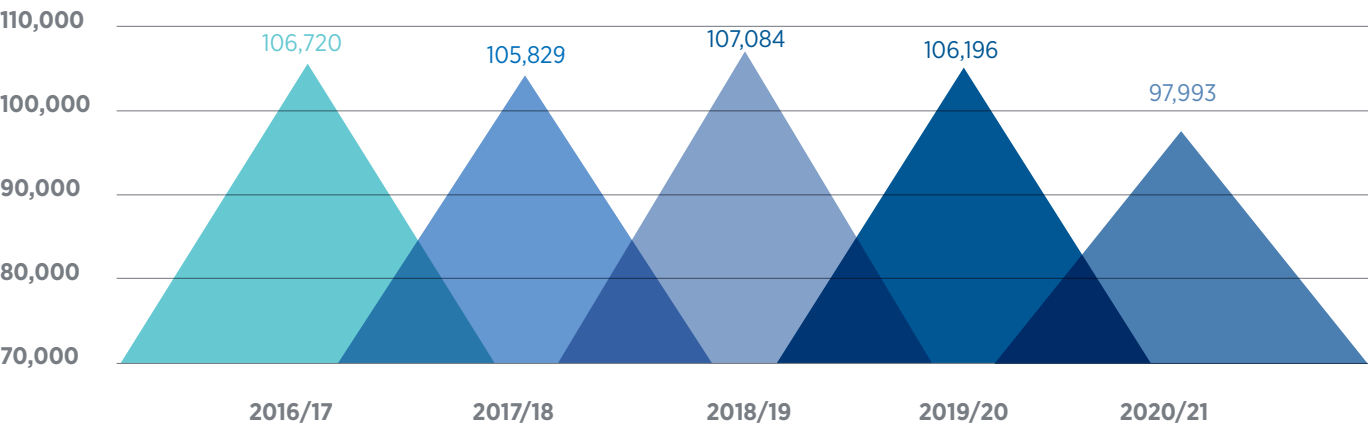


region as a whole is second only to Asia in international student mobility to the United States. In the academic year (AY) 2020-2021, 97,993 students from the region studied in the United States. The region has recently seen steady growth in the numbers of undergraduate and graduate students studying in the United States and represents just over 10 percent of the total international student population in the United States according to the Institute of International Education's (IIE) *2021 Open Doors® Report on International Educational Exchange*.

Prior to 2020, many countries in the region were already suffering from economic recessions, which the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated. This economic landscape has impacted students' short-term plans to study abroad as families are forced to re-evaluate their finances. However, interest in studying in the United States remains high, and many students are interested in hybrid programs that will allow them to work in their home countries while also experiencing U.S. study. Countries in the region have diverse economies and

deep disparities in purchasing power and in gross domestic product per capita. Access to quality education at the primary school level and beyond is a challenge for some communities across the region, and access to internet connectivity varies greatly. While an average of 79 percent of people in the region have internet access, connectivity ranges from 33 percent in Haiti to more than 96 percent in Canada. Petroleum, mining, agriculture, manufacturing industries, health-related services, and other services (including

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



banking and tourism) continue to be top employment sectors in many countries in the region. As a result, the Americas remain focused on expanding science, technology, and innovation initiatives and on developing a strong, capable workforce to grow local and regional economies. Advisers report that students' top choices of academic discipline in 2021 were business and entrepreneurship, STEM, and social sciences.

While in some ways a cohesive region, the WHA's languages, cultures, and educational systems vary by subregion. Educational systems follow the British, Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Spanish models, in combination with regional credentialing models aimed at achieving standardization across subregions. Academic calendars vary across the region, and some pose challenges for students submitting required application documents in time for U.S. college and university admissions deadlines.

Flight options in the region can be limited, but direct travel between countries is possible through regional hubs. Flight availability between smaller cities is often infrequent. Ground transportation may be the only option for traveling within smaller countries. Travelers to the region should refer to [U.S. Department of State travel advisories](#) for up-to-date guidance and recommendations, paying careful attention to local conditions.

Recent Trends

EducationUSA advisers frequently address questions from students related to security and safety on U.S. campuses, and now health as well, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Advisers work hard to dispel misconceptions, sharing examples of common campus security and public health practices and highlighting the benefits of U.S. study.

Local political and economic conditions continue to impact student mobility to the United States. Economic instability forces young professionals to delay graduate studies or seek more affordable options in the region or in other parts of the world, while local security concerns drive parents to consider sending their children abroad for undergraduate studies. Despite financial barriers to U.S. study, many families in the region recognize its value and are willing to invest in it.

Offers of in-state tuition and the presence of diaspora communities continue to attract WHA students to the United States. As a result of Mexico and Canada's proximity to the United States, students from these countries tend to be concentrated in border states. An increasing number of international students appear to express a preference for institutions located in predominantly urban and coastal areas of the United States, where they anticipate the presence of diaspora and immigrant communities.

In some WHA countries, industry is investing in academia, and public-private partnerships to fund international educational initiatives are becoming more common. Bilateral dialogues between the United States and countries in the region have prioritized workforce development, resulting in a focus on partnerships between nontraditional institutions (such as technical universities) and U.S. community colleges.

Teacher training through exchanges is increasingly a central component of national and regional educational programs and policy. Governments are focused on strengthening local teachers' language and pedagogical skills. Many local governments are funding short-term English-language programs for students and teachers, and these programs are now more readily available in non-English-speaking countries across the region.

There is also increased interest in institutional partnership building to increase student mobility, collaborative research, and other internationalization efforts. Local colleges and universities are eager to explore virtual or hybrid programs to increase international opportunities for students and faculty, as well as dual degrees and transfer agreements. There is special interest in Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiatives to offer a U.S. academic experience directly to local classrooms.

In some southern South American countries, high schools offer dual local country-U.S. high school diplomas. Several universities and companies (Texas Tech University, University of Missouri, Griggs International, and Pearson Academy, among others) have partnered

with high schools to offer required courses in English, leading to a U.S. high school diploma. Such programs have created a new pool of highly qualified students for U.S. HEIs to engage.

Students from the region continue to express interest in two-year institutions and the transfer process between U.S. community colleges and four-year institutions as an affordable option for study in the United States. Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Canada, and El Salvador all have high percentages of students enrolling in U.S. community colleges.

As students look for more affordable U.S. study options, EducationUSA advisers report an increased interest in virtual programs including internships, co-ops, and research.

Top Senders and Countries to Watch

Below are the top 10 countries in the region by number of students studying in the United States. *Student Mobility Facts and Figures* sheets for all countries are available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

1. [Canada](#)
2. [Brazil](#)
3. [Mexico](#)
4. [Colombia](#)
5. [Venezuela](#)
6. [Peru](#)
7. [Jamaica](#)
8. [Ecuador](#)
9. [Bahamas](#)
10. [Chile](#)

What to Expect Over the Next Three to Five Years

Online education and sustainable academic partnerships are gaining momentum in North and Central America and the Caribbean, offering U.S. HEIs new opportunities for training and engagement. Programs offering skills development for students, faculty, and researchers such as virtual exchanges, research, and internships as well as joint degrees and short-term certifications will continue to be in demand.

Mexico and most Central American countries continue to prioritize workforce development, and there is strong interest in short-term certificate programs and partnerships between local technical universities and U.S. community colleges.

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Public-private partnerships in Mexico and Central America are popular models for supporting regional academic exchange initiatives.

Caribbean 2020, a U.S. government interagency strategy for engagement in the Caribbean, identifies education as one of six priority areas. The education priority focuses on support for public-private sector collaborations that facilitate higher education and workforce development in the United States and the Caribbean, as well as the efforts of U.S. colleges and universities to recruit qualified students from the region.

Students in the Andean region show continued interest in studying abroad, and the United States is the preferred destination. This trend is expected to continue in the next three to five years. In 2021 Ecuador saw a 70 percent increase in demand for individual advising services, demonstrating that a growing number of students are seeking admission at U.S. institutions. Bolivia is a market to watch; advisers report that there is increased interest among young students in becoming global citizens. Thanks to social media, Bolivian students are more connected than ever and interested in international experiences. Advisers in Colombia and Ecuador report a growing demand for intensive English programs.

The region's economy has been severely impacted by the pandemic, leading to deep devaluation of some local currencies and making it difficult for students to afford to study abroad. In the next

couple of years students will look for more affordable study destinations and for funding opportunities. Community colleges will be an appealing option for students interested in undergraduate studies. Graduate students will continue to seek hybrid programs that allow them to save money by studying virtually from home while maintaining an in-person component.

Though Venezuelans continue to prioritize the United States as a study destination, the economic and humanitarian crisis has forced many students to seek more affordable and accessible opportunities in neighboring countries. Despite challenges, EducationUSA advisers in Venezuela and throughout the region continue to support Venezuelans who want to study in the United States. Venezuela will hold presidential elections in 2024, and there is hope for a political transition that could re-establish United States-Venezuela diplomatic relations. If this happens, expect an increase in student mobility to the United States. Nevertheless, economic challenges will continue to exist, limiting educational opportunities.

EducationUSA advisers in South America's southern cone are creating new pools of prospective students for U.S. HEI recruitment through advising cohort programs in schools that offer dual high school diplomas (U.S. and local country's). These connections will make it easier for U.S. HEIs to establish rapport and organize visits to recruit students directly at these schools. Paraguay has expanded its EducationUSA presence

with the hiring of three new advisers, all of whom are graduates of U.S. HEIs, for Asunción and the new tri-border office in Hernandarias (which will serve Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay). Universities and schools in the region are now beginning to reopen for in-person gatherings, so look for upcoming recruitment trips in the region to all southern cone countries.

EducationUSA virtual events are increasingly popular across the region. The EducationUSA Brazil Virtual Roadshow in spring 2022 attracted double the number of student registrations as the last in-person event in 2019. Several new advising centers have opened in this region over the past year, helping to meet the increased demand for services. Advisers in Brazil are seeing a renewed interest in studying in the United States.

U.S. and local HEIs are collaborating on innovative recruitment activities in the region. Best practices include dual-degree agreements, online credit-bearing visiting student programs, and institutional partnerships that facilitate pathways for transfer between institutions in specific disciplines. Online collaboration has increased engagement between U.S. universities and students interested in certificate programs. As these students conclude undergraduate or certificate programs, many apply for graduate programs at the U.S. universities in which they were previously enrolled.

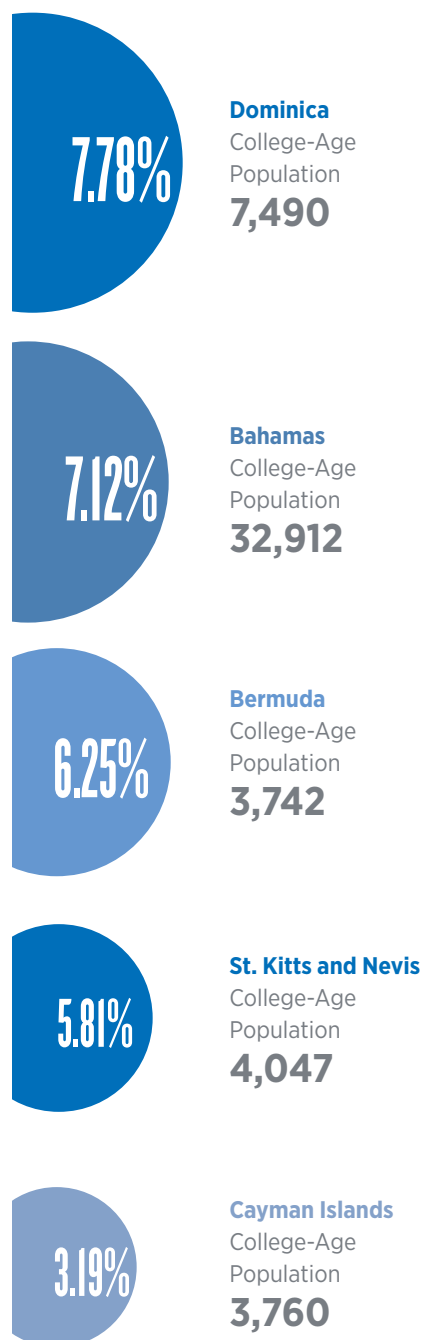
Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2016/17	2020/21	% Change
Dominica	271	583	115.1%
Guyana	250	358	43.2%
Paraguay	587	804	37.0%
Nicaragua	398	478	20.1%
Haiti	958	1,067	11.4%

115.1%

Dominica has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years **(with over 100 students)**

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2018 or most recent Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

EducationUSA centers in the region maintain active Instagram and Facebook accounts, with over 79,000 and 400,000 followers, respectively. Advisers also engage through other platforms, such as Twitter, YouTube, and blogs. Advisers use WhatsApp to disseminate information about upcoming events and for cohort advising. Advisers conduct virtual advising and virtual office hours using platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet. Facebook ads and Facebook Live are also effective outreach tools in the region. The following examples highlight virtual initiatives in the WHA region.

The EducationUSA North America, Central America, and the Caribbean (NCAC) regional working group of senior advisers organizes webinars, workshops, professional roundtables, and showcases on diverse topics, providing opportunities for U.S. HEIs to share their expertise with students, parents, counselors, and teachers in this subregion. All sessions are available for students to watch on demand through EducationUSA's [YouTube channel](#). HEIs wishing to get involved can indicate interest by completing this [survey](#).

Through weekly programs on Facebook and Instagram, EducationUSA Canada regularly provides information on Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study to large audiences. EducationUSA Canada also offers a virtual SAT prep boot camp in the spring and essay-writing boot camp in the summer.

EducationUSA Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay have developed online cohort advising programs to reach larger and more diverse student audiences. Social media campaigns on topics such as Black History and Women's History months have attracted significant student interest. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay have revamped their websites in local languages (Spanish and Portuguese), highlighting U.S. university webinars through online agendas and International Education Week (IEW) [events](#). Instagram Live sessions and social media takeovers by currently enrolled students are popular in the region. By offering all presentations, workshops, and cohort advising groups virtually, EducationUSA southern cone has

expanded to advise more students from a wider variety of locations.

To meet increased demand from U.S. institutions for virtual engagement with Colombian students, EducationUSA Colombia created a [webinar request form](#) that allows EducationUSA to better coordinate and promote events.

EducationUSA advisers in the Andean region work together to create regional social media campaigns and virtual programming to have a wider reach in the region. Advisers welcome U.S. HEIs interested in collaborating in these regional virtual spaces.

Internet connectivity issues and local power outages in Venezuela make virtual activities challenging. During EducationUSA webinars and virtual workshops, advisers also connect with students via WhatsApp, which is an accessible and reliable platform in Venezuela.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- Interact with students through EducationUSA webinars and in-person presentations at advising centers when local health, safety, and travel conditions allow.
- Incorporate alumni into student engagement strategies. Consult local EducationUSA advisers when engaging alumni to represent your institution.
- Connect prospective students with currently enrolled international students on campus who are willing to share their personal experiences.

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2019/20	% Change
Canada	25,143	-3.3%
Brazil	14,000	-16.0%
Mexico	12,986	-9.5%
Colombia	7,107	-8.7%
Venezuela	6,122	-10.7%

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- Coordinate with other U.S. HEIs to offer group presentations, seminars, workshops, and mini-fairs virtually or at EducationUSA centers. Collaborative sessions are effective, given the demand for EducationUSA services and students' limited time to participate in events.
- Contact EducationUSA advisers in locations that are off the beaten path. These connections may yield new opportunities to reach diverse student populations.
- Distribute materials in local languages, including Dutch, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, and employ local-language speaking representatives in recruitment efforts to engage parents in meaningful ways.
- Consider recruiting qualified students from prominent national (i.e., public) secondary schools in addition to international schools.
- Stay informed about faculty-led study abroad programs. Encourage professors and students to visit EducationUSA advising centers to meet local students

when traveling abroad and ask students to share their experiences.

- Explore in-person and virtual internship opportunities at EducationUSA advising centers. Students can gain skills, assist advisers, and help promote their institution locally.

Institutional Partnerships

Many institutions in the region have established specific internationalization goals and are eager to explore institutional linkages, including faculty exchanges, research or internship programs, and group study abroad for both inbound and outbound students. Dual and/or joint degrees and collaborative online education are also increasingly common. Many local institutions seek language training for faculty to facilitate more instruction in English and attract U.S. and other international students.

Before pursuing new institutional partnerships, inventory faculty on existing relationships – formal and informal – with HEIs and their faculty counterparts in the region. Identify the types of programs

that are or would be relevant and sustainable for both institutions.

Organize meetings with local institutional representatives to outline priorities, explore opportunities, and discuss sustainability. Contact a Regional Educational Advising Coordinator (REAC) to develop an initial strategy prior to engaging prospective partners. In some cases, EducationUSA can also share local institution and/or higher education association contact information.

Maintain regular follow-up conversations with local institutions after visits. Subsequent in-person meetings may be needed to solidify relationships. Including staff who speak the local language offers a strategic advantage.

The *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund is the signature hemisphere-wide public-private sector collaboration between the U.S. Department of State (WHA Bureau), U.S. embassies, and Partners of the Americas, working with private, public, and academic sectors throughout the Americas to build institutional capacity, increase student and faculty mobility, and provide access to inclusive education and training programs. The 100K Strong initiative harnesses the power of education and creates enduring links between governments, private sector, and academic networks that are critical to the economies of the Americas.

Since 2014 and to date as of April 2022, the Innovation Fund has awarded 278 grants (USD\$25,000 to USD\$40,000 each) to 534 HEIs working in teams across 25 countries and 49 U.S. states. Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Chile, and Costa Rica are currently the leading 100K grant recipient countries in the region. Thus far, the Innovation Network, managed by Partners of the Americas in coordination with WHA/PDA, is comprised of over 2,300 regional HEIs, including over 1,200 universities and colleges in the United States.

EducationUSA advisers in the WHA region are actively engaged in promoting and facilitating 100K partnership development between U.S. colleges and universities with regional HEIs in Latin America. Learn more and apply for 100K Innovation Fund opportunities at the [100K website](https://www.educationusa.state.gov/100k).

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Argentina. The Ministry of Education's Department of International Scholarships and International Cooperation (DGCIN) funds scholarships for graduate studies in the United States and supports teaching assistants and researchers. The City of Buenos Aires Magistrates' Council awards Master of Laws (LLM) scholarships through the Fulbright Commission in Argentina as well as three-month research grants. The National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), the National Institute for Agricultural and Technological Research (INTA), and Bunge and Born-Williams Foundation award research grants to local scholars. Instituto Argentino del Petroleo y del Gas (IAPG) Houston offers grants to pursue master's degrees in petroleum engineering, geology, renewable energies, environmental sciences, and related fields.

Aruba. The government of Aruba provides loans to bachelor's- and master's-level students pursuing study overseas. Aruban students pursuing study in the United States are eligible to apply for a starter package of 17,000 Aruban florin (AWG) and 15,375 AWG per academic term for up to eight terms at a 2 percent interest rate.

Antigua and Barbuda. Antigua and Barbuda offer a government-funded grant of approximately USD\$5,000 annually as well as low-interest loans to students pursuing postsecondary studies, including online study at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Bahamas. Lyford Cay Foundations Scholarships provide maximum awards of USD\$30,000 to approximately 100 Bahamian students each year to pursue undergraduate, graduate, and technical education abroad. In addition, the Ministry of Education has implemented a tiered system to award grants and merit-based scholarships ranging from USD\$7,500 to USD\$35,000 for study abroad.

Barbados. The Barbados Scholarships and Exhibitions are merit-based awards offered to approximately 30 undergraduate-level students with high scores on the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) or in an associate's degree program at the Barbados Community College. The scholarship covers tuition and airfare

and provides a stipend of approximately USD\$3,500 per year for study at home or abroad. In addition, approximately 10 students per year receive National Development Scholarships, which provide financial support to students ages 18 to 40 who have been accepted by an accredited university abroad, including in the United States, at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Bolivia. Soberanía is a government scholarship program that offers full funding for graduate studies at select international universities, including in the United States, mainly in STEM-related fields. Since 2021, the program also includes funding for undergraduate programs in the areas of nuclear engineering and nuclear physics.

Brazil. The Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) has sharply reduced the number of scholarships it offers to support study both within Brazil and

abroad. The Fulbright Commission in Brazil works with CAPES to expand Fulbright's professional development support for public school teachers in one-month teacher training programs at U.S. HEIs. EducationUSA collaborates with the Lemann Foundation, which supports the participation of 10 graduate students, all indigenous and Afro-Brazilians, in the EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program.

Canada. The Killam Fellowships Program, administered by Fulbright Canada, provides support for exceptional students to study at U.S. HEIs for one semester or a full academic year. This program provides a cash award of USD\$5,000 per semester. More information is available on the [Fulbright Canada website](#). The [Mitacs Globalink Research Award](#) provides USD\$6,000 for seniors in undergraduate programs, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows in Canada to conduct 12- to 24-week research projects at universities overseas.

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region		
Destination	2019/20	% Change
Costa Rica	3,917	-53.0%
Mexico	2,999	-52.7%
Argentina	1,920	-42.1%
Ecuador	1,787	-51.4%
Chile	1,332	-58.2%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth/Lowest Percentage Decline, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)			
Country	2015/16	2019/20	% Change
Uruguay	142	197	38.7%
El Salvador	120	114	-5.0%
Bermuda	131	118	-9.9%
Panama	1,256	892	-29.0%
Barbados	177	109	-38.4%

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Chile. The National Agency for Research and Development (ANID) (formerly known as the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research) administers Becas Chile and other programs that promote research opportunities in all disciplines, technological development, and scientific-technological innovation. In 2022, the new government of Chile brought back all Becas Chile graduate scholarships, providing an opportunity for U.S. HEIs to recruit fully sponsored Chilean students.

Colombia. The Foundation for the Future of Colombia (**COLFUTURO**), a nonprofit foundation established in 1991 with the support of the government of Colombia and the private sector, provides loans for graduate study abroad. These loans can be converted to partial scholarships if graduates meet requirements such as working for the public sector upon graduation. **ICETEX**, the Colombian government entity that promotes higher education through national and international educational credits, offers loans for students to pursue graduate study abroad. The Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (**MinCiencias**) offers scholarships for doctoral studies in the United States. Some of this funding

is administered through the Fulbright Commission in Colombia as Fulbright doctoral grants.

Costa Rica. The Costa Rica United States Foundation for Cooperation (**CRUSA**) supports international exchange and student mobility initiatives in STEM fields using tools that include the EducationUSA Opportunity Funds program. In 2022, through collaboration with the BNC Centro Cultural Costarricense Norteamericano and its EducationUSA center, CRUSA plans to support eight students with awards of approximately USD\$40,000 to pursue technical degrees at community colleges.

Dominica. The Dominica government awards one Island Scholarship each year to the student with the highest score on the **CAPE**. The government also awards approximately five scholarships annually to the top student in each of the faculties of Dominica State College.

Dominican Republic. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (**MESCyT**) continues to support study abroad at the graduate level and for certificate programs. MESCyT prioritizes master's and doctoral degrees

in engineering, technology, science, public health, education, and agriculture. The ministry seeks to establish articulation agreements with U.S. research-focused universities that offer tuition waivers or in-state tuition for scholars from the Dominican Republic. These scholarships can also be used for hybrid and joint-degree programs offered in partnership between U.S. and local HEIs.

Guatemala. The GuateFuturo Foundation offers loans of as much as USD\$50,000 for master's programs. Students are eligible for scholarships of up to 50 percent of the loaned amount, provided they receive their degree within a certain time frame and return to Guatemala and satisfy residency requirements (typically three to five years). Students can obtain an additional 10 percent discount if, upon returning home, they complete one year of continuous employment in the public sector, teaching, or research, or if they work in the interior of the country (outside of the Department of Guatemala). Those pursuing master's degrees in management or business programs are limited to 25 percent of the loan amount as a scholarship.

Honduras. The HonduFuturo Foundation offers the same model of support as GuateFuturo, with loans of up to USD\$50,000. Students can obtain an additional 10 percent discount if, upon returning to the country, they immediately engage in employment for one full year as teachers in local universities. Those pursuing master's degrees in management or Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs are limited to 25 percent of the loan amount as a scholarship.

Mexico. The U.S. embassy in Mexico, with support from local higher education associations and in partnership with U.S. HEIs, offers a series of short-term programs focused on women and minority empowerment as well as research. In addition to managing traditional Fulbright exchanges, the Fulbright Commission in Mexico (COMEXUS) supports short-term programs in undergraduate research, teacher training, and professional internships, both in Mexico and the United States. The government of Mexico supports graduate students mainly via the Fulbright Commission, the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT), and the Human Resources Development Fund (FIDERH). Local NGOs such as the Mexican Foundation for Education, Technology and Science (FUNED) and the Becas Magdalena O. Vda. de Brockmann offer scholarships and loans to Mexican graduate students.

Panama. The Panamanian government's National Secretariat for Science, Technology, and Innovation (SENACYT) administers several scholarship programs, including the Fulbright-SENACYT scholarship, at the undergraduate and graduate levels in a range of fields. The scholarship was recently expanded to include doctoral study, postdoctoral fellowships, and internships. To date, this program has provided full funding for over 700 Panamanian students in the United States. The Panamanian government's Institute for Training and Development of Human Resources (IFARHU) offers loans of up to USD\$80,000 to support undergraduate and graduate study abroad as well as scholarships for short-term, intensive language training. IFARHU has established agreements with U.S. HEIs to provide merit-based scholarships for students with financial need, which can

be used to cover the costs for English pathway programs.

Paraguay. The Paraguayan government's Programa Nacional de Becas en el Exterior don Carlos Antonio López (BECAL) scholarship program funds master's and doctoral students in education and STEM fields at specific U.S. HEIs. The program added a new scholarship for students who want to pursue online master's degree programs during the pandemic. The Kansas-Paraguay Partners of the America out-of-state tuition waiver agreements have contributed to a steady flow of Paraguayan students attending colleges and universities in Kansas every year. BECAL has established a partnership with the Paraguay Kansas Committee, which funds 50 students from Paraguay to participate in a semester abroad at HEIs in Kansas yearly. The U.S. embassy and EducationUSA Paraguay have offered webinars to promote U.S. embassy-driven Fulbright scholarships. In the past year, there has been an increase in the number of Fulbright-CAL scholarships, co-funded by the Paraguayan government.

Peru. PRONABEC is the government agency that manages scholarship programs, including Beca Generación del Bicentenario (previously known as Beca Presidente de la República), a full scholarship program for graduate studies abroad that awards approximately 150 scholarships each year. In 2022, PRONABEC will take into consideration any partial funding students can secure from other sources, such as an assistantship, when evaluating a candidate's scholarship application. The scholarship continues to use a list of approved universities based on international rankings. This year, 159 U.S. institutions are included on the list.

Reto Excelencia-SERVIR is a government "loan-scholarship" program that supports public servants pursuing graduate studies abroad. To date, more than 344 government employees have benefited from this opportunity. Contact cusco@educationusa.org for updates on these two scholarships.

Through the private sector, a new scholarship called *Beca Cometa* will fully fund 20 Peruvian students' undergraduate studies each year at select

U.S. universities, annually. This initiative is led by Intercorp Group, one of the largest business conglomerates in the country.

Uruguay. The government of Uruguay nominates candidates for U.S. embassy exchange programs and has recently engaged more closely on Fulbright academic programs. Every year, the National Agency for Research and Innovation (ANII) funds [Fulbright scholarships](#) for study at U.S. institutions to earn master's or doctoral degrees in subjects such as biotechnology, environmental sciences, information and communications technology, human and animal health, energy, education, creative industries, agribusiness and agro-industry, transportation, and criminology. Of all ANII funds, 40 percent are dedicated to supporting students attending U.S. institutions.

Organization of American States (OAS).

Students from member countries are eligible for [Rowe Fund loans](#). These interest-free loans are available at the graduate level throughout the region and for undergraduate studies in English-speaking Caribbean countries. The Rowe Fund allows EducationUSA Opportunity Funds students from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Uruguay to apply for the loan without a cosigner.

Regional Economics and Market Demands

The majority of governments in the region have identified STEM-related fields as key priorities for workforce development and economic growth. Governments in the region support both technical and research-related pursuits in STEM fields, and strategic sectors include oil, gas, mining, agribusiness, and health care. Several countries, such as Colombia, are investing in the "Orange Economy" and considering how culture and creative industries can play a pivotal role in economic development. Entrepreneurship is also a regional focus as countries consider ways to support small-business growth. Several countries also rely on service industries (tourism, banking, information) as major employment sectors.

Countries in the region seek opportunities to collaborate on tailored, non-degree, short-term programs, especially for

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technical education. Such programs include internships and other hands-on experiences for young professionals, virtual education opportunities, and capacity-building opportunities with local academic institutions as well as the public and private sectors.

Regional EducationUSA Events, Fairs, and Conferences (in person and virtual)

Refer to a specific country's EducationUSA website and social media accounts to find current, country-specific information about upcoming fairs, webinars, center events, and other activities. Contact the REAC covering the region you are interested in engaging. Additional opportunities include participation in beginner adviser trainings, thematic sub-regional workshops, and capacity-building workshops for local HEIs.

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Regional Forum. In November 2022, EducationUSA WHA will host a regional forum in San José, Costa Rica, to offer professional development and networking opportunities for U.S. HEI representatives and EducationUSA advisers from the WHA. More information on the EducationUSA Western Hemisphere Regional Forum is available on the [EducationUSA website](#).

The EducationUSA Brazil Roadshow is an opportunity to recruit students, meet key leaders in internationalization, and establish partnerships. The roadshow was offered as a webinar series in 2022 that addressed different themes related to applying to U.S. HEIs. In August 2022, EducationUSA Brazil will be hosting an in-person Roadshow with stops in five cities. Contact roadshowbrazil@educationusa.org.br for updates.

Canada. EducationUSA Canada held its first virtual fair in April 2022. The event featured 100 U.S.-based HEIs emphasizing their undergraduate degree programs. A second iteration of this event is expected to take place in spring 2023.

Caribbean. In 2021, EducationUSA Bahamas, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago hosted their first virtual subregional fair in place of the traditional annual in-person Caribbean fair circuit. A second edition of this event, likely to be hybrid, is planned for fall 2022, possibly

in advance of the 2022 EducationUSA Regional Forum. Contact caribbeantour@educationusa.org for status updates.

Colombia STEM Fair. This annual STEM-focused fair takes place in March and typically includes stops in various cities in Colombia. During the past two years, this fair has been virtual. In 2022, approximately 600 students joined the virtual event which featured 31 U.S. institutions. Contact colombiatour@educationusa.org for information on future Colombia fairs.

EducationUSA Central America Fairs. Each year, EducationUSA Central America organizes theme-based, multi-country fairs during the spring semester. For example, in May 2022, EducationUSA Costa Rica and Panama hosted a virtual science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) open house, featuring 50 U.S.-based HEIs. The event was designed to promote undergraduate and graduate programs in STEAM and offered opportunities for group conversations between U.S. HEIs and potential students. For information about future fairs in Central America, contact centralamericafair@educationusa.org.

High School Counselor Training Workshops. EducationUSA Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Eastern Caribbean islands, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago regularly organize training workshops on U.S. higher education for local high school counselors.

EducationUSA LLM Webinar Series. EducationUSA plans to offer its third virtual hemisphere-wide regional LLM webinar series in November 2022. There will also be an in-person LLM fair tour from October 23–November 2 including stops in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile (other countries TBD). Contact llmfair@educationusa.org for more information.

EducationUSA Mexico Community College Open House. This community-college focused event is embedded into EducationUSA Mexico's strategic plan, with strong support from the U.S. embassy in Mexico. The event highlights affordability, accessibility, and skills development for Mexican students and young professionals. A second iteration of this virtual event will take place in fall

2022. Contact mexico@educationusa.org for more information.

WHA EducationUSA Virtual Fair. While historically this has been an in-person fair circuit across South America, EducationUSA will offer its third virtual hemisphere-wide regional fair on August 24, 2022. Contact southamfair@educationusa.org for more details.

Venezuela. EducationUSA Venezuela offers "mock fairs" that reach more than 6,000 students per year. As local conditions for the past several years have made it difficult for U.S. higher education representatives to visit the country, U.S. HEIs have helped to prepare English-language students from local binational centers to represent them at these fairs. Represented HEIs frequently send materials for these fairs and promote these fairs widely on their social media platforms.

Alumni Fairs. EducationUSA regularly hosts alumni fairs featuring U.S. embassy and consulate officers sharing their personal experiences at their alma maters. U.S. HEIs are encouraged to share informational materials with the organizers for use in these fairs.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The COVID-19 global pandemic affected U.S. study abroad programs across the United States and to all global destinations, resulting in a 53 percent decline overall, according to the most recent *Open Doors* data. In AY 2019–2020, the most recently measured, 162,633 American students studied abroad for academic credit, most of whom enrolled in programs prior to March 2020. Declines in U.S. study abroad programming occurred primarily during spring and summer 2020. Summer programs, which comprised 39 percent of all U.S. study abroad programming in AY 2018–2019, decreased by 99 percent in 2019–2020. During spring 2020, 867 U.S. HEIs launched emergency efforts to return students to the United States, bringing a reported 55,000 students home from their studies early amid the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. study abroad programs were able to pivot and offer alternative modes of study abroad. For example, 242 institutions reported offering online global learning experiences to over 10,400 students.



According to 2021 *Open Doors* data, in AY 2019-2020, over 22,000 U.S. students studied abroad in the WHA region, which hosted almost 14 percent of the total U.S. study abroad population. Costa Rica continues to be the region's top-receiving country – and 10th most popular study abroad destination overall – hosting 3,917 U.S. students in AY 2019-2020. Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru are also leading destinations in the region, and all are ranked among the top 25 for U.S. students studying abroad. It is noteworthy that Antigua, Aruba, the Bahamas, Bolivia, Colombia, Dominica, El Salvador, and Uruguay were rapidly growing destinations in AY 2019-2020 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021 and 2022, there has been some rebound of study abroad demand; however, it will take some time before this rebound will be reflected in *Open Doors* data.

In 2021, U.S. embassies, consulates, or Fulbright Commissions in Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Mexico, and Bolivia received Study Abroad Engagement Grants from the USA Study Abroad Branch of the Department of State to carry out capacity-building projects to promote U.S. study abroad. In

addition, the State Department's **IDEAS program** awarded grants to 10 U.S. HEIs to develop or diversify study abroad programming in the Bahamas, Barbados, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, and the United States.

U.S. study abroad students are welcome to join EducationUSA programming activities throughout the region. U.S. institutions are encouraged to provide information and resources to study abroad participants prior to their

departure from the United States so they can promote the institution to local audiences. Students have delivered general presentations about their institutions, joined conversation groups, assisted with mock admissions interviews, and participated in alumni fairs and other events that allowed them to engage with local high school and university students.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (in person and virtual)

U.S. HEI representatives are encouraged to review and consider U.S. Department of State travel warnings posted at travel.state.gov. In Northern Hemisphere countries, the academic year runs from August, September, or October to May, June, or July. In Central America and Southern Hemisphere countries, the school year aligns more closely with the calendar year, running from February or March to November or December. Secondary schools in a few countries in the region follow multiple academic calendars – even within the same country. Avoid travel during Christmas, at the beginning of the New Year, and during region-specific festivities such as Carnival, Holy Week, and All Saints' Day/Day of the Dead. Contact REACs or advisers before planning a trip to avoid visiting during local holidays.



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