

United States Hosts Over 1 Million International Students, Fastest Enrollment Growth Rate in More Than 40 Years

The *Open Doors*® 2023 Report on International Educational Exchange reveals over 298,000 international students started their studies in 2022/23, exceeding pre-pandemic totals.

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 13, 2023— The [Open Doors](#)® 2023 Report on International Educational Exchange, released today, reveals that the United States hosted more than one million (1,057,188) international students during the 2022/2023 academic year, a 12% increase compared to the previous academic year. It is the fastest growth rate in more than 40 years. Released by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the [Institute of International Education](#) (IIE), the report provides a critical annual benchmark on the state of international educational exchange and student mobility. International students accounted for 6% of the total U.S. higher education population and contributed nearly \$38 billion to the U.S. economy according, to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Lee Satterfield said: "Students from around the world have chosen the United States as the top destination for international study. International education is a vehicle that promotes peace and cross-cultural connections and provides the tools necessary to address the shared challenges of our time. It continues to shape the leaders of the future, both here at home and abroad, and we look forward to doing even more to attract international students to the United States and serve as the global leader in international education."

New international student enrollment near all-time high, surpasses pre-pandemic levels

Soaring beyond pre-pandemic levels to nearly record highs, the number of international students who enrolled for the first time at a U.S. college or university during the 2022/2023 academic year increased by 14% year-over-year to 298,523, building on the 80% increase in the prior year. New international students continued to study in every U.S. state and territory, and 48 states reported an increase in international students.

"Over one million international students studying in the U.S. reflects a strong rebound, with the number approaching pre-pandemic levels. This reinforces that the U.S. remains the destination of choice for international students wishing to study abroad, as it has been for more than a century," said Allan E. Goodman, IIE CEO. "The *Open Doors 2023 Report* emphasizes that international education is resilient and also integral to universities and countries looking to support global innovation, collaboration, and peace."

For the first time since 2014/15, international student enrollment across all academic levels increased in 2022/23. Graduate student enrollment increased the most, with 467,027 international students pursuing master's, doctorate, or professional degrees (+21% year-over-year). Undergraduate student enrollment grew (+1% year-over-year) for the first time in five years.

In addition to enrolled international students, 198,793 students pursued Optional Practical Training (OPT), which supports students to gain practical work experiences after they complete their academic studies.

India reaches an all-time high in international student enrollment

China remained the top-sending country in 2022/23, with 289,526 students studying in the U.S. (-0.2% year-over-year). India, the second largest sending country, reached an all-time high of 268,923 international students in 2022/23, an increase of 35% year-over-year.

Most places of origin (23 of the top 25) increased their total number of international students in the U.S. in 2022/23. In addition, eight places of origin, including Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, India, Italy, Nepal, Pakistan, and Spain, reached all-time highs in international student numbers. Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest regional growth (+18% year-over-year), and Ghana entered the top 25 places of origin for the first time with 6,468 international students. Students studied in the United States from over 200 places of origin.

Study abroad bounces back during the 2021/2022 academic year

The *Open Doors 2023 Report* shows that during the 2021/2022 academic year, U.S. study abroad rebounded to more than half of pre-pandemic levels, with 188,753 students pursuing opportunities abroad for academic credit. The U.S. study abroad total reflects the 2021/22 academic year when travel and study abroad programming were still affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during the fall and winter. The rebound signals a critical turning point in students' ability to pursue in-person experiences abroad safely.

"International education, both here at home and abroad, is the ultimate unifier – there is something for everyone. American students from two-year community colleges to four-year universities and beyond, across a wide-range of fields, can study abroad all over the world and bring new perspectives back to their communities," said Satterfield, who noted her college-aged son studied abroad during the spring semester of 2023.

During the 2021/2022 academic year, nearly half of all students studied abroad in the summer (49%), and the leading destinations continued to be Italy, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France. There are positive signs of further growth, as [IIE's 2023 Spring Snapshot Survey](#) reported that 83% of U.S. institutions expected study abroad totals to increase in 2022/23 and beyond.

Fall 2023 Snapshot

U.S. institutions report continued international student growth for Fall 2023

The *Fall 2023 International Student Enrollment Snapshot* shows continued momentum for international student mobility in the United States. U.S. higher education institutions reported an 8% increase in international students in Fall 2023, with growth across all academic levels and OPT.

For all places of origin, India continues to be the highest priority for undergraduate and graduate recruitment. Seventy percent of U.S. institutions are prioritizing undergraduate outreach and 80% of U.S. institutions are prioritizing graduate outreach for students in India. Over 630 U.S. higher education institutions participated in the *Fall 2023 International Student Enrollment Snapshot*.

To learn more about *Open Doors*, visit opendoorsdata.org.

To learn more about IIE's Fall Snapshot Survey, visit: <https://www.iie.org/publications/fall-2023-snapshot-on-international-student-enrollment/>.

About *Open Doors*

For close to 75 years, *Open Doors* has been a comprehensive information resource on international students studying at higher education institutions in the United States and U.S. students studying abroad for academic credit at their home colleges or universities. *Open Doors* also reports on the number of international scholars at U.S. universities and international students enrolled in pre-academic Intensive English Programs. For more data, infographics, and resources, visit opendoorsdata.org.

About the Institute of International Education (IIE)

The Institute of International Education (IIE) is the leader in designing and implementing international education strategies and program services. We work with governments, policymakers, educators, and employers across the globe to prepare students and professionals for the global workforce and equip them to solve the increasingly complex challenges facing our interconnected world. With support from donors, we also create initiatives that assist students, scholars, and artists whose lives and work are threatened; expand teaching and learning across cultures; and provide opportunities to underserved populations. A not-for-profit organization founded in 1919, IIE has a network of 16 offices and affiliates worldwide and over 1,600 higher education partners. Visit iie.org.

About the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) builds relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through academic, cultural, sports, professional and private exchanges, as well as public-private partnerships and mentoring programs. These exchange programs improve foreign relations and strengthen the national security of the United States, support U.S. international leadership, and provide a broad range of domestic benefits by helping break down barriers that often divide us. ECA sponsors the flagship Fulbright Program, the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarships for U.S. undergraduates with financial need, the Critical Language Scholarship Program in support of U.S. foreign language study abroad, and the [EducationUSA](https://educationusa.gov) network of over 400 advising centers worldwide, which provides information to students around the globe who wish to study in the United States. Visit eca.state.gov.

###

PRESS CONTACT:

Press Office, IIE: press@iie.org

Department of State: ECA-Press@state.gov