

*Data extracted in September 2024.*

*Planned article update: September 2025.*

**" 1.66 million students from abroad (from other EU countries or from non-EU countries) were undertaking tertiary level studies across the EU in 2022. "**

**" In 2022, there were 403 500 students from abroad studying in Germany. They accounted for 24% of all tertiary education students from abroad studying in the EU, which could be compared with the next largest share in France (16%). "**

**" More than 2 in 5 (43%) of the students from abroad who were undertaking tertiary level studies across the EU in 2022 were from Europe, 25% from Asia and 17% from Africa. "**

This article presents statistics on the mobility of [tertiary education](#) students in the [European Union \(EU\)](#) and forms part of an [online publication](#) on [Education and training in the EU](#) . It focuses on tertiary education students who are internationally mobile. Tertiary students are degree mobile in the EU if they completed secondary education somewhere (regardless of whether this was in another EU country or in a non-EU country) other than the EU country where they are studying. They are credit mobile if they spend a short-term study or work-related time abroad while being enrolled in their home country's tertiary institution. The 1st part of the analysis focuses on tertiary students, the 2nd part on tertiary graduates, followed by an analysis comparing the number of students with the number of graduates. The article concludes with a presentation of data on credit-mobile graduates. The article provides information on students and graduates analysed by level of education, with a focus on country of origin for degree-mobile students and country of destination for credit-mobile students. As well as the information provided in this article, data are available for degree-mobile students and graduates analysed by field of study.

## Students from abroad

### Number and share of students from abroad

#### Tertiary education students from abroad by sex and level of education, 2022

(number)

EU	Short-cycle tertiary			Bachelor's or equivalent			Master's or equivalent			Doctoral or equivalent		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
EU	39 164	17 794	21 371	728 186	351 700	376 486	742 850	362 688	380 161	151 780	80 692	71 089
Belgium	1 414	381	1 033	28 435	10 674	17 761	21 004	9 323	11 681	4 894	2 674	2 220
Bulgaria	-	-	-	5 653	3 301	2 352	12 826	6 171	6 655	683	359	324
Czechia	55	15	40	27 519	13 496	14 023	20 201	8 861	11 340	5 594	3 039	2 555
Denmark	3 646	1 715	1 931	10 364	4 490	5 874	13 835	6 379	7 456	3 530	1 869	1 661
Germany	0	0	0	151 263	84 009	67 254	206 563	110 047	96 516	45 647	23 885	21 762
Estonia	-	-	-	1 843	1 068	776	2 463	1 237	1 227	756	456	300
Ireland	728	366	362	13 563	6 067	7 496	8 977	4 113	4 864	3 891	1 870	2 021
Greece	-	-	-	25 280	11 771	13 509	575	279	296	930	513	417
Spain	6 854	2 579	4 275	24 099	11 014	13 085	41 046	19 002	22 044	19 693	10 314	9 379
France	15 120	7 320	7 800	86 432	39 837	46 594	137 894	69 359	68 535	24 013	12 748	11 265
Croatia	0	0	0	2 653	1 181	1 472	2 720	1 132	1 588	362	172	190
Italy	0	0	0	39 718	17 990	21 728	45 738	20 565	25 173	4 490	2 561	1 929
Cyprus	898	617	281	6 318	3 976	2 342	3 058	1 460	1 598	457	226	231
Latvia	224	147	77	4 497	3 312	1 185	4 831	2 486	2 345	258	184	74
Lithuania	-	-	-	4 681	2 591	2 090	4 195	2 155	2 040	253	151	102
Luxembourg	77	23	54	772	323	449	2 121	1 003	1 118	936	532	404
Hungary	134	62	72	19 011	9 588	9 423	18 071	8 348	9 723	3 074	1 640	1 434
Malta	257	143	115	2 222	1 116	1 106	1 561	688	873	492	291	201
Netherlands	4 771	1 994	2 777	104 463	47 015	57 448	54 641	23 888	30 753	-	-	-
Austria	1 391	499	892	38 065	17 241	20 824	37 740	16 967	20 773	8 000	4 115	3 885
Poland	53	23	30	63 303	29 196	34 107	27 524	13 078	14 446	871	535	336
Portugal	3 054	1 649	1 405	21 081	10 100	10 981	17 651	8 021	9 630	8 130	4 330	3 800
Romania	-	-	-	12 957	6 401	6 556	20 845	10 385	10 460	970	594	376
Slovenia	434	231	203	4 232	1 662	2 570	2 301	901	1 400	762	367	395
Slovakia	43	24	19	9 414	4 204	5 210	6 361	2 717	3 644	878	572	306
Finland	-	-	-	12 735	7 066	5 669	8 719	4 601	4 118	5 320	2 925	2 395
Sweden	11	6	5	7 613	3 011	4 602	19 389	9 523	9 866	6 897	3 770	3 127
Iceland	156	65	91	864	245	619	792	272	520	290	142	148
Liechtenstein	0	0	0	358	185	173	276	170	106	197	141	56
Norway	102	50	52	4 283	1 824	2 459	6 633	3 461	3 172	2 261	1 298	963
Switzerland (*)	0	0	0	22 597	11 351	11 246	26 486	12 595	13 891	15 764	8 292	7 472
North Macedonia	-	-	-	3 755	2 184	1 571	670	233	437	282	147	135
Albania	12	5	7	475	263	212	1 306	551	755	79	47	32
Serbia	-	-	-	7 429	3 528	3 901	3 058	1 332	1 726	760	411	349
Türkiye	31 656	18 904	12 752	153 704	99 568	54 136	48 024	28 371	19 653	10 643	7 046	3 597

(-) not available.

(-) not applicable.

Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated. Based on country of usual residence in Estonia, Ireland, Spain (not for short-cycle tertiary), Italy, Slovenia, and Liechtenstein. Based on country of citizenship in Bulgaria (for Master's or equivalent), Hungary, Slovakia, Serbia and Türkiye. Based on country of upper secondary/prior education in Bulgaria (for Doctoral or equivalent), Latvia and Poland. Based on country of upper secondary diploma and/or citizenship in France and the Netherlands. Other criteria: Sweden. No information provided: North Macedonia.

(\*) Short-cycle tertiary: negligible, reported as 0. Bachelor's or equivalent and master's or equivalent: only covers students in universities or universities of applied sciences.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobs02)

eurostat 

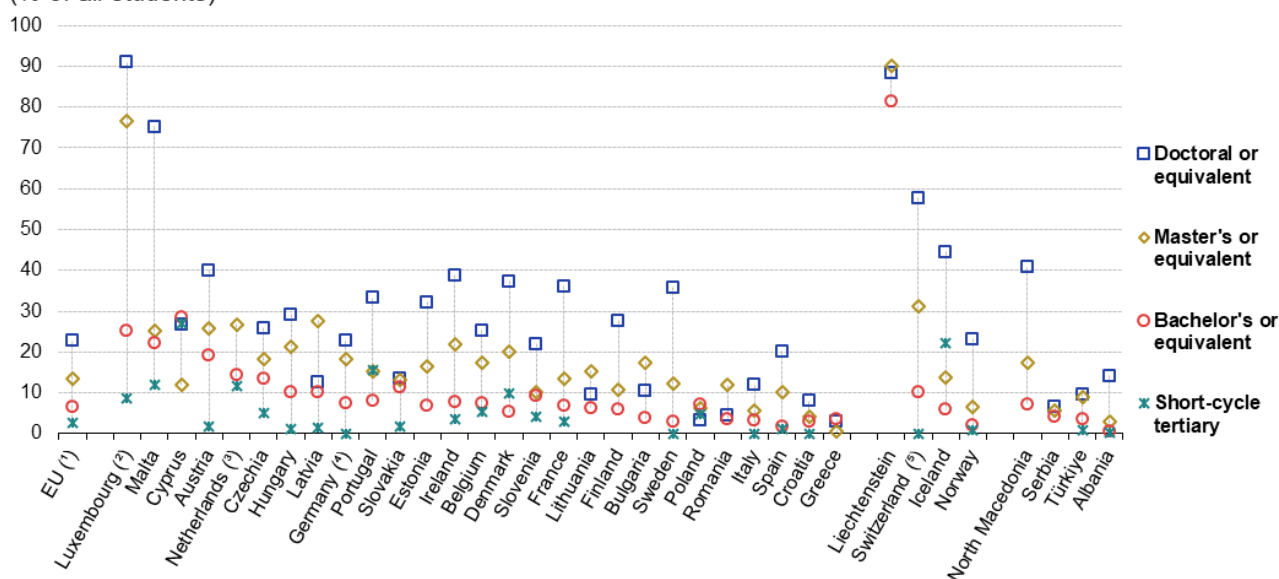
**Table 1: Tertiary education students from abroad by sex and level of education, 2022 (number) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobs02)**

There were 1.66 million students from abroad who were undertaking tertiary level studies across the EU in 2022. As is the case for all students, not just those from abroad, the highest shares of these students were studying for either a bachelor's degree (43.8%) or a master's degree (44.7%), while 9.1% were studying for doctoral degrees and 2.4% followed short-cycle tertiary courses.

In 2022, a total of 403 500 tertiary education students from abroad (24.3% of the total number of students from abroad in the EU) were studying in Germany. The next largest populations of tertiary education students from abroad were recorded in France (263 500; 15.9% of the EU total) and the Netherlands (163 900, excluding students studying for a doctoral or equivalent education; 9.9% of the EU total).

## Share of tertiary education students from abroad within each level of education, 2022

(% of all students)



Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated in Table 1. Short cycle tertiary: not applicable in Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Romania, Finland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia and Serbia. Ranked on the average for all tertiary education.

(1) Based on data available for EU countries.

(2) Bachelor's or equivalent, master's or equivalent and doctoral or equivalent level: enrolments in independent private institutions are negligible and reported as 0.

(3) Doctoral or equivalent: not available.

(4) Doctoral or equivalent: estimates.

(5) Short-cycle tertiary: negligible students from abroad, reported as 0. Bachelor's or equivalent and master's or equivalent: students from abroad only covers students in universities or universities of applied sciences.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: educ\_uae\_mobs02 and educ\_uae\_enrt01)

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**Figure 1: Share of tertiary education students from abroad within each level of education, 2022 (% of all students) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobs02) and (educ\_uae\_enrt01)**

Relative to the overall number of tertiary education students in each EU country (in other words, the sum of local students and students from abroad), Luxembourg had the highest proportion of students from abroad in 2022, at 50.5%, followed by Malta (23.8%) and Cyprus (20.2%). There were 12 other EU countries where at least one tenth of all tertiary education students were from abroad. By contrast, students from abroad made up a relatively small proportion of the tertiary education student population in Italy (4.2%), Spain (4.0%), Croatia (3.6%) and Greece (3.1%).

Figure 1 provides a more detailed analysis of the share of students from abroad in each stage of tertiary education in 2022, ranked on the share for all tertiary education. In relation to the total number of students at each level, the share of students from abroad generally increases as a function of the level of education, from relatively low shares for short-cycle tertiary courses to much higher shares for doctoral degrees. For the EU as a whole, the shares in 2022 ranged from 2.7% for short-cycle tertiary courses to 22.7% for doctoral degrees.

- In 19 of the EU countries, the highest share of students from abroad was observed for doctoral degrees.
- In Latvia, the Netherlands (excluding students studying for a doctoral or equivalent education), Bulgaria, Lithuania and Romania, the highest share of students from abroad was for master's degrees.
- Cyprus, Poland and Greece recorded their highest share of students from abroad for bachelor's degrees.

Within each education level, some of the smaller EU countries recorded particularly high shares of tertiary students from abroad in 2022.

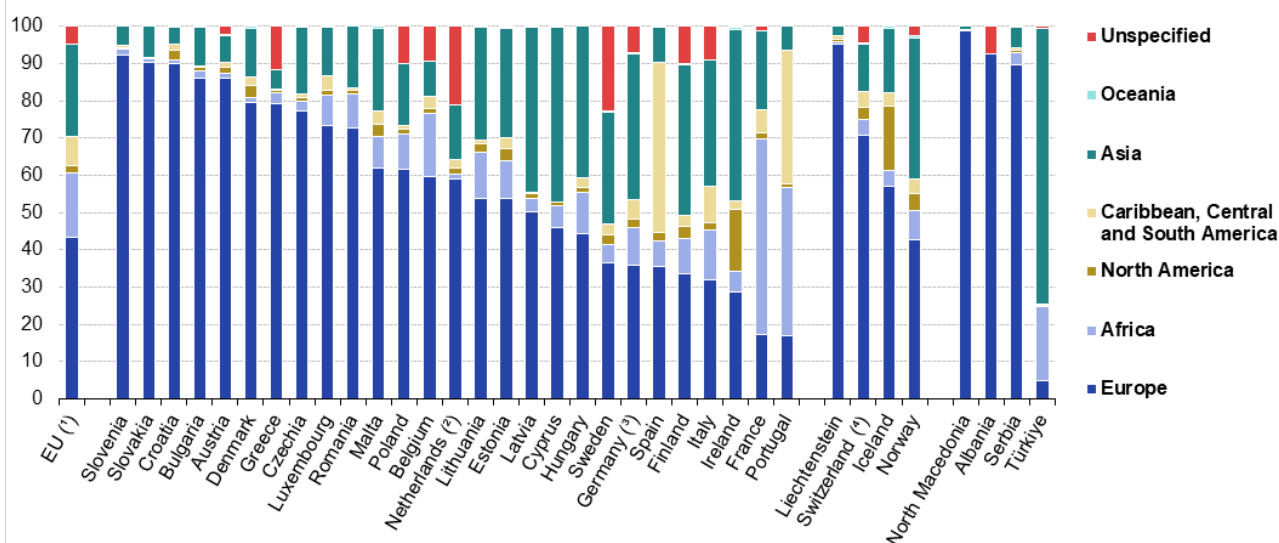
- The highest share of students from abroad studying on short-cycle tertiary courses was recorded in Cyprus, at 26.9%; for comparison, the next highest shares were 15.6% and 12.0% in Portugal and Malta, respectively.
- Cyprus also recorded the highest share of students from abroad studying for bachelor's degrees, at 28.4%, while relatively high shares were also recorded in Luxembourg (25.2%) and Malta (22.1%). In 6 other EU countries, more than 1 in 10 of the students studying for a bachelor's degree or equivalent were from abroad.

- Just over three quarters (76.7%) of master's students in Luxembourg were from abroad; for comparison, the next highest share was 27.7% in Latvia. Shares of more than 20.0% were observed in 6 other EU countries, while there were 4 EU countries where the share of master's students from abroad was below 1 in 10.
- For doctoral students, Luxembourg again reported the highest share of students from abroad (91.0%), while Malta (75.1%) was the only other EU country where a majority of doctoral students originated from abroad; note, no data are available for the Netherlands. There were a further 12 EU countries that reported shares of doctoral students from abroad of at least 25.0%. In 5 EU countries, the share of doctoral students from abroad was below 1 in 10.

## Origin of students from abroad

### Share of tertiary education students from abroad by continent of origin, 2022

(% of all tertiary education students from abroad)



Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated in Table 1. Ranked on the percentage of students from abroad from Europe.

(\*) Excluding the Netherlands.

(\*) 2020. Estimates.

(\*) Estimates.

(\*) Bachelor's or equivalent and master's or equivalent: students from abroad only covers students in universities or universities of applied sciences.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobs02)

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**Figure 2: Share of tertiary education students from abroad by continent of origin, 2022 (% of all tertiary education students from abroad) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobs02)**

Figure 2 reflects how factors like language, cultural and historical ties, as well as geographical proximity can influence learning mobility. The establishment of the [European Higher Education Area](#) may also be an influencing factor on mobility.

- For 17 of the EU countries, a majority of students from abroad in 2022 were from elsewhere in Europe. This share was highest in Slovenia (92.3%), Slovakia (90.2%) and Croatia (90.0%). Students from elsewhere in Europe accounted for less than a third of all tertiary education students from abroad in Italy (32.1%) and Ireland (28.7%), with shares below one fifth in France (17.2%) and Portugal (16.9%).
- Students from Asia accounted for between 40.0% and 50.0% of all tertiary students from abroad in Cyprus, Ireland, Latvia, Hungary and Finland.
- In France, more than half (52.5%) of tertiary students from abroad in 2021 were from Africa, while this share was more than one third (39.8%) in Portugal.
- The share of tertiary students who were from the Caribbean, Central and South America was particularly high in Spain (45.5%) and Portugal (35.9%).

- Ireland (16.6%) was the only EU country where more than 3.3% of tertiary education students from abroad originated from North America.
- The share of tertiary education students from abroad that originated from Oceania was small in all of the EU countries, peaking at 0.6% in Denmark.

#### Share of tertiary education students from abroad by country of origin for the 3 largest partner countries, 2022

(% of all tertiary education students from abroad)

	Largest country of origin for students from abroad	Share (%)	2nd largest country of origin for students from abroad	Share (%)	3rd largest country of origin for students from abroad	Share (%)
<b>EU (*)</b>	China (including Hong Kong)	6.0	Germany	4.6	India	4.4
Belgium	France	35.5	Netherlands	7.6	Cameroon	6.1
Bulgaria	Greece	22.8	United Kingdom	14.9	Germany	9.0
Czechia	Slovakia	40.2	Russia	15.5	Ukraine	8.7
Denmark	Germany	10.7	Norway	9.0	China (including Hong Kong)	5.3
Germany	China (including Hong Kong)	9.5	India	8.4	Austria	4.4
Estonia	Finland	19.4	Russia	10.7	Nigeria	6.3
Ireland	India	14.6	China (including Hong Kong)	13.3	United States	10.2
Greece	Cyprus	59.2	Albania	5.8	Germany	4.9
Spain	France	12.1	Colombia	9.0	Italy	7.1
France	Morocco	13.6	Algeria	9.2	China (including Hong Kong)	8.8
Croatia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	41.2	Germany	11.0	France	6.4
Italy	Iran	7.6	China (including Hong Kong)	6.6	India	5.6
Cyprus	Greece	37.3	India	19.2	Nepal	14.5
Latvia	India	17.3	Uzbekistan	14.2	Germany	10.2
Lithuania	Belarus	12.7	India	8.1	Ukraine	8.1
Luxembourg	France	24.8	Germany	13.0	Belgium	9.0
Hungary	Germany	8.6	Romania	6.9	China (including Hong Kong)	6.4
Malta	Italy	26.3	India	11.2	Germany	10.4
Netherlands (*)	Germany	18.6	Italy	4.8	China (including Hong Kong)	4.3
Austria	Germany	42.8	Italy	11.3	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.0
Poland	Ukraine	36.0	Belarus	11.7	Zimbabwe	2.6
Portugal	Brazil	32.8	Guinea-Bissau	12.4	Cabo Verde	10.7
Romania	Moldova	34.8	France	9.5	Italy	7.6
Slovenia	:	:	:	:	:	:
Slovakia	Ukraine	34.5	Czechia	19.7	Germany	5.4
Finland	China (including Hong Kong)	8.4	Russia	7.6	Viet Nam	6.8
Sweden	China (including Hong Kong)	8.4	India	7.4	Germany	6.7
Iceland	United States	13.8	Germany	7.7	Philippines	5.9
Liechtenstein	Austria	38.1	Germany	26.2	Switzerland	24.7
Norway	China (including Hong Kong)	6.4	Iran	6.0	Germany	5.5
Switzerland (*)	France	19.4	Germany	18.6	Italy	10.6
North Macedonia	Türkiye	48.5	Kosovo*	38.1	Serbia	5.2
Albania	Italy	45.7	Kosovo*	20.6	Serbia	8.1
Serbia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	53.1	Montenegro	26.0	Croatia	2.9
Türkiye	Syria	21.5	Azerbaijan	11.7	Iraq	6.9

(:) not available.

\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated in Table 1.

(\*) Excluding the Netherlands and Slovenia.

(\*) 2020. Data not available for Kosovo as a partner country.

(\*) Bachelor's or equivalent and master's or equivalent: only covers students in universities or universities of applied sciences.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobs02)

eurostat 

**Table 2: Share of tertiary education students from abroad by country of origin for the 3 largest partner countries, 2022 (% of all tertiary education students from abroad) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobs02)**

A more detailed analysis for the origin of students from abroad is presented in Table 2. For 13 of the EU countries, the principal country of origin for students from abroad in 2022 was another EU country. These were often neighbouring countries (such as students from Slovakia in Czechia) or countries that may be reached by a relatively short water crossing (for example, students from Finland studying in Estonia). In 4 of the EU countries – Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands (2020 data) and Austria – students from Germany made up the largest share of students from abroad, while German students were the 2nd largest group of students from abroad in 2 other EU countries (Croatia and Luxembourg) and the 3rd largest group in Bulgaria, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and Sweden.

Across the whole of the EU, China (including Hong Kong) was the most common country of origin for tertiary students from abroad in 2022, accounting for 6.0% of the total. There were more students from China (than any other foreign country) studying in Germany, Finland and Sweden, while Chinese students accounted for the 2nd or 3rd largest population of foreign students within the tertiary education sectors of 6 other EU countries. The only other non-EU countries that appeared multiple times in the rankings were India and several countries neighbouring

the EU – Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia and Ukraine.

## Field of study of students from abroad

### Share of tertiary education students from abroad by field, 2022

(% of all tertiary education students from abroad)

	Generic programmes and qualifications	Education	Arts and humanities	Social sciences, journalism and information	Business, administration and law	Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	Information and communication technologies	Engineering, manufacturing and construction	Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	Health and welfare	Services	Unknown
<b>EU</b>	0.0	2.6	12.1	10.6	22.2	9.2	6.5	16.5	1.9	15.0	2.7	0.8
Belgium	0.0	3.1	12.3	11.2	13.8	5.9	2.6	10.7	4.6	34.4	1.6	0.0
Bulgaria	0.0	4.3	5.2	5.4	7.5	0.9	3.5	6.3	3.4	57.0	4.9	1.6
Czechia	0.1	1.9	10.0	10.2	20.9	9.5	12.8	10.7	3.0	17.5	3.5	0.0
Denmark	0.0	1.8	9.4	9.2	25.4	8.3	8.0	23.6	1.7	8.9	3.6	0.0
Germany	0.0	1.6	13.4	6.9	17.1	13.4	9.0	25.8	2.0	9.2	0.8	0.7
Estonia	0.0	3.9	15.0	10.0	31.0	8.9	13.4	8.6	4.6	4.7	0.0	0.0
Ireland	0.3	1.2	12.8	8.1	18.9	10.4	10.1	12.1	1.3	22.6	2.0	0.0
Greece	0.0	4.5	15.3	16.2	13.0	12.1	3.1	16.9	2.6	12.9	3.4	0.0
Spain	0.0	4.3	9.1	12.1	25.5	5.3	3.0	12.3	2.4	21.8	4.2	0.0
France	0.0	1.5	13.6	9.8	31.8	13.4	5.8	15.6	0.3	6.3	1.9	0.0
Croatia	0.0	2.5	9.7	7.1	23.5	3.6	2.7	20.1	4.3	21.1	5.3	0.0
Italy	0.0	1.1	19.6	15.6	16.3	7.1	2.9	21.4	1.7	12.6	1.6	0.1
Cyprus	0.0	1.4	3.6	3.9	53.5	2.2	3.5	5.5	0.1	23.7	2.6	0.0
Latvia	0.0	0.5	2.5	4.4	37.3	0.5	11.3	8.7	1.1	29.3	4.5	0.0
Lithuania	0.0	0.5	10.2	12.3	25.7	2.1	5.1	12.4	2.0	29.0	0.7	0.0
Luxembourg	0.0	3.9	6.0	13.1	34.5	12.6	11.2	9.2	6.3	2.7	0.5	0.0
Hungary	0.0	2.0	6.7	10.7	11.6	3.9	6.6	11.4	5.5	27.9	2.0	11.7
Malta	0.0	3.7	4.3	12.5	30.1	2.4	3.2	2.3	0.0	36.0	5.6	0.0
Netherlands <sup>(1)</sup>	0.0	2.1	10.3	20.1	24.2	5.6	3.5	10.1	1.0	5.4	4.9	12.8
Austria	0.0	4.8	13.2	16.1	22.0	10.8	6.1	15.0	1.4	9.2	1.1	0.4
Poland	0.0	6.3	9.2	15.0	25.9	2.8	5.7	6.0	1.2	13.7	9.8	4.4
Portugal	0.0	3.6	11.0	13.1	25.5	5.1	2.8	18.6	2.4	13.6	4.3	0.1
Romania	0.0	0.5	8.4	6.7	16.5	1.5	3.7	11.0	4.9	44.2	2.5	0.0
Slovenia	0.0	3.8	6.9	13.9	24.5	7.6	9.0	16.5	1.4	7.9	8.6	0.0
Slovakia	0.0	7.2	8.3	7.6	13.3	3.4	5.8	11.6	3.0	36.5	3.3	0.0
Finland	0.0	2.7	9.3	4.1	21.2	6.1	20.3	19.4	1.3	11.7	4.0	0.0
Sweden	0.0	2.6	14.1	13.3	11.3	14.1	8.0	23.5	0.7	10.7	1.6	0.1
Iceland	0.0	9.8	37.9	11.5	6.8	15.5	2.5	8.8	1.8	4.7	0.7	0.0
Liechtenstein	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.0	0.0	0.0	23.6	0.0	9.4	0.0	0.0
Norway	0.1	4.0	19.4	12.4	15.3	14.6	7.2	12.7	1.0	9.6	3.8	0.0
Switzerland <sup>(2)</sup>	0.0	5.0	12.6	11.7	17.5	16.4	5.7	17.4	0.5	9.1	2.6	1.6
North Macedonia	0.0	4.9	8.9	10.4	26.9	5.0	6.9	10.3	0.4	24.9	1.4	0.0
Albania	0.0	2.0	7.7	4.5	5.1	0.6	1.0	8.4	0.7	69.0	0.9	0.0
Serbia	0.0	3.1	10.0	9.6	12.7	5.7	9.2	24.3	3.4	17.7	4.2	0.0
Türkiye	0.0	4.0	11.5	13.6	17.9	5.0	3.2	22.8	1.8	16.1	4.1	0.0

Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated in Table 1.

(<sup>1</sup>) All short-cycle tertiary and doctoral or equivalent included in unknown.

(<sup>2</sup>) Short-cycle tertiary: negligible, reported as 0. Bachelor's or equivalent and master's or equivalent: only covers students in universities or universities of applied sciences.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobs04)

eurostat 

**Table 3: Share of tertiary education students from abroad by field, 2022 (% of all tertiary education students from abroad) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobs04)**

Table 3 provides an analysis of students from abroad according to their field of education. Among the fields shown in the table – which is based on the ISCED-F 2013 classification (see the section on **Data sources** for more information) – across the EU, the most common field for tertiary students from abroad was business, administration and law (22.2% of all students from abroad). This was followed by engineering, manufacturing and construction (16.5%), health and welfare (15.0%), arts and humanities (12.1%), and social sciences, journalism and information (10.6%). By contrast, students from abroad following services, education, or agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary fields of study accounted for a relatively small share of the total number of students from abroad (each less than 3.0%).

Among the EU countries, there was a high degree of variation concerning the share of tertiary students from abroad studying each field of education, reflecting at least to some degree, their specialisations. For example, around a fifth (19.6%) of all students from abroad studying in Italy in 2022 followed a course in the arts or humanities, while 25.8%

of the students from abroad studying in Germany followed a course in engineering, manufacturing or construction.

Business, administration and law was the most common field of study for tertiary students from abroad in 15 of the EU countries; for example, this field of education accounted for more than half (53.5%) of all tertiary students from abroad studying in Cyprus. Health or welfare was the most common field of study for students from abroad in 8 of the EU countries; for example, this field of education accounted for close to three fifths (57.0%) of all tertiary students from abroad studying in Bulgaria. Engineering, manufacturing and construction was the most common field in Germany, Greece, Italy and Sweden.

## Graduates from abroad

In 2022, there were 263 400 tertiary students from abroad that graduated in the EU (excluding graduates at doctoral or equivalent level in the Netherlands). A majority were graduates from master's degree courses (56.4%), while more than one third (36.1%) graduated from bachelor's degree courses, 6.4% from doctoral courses and 1.1% from short-cycle tertiary courses.

Like for students, Eurostat also publishes data on degree graduates from abroad by sex, level of education, country of origin and field of education. Figure 3 presents some of this information and provides an analysis of the share of graduates from abroad within each level of tertiary education, ranked on the share for tertiary education as a whole. Relative to the overall number of tertiary graduates in 2022, Luxembourg had the highest proportion (51.9%) of graduates from abroad, followed by Malta (24.1%). In 12 other EU countries (including the Netherlands for which 2022 data are not available, but the 2021 average was 18.9%), the share of tertiary education graduates who originated from abroad was at least 10.0%. By contrast, students from abroad made up a relatively small proportion (2.0%) of the total number of tertiary graduates in Greece.

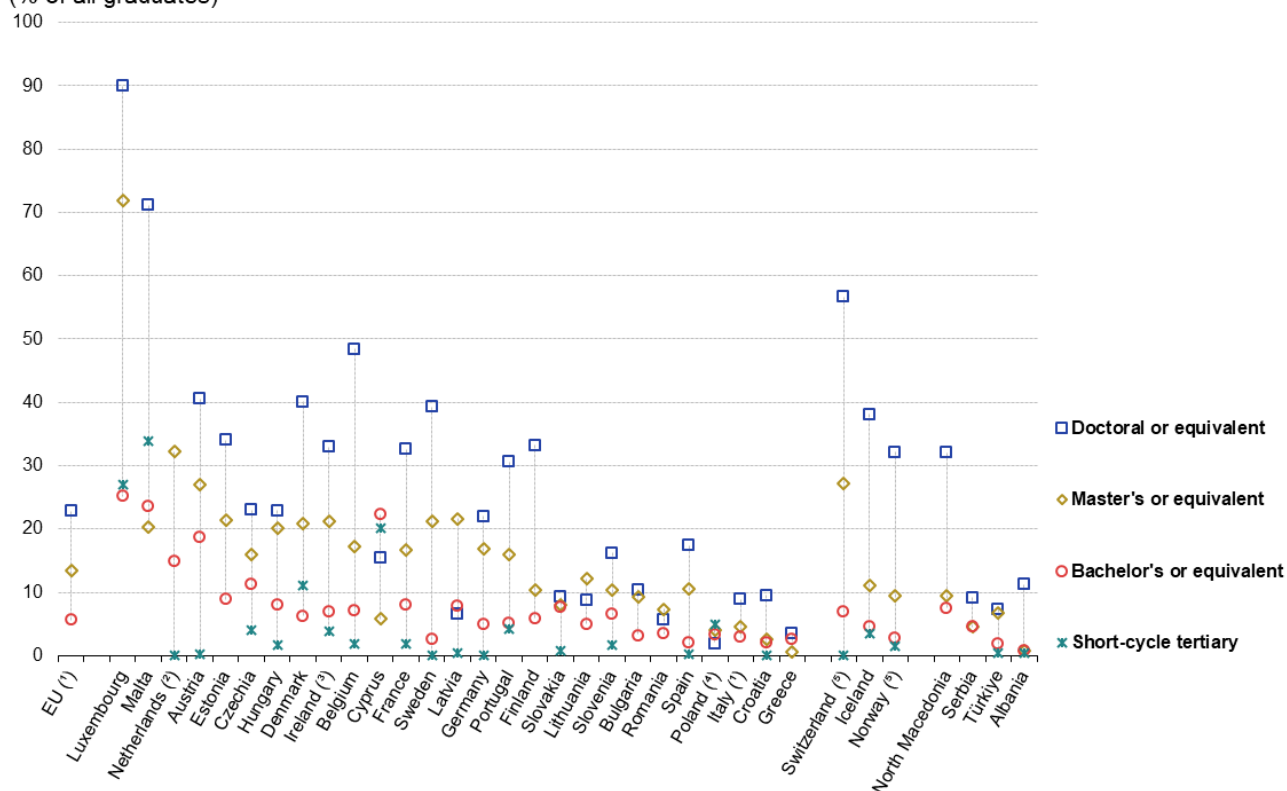
In relation to the total number of graduates at each level, the share of graduates from abroad generally increases as a function of the level of education. For the EU, the share ranged in 2022 from 5.6% for graduates of bachelor's degrees to 22.8% for graduates of doctoral degrees. This is a similar pattern to that observed for students from abroad – see Figure 1.

Among EU countries, the highest shares of graduates from abroad in 2022 in most of the levels of tertiary education were observed in Luxembourg, ranging from 25.2% for bachelor's degrees to 71.9% for master's degrees and 89.9% for doctoral degrees. For short-cycle tertiary courses, Malta had the highest share, at 33.8%. Relatively high shares of graduates from abroad were also observed in

- Luxembourg, Cyprus and Denmark for short-cycle tertiary education, at least 10.0%
- Malta, Cyprus, Austria, the Netherlands and Czechia for bachelor's degrees, at least 10.0%
- the Netherlands, Austria, Latvia, Estonia, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Malta and Hungary for master's degrees, at least 20.0%
- Malta and Belgium for doctoral degrees, at least 45.0%.

### Share of tertiary education graduates from abroad within each level of education, 2022

(% of all graduates)



Note: based on country of upper secondary diploma unless otherwise stated. Based on country of usual residence in Estonia, Ireland, Spain (not for short-cycle tertiary), Italy, Slovenia and North Macedonia. Based on country of citizenship in Hungary, the Netherlands (only for doctoral or equivalent), Slovakia, Serbia and Türkiye. Based on country of upper secondary/prior education in Latvia. Based on country of upper secondary diploma and/or citizenship in France and the Netherlands. Other criteria: Sweden. Short-cycle tertiary: Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Romania, Finland, North Macedonia and Serbia, not applicable. Ranked on the average for all tertiary education.

(1) Short-cycle tertiary: not available.

(2) Doctoral or equivalent: not available.

(3) Definition differs. Undercoverage: does not include full data from private government independent institutions.

(4) Short-cycle tertiary: estimates.

(5) 2021.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobg03)

eurostat

**Figure 3: Share of tertiary education graduates from abroad within each level of education, 2022 (% of all graduates) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobg03)**



## Credit-mobile graduates

### Number of credit-mobile tertiary graduates from abroad, 2022

(number)

	Tertiary (*)	Short-cycle tertiary	Bachelor's or equivalent	Master's or equivalent	Doctoral or equivalent
<b>EU (†)</b>	<b>388 151</b>	<b>10 838</b>	<b>156 226</b>	<b>207 664</b>	<b>13 423</b>
Belgium	7 625	15	4 474	3 136	–
Bulgaria	783	–	517	253	13
Czechia (‡)	3 996	0	1 634	2 136	226
Denmark	4 693	187	2 332	1 709	465
Germany (‡)	51 100	–	27 200	23 900	–
Estonia (‡)	576	–	287	289	–
Ireland	1 790	0	1 790	0	0
Greece	1 403	–	1 346	57	–
Spain	34 460	797	24 566	5 833	3 264
France	179 997	9 730	44 587	124 597	1 083
Croatia	1 095	0	275	741	79
Italy	47 815	–	14 786	25 579	7 450
Cyprus	151	20	69	62	0
Latvia	645	32	475	130	8
Lithuania	1 209	–	797	372	40
Luxembourg	358	–	309	18	31
Hungary	1 488	9	780	663	36
Malta	272	0	257	15	0
Netherlands	18 649	0	13 638	5 011	–
Austria	6 335	–	3 105	2 949	281
Poland (‡)	6 629	0	3 271	3 265	93
Portugal	4 198	14	2 819	1 343	22
Romania	1 463	–	940	505	18
Slovenia	421	11	282	123	5
Slovakia	1 411	–	694	663	54
Finland	3 220	–	2 099	1 089	32
Sweden	6 369	23	2 897	3 226	223
Norway	2 419	–	1 380	1 036	3
Switzerland (‡)	8 843	–	5 016	3 266	561
North Macedonia (‡)	402	–	364	38	0
Serbia	664	–	452	163	49
Türkiye (‡)	1 041	5	970	43	23

(-) not available.

(-) not applicable.

(\*) Sum of available data for the four tertiary education levels.

(†) Based on available data for EU countries as shown in this table.

(‡) Short-cycle tertiary: undercoverage.

(§) Data are rounded to the nearest 100.

(§) Undercoverage.

(§) Short-cycle tertiary: negligible graduates and students from abroad.

(‡) 2020.

(‡) 2021. Credit mobility under other international/national programmes only.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobc01)

eurostat 

**Table 4: Number of credit-mobile tertiary graduates from abroad, 2022 (number) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobc01)**

The previous sections of this article have focused on degree-mobile students and graduates – students from abroad enrolled as a regular student with the intention of graduating from the course/study in the country of destination. The last section of this article concerns credit-mobile graduates. Credit mobility is defined as temporary tertiary education and/or study-related traineeship abroad within the framework of enrolment in a tertiary education programme at a home institution (usually) for the purpose of gaining academic credit. The analysis concerns credit-mobile students who were mobile for either a period of study or for a work placement, or both combined.

The number of credit-mobile graduates from the EU in 2022 was approximately 390 000, although this is likely to be an underestimate as coverage isn't complete. In particular, data for credit-mobile graduates for doctoral or equivalent studies aren't available for several EU countries, including Germany and the Netherlands. Based on the available data, slightly more than half of all credit-mobile graduates had followed master's or equivalent studies and most of the rest had followed bachelor's or equivalent studies; relatively small numbers of credit-mobile graduates were recorded for short-cycle tertiary studies or doctoral or equivalent studies.

Among the EU countries, the largest number of credit-mobile graduates in 2022 were from France, at 180 000. The 2nd highest number of credit-mobile graduates, 51 100 (excluding doctoral or equivalent studies) was from Germany, closely followed by Italy (47 800).

- The largest numbers of credit-mobile graduates in short-cycle tertiary studies (9 700), bachelor's or equivalent studies (44 600) and master's or equivalent studies (124 600) were from France.
- Within doctoral or equivalent studies, the largest numbers of credit-mobile graduates were from Italy (7 500) and Spain (3 300).

#### Share of credit-mobile graduates for the 3 largest partner countries, 2022

(% of all credit-mobile graduates)

	Largest destination for credit-mobile graduates	Share (%)	2nd largest destination for credit-mobile graduates	Share (%)	3rd largest destination for credit-mobile graduates	Share (%)
<b>EU (*)</b>	Spain	11.2	United Kingdom	9.9	United States	7.0
<b>Belgium (*)</b>	Spain	9.2	France	7.7	Netherlands	6.4
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Spain	11.6	Greece	10.7	Germany	10.3
<b>Czechia (*)</b>	Germany	10.8	Spain	9.1	Portugal	7.4
<b>Denmark</b>	United States	11.7	Germany	7.4	United Kingdom	6.9
<b>Germany (*)</b> (*)	France	10.2	United Kingdom	10.2	United States	9.4
<b>Estonia (*)</b> (*)	Finland	14.6	Germany	9.7	France	6.1
<b>Ireland</b>	France	19.2	Spain	19.0	Germany	15.5
<b>Greece (*)</b>	France	16.3	Germany	12.5	Spain	10.5
<b>Spain</b>	Italy	17.6	Poland	8.6	France	7.4
<b>France</b>	United Kingdom	16.3	Spain	12.5	United States	9.3
<b>Croatia</b>	Spain	14.8	Portugal	12.8	Italy	9.8
<b>Italy (*)</b>	Spain	22.0	France	12.5	Germany	9.6
<b>Cyprus</b>	Greece	54.3	Portugal	11.3	Spain	6.0
<b>Latvia</b>	Spain	11.9	Portugal	8.5	Germany	8.1
<b>Lithuania</b>	Gibraltar	10.1	Slovenia	7.9	Kosovo*	6.9
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Germany	27.1	France	23.2	Portugal	7.8
<b>Hungary</b>	Germany	15.1	Spain	12.1	Italy	9.3
<b>Malta</b>	Italy	51.1	United Kingdom	10.3	Finland	6.3
<b>Netherlands (*)</b> (*)	United Kingdom	7.1	United States	6.8	Germany	6.5
<b>Austria</b>	Germany	17.9	Spain	8.5	United States	5.7
<b>Poland (*)</b>	Spain	18.5	Italy	12.3	Germany	11.3
<b>Portugal</b>	Spain	15.8	Poland	12.4	Italy	11.9
<b>Romania</b>	France	14.8	Spain	12.7	Italy	10.4
<b>Slovenia</b>	:	:	:	:	:	:
<b>Slovakia (*)</b>	Czechia	17.6	Spain	10.8	Germany	8.6
<b>Finland</b>	Germany	10.2	Spain	7.3	Netherlands	7.0
<b>Sweden</b>	United States	13.7	United Kingdom	9.2	France	7.5
<b>Norway (*)</b>	France	10.2	United Kingdom	9.3	United States	9.3
<b>Switzerland (*)</b>	Germany	12.3	United States	9.6	France	8.2
<b>North Macedonia (*)</b>	Germany	13.7	Croatia	10.8	Slovenia	9.8
<b>Serbia</b>	Germany	14.2	Spain	12.0	United States	8.4
<b>Türkiye (*)</b>	Jordan	11.5	Malaysia	10.2	South Korea	9.5

(-) not available.

\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

(\*) Based on available data for EU countries.

(\*) Excluding Doctoral or equivalent.

(\*) Short-cycle tertiary: undercoverage.

(\*) Data available for a limited number of partner countries. Based on data rounded to the nearest 100.

(\*) Undercoverage.

(\*) Excluding short-cycle tertiary.

(\*) 2021.

(\*) Short-cycle tertiary: negligible graduates and students from abroad.

(\*) 2020.

(\*) 2021. Credit mobility under other international/national programmes only.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobc02)

eurostat 

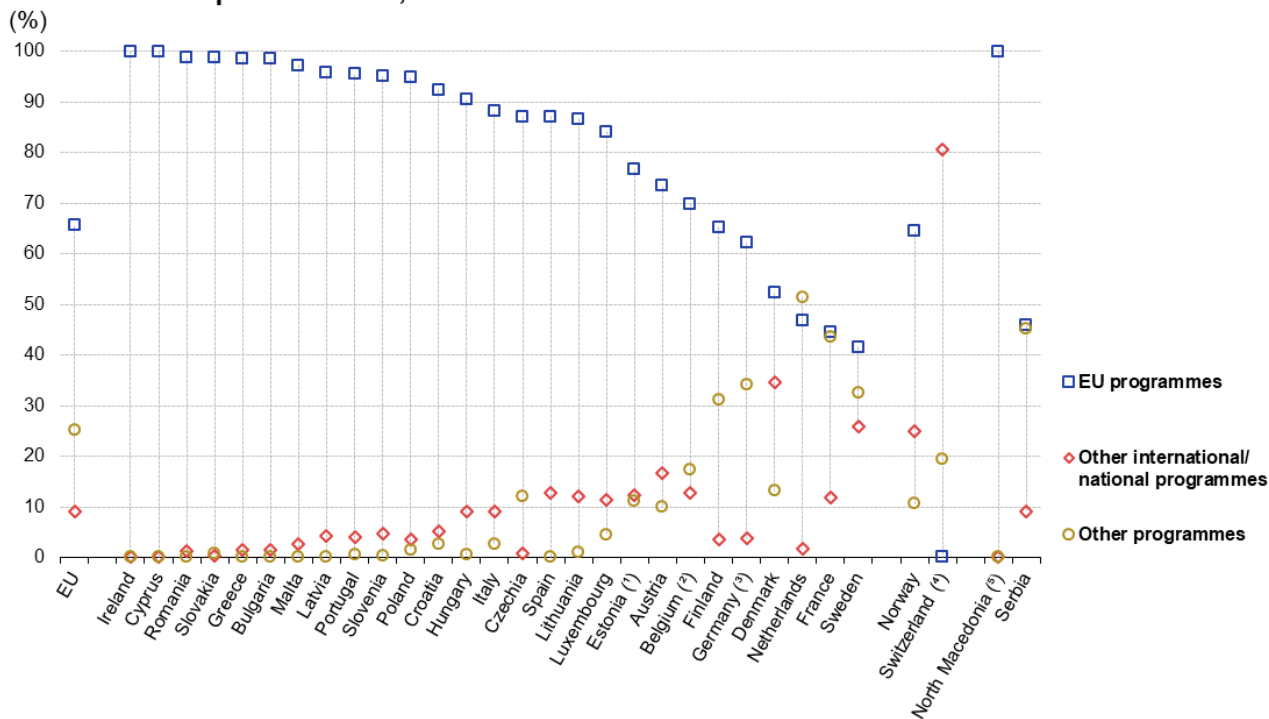
**Table 5: Share of credit-mobile graduates for the 3 largest partner countries, 2022 (% of all credit-mobile graduates) Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobc02)**

As for degree-mobile students/graduates, credit-mobile graduates within EU countries went to study in a wide range of countries, often because of similar language, cultural and historical ties, as well as geographical proximity. For the EU as a whole (excluding Slovenia), the largest number of credit-mobile graduates in 2022 went to Spain (11.2%) and the United Kingdom (9.9%). The 3rd largest share went to the United States (7.0%). Together, these 3 partners accounted for 28.2% of all credit-mobile graduates from the EU.

An analysis of the destinations of credit-mobile graduates is presented in Table 5. For 21 of the EU countries, the principal destination for credit-mobile graduates in 2022 had been another EU country. Several of these were neighbouring EU countries (such as graduates from Luxembourg who had been in Germany) or countries with the same or similar languages (for example, graduates from Cyprus who had been in Greece). Looking across the top 3 destinations for all EU countries together, Spain and Germany were the most common destinations. Among

non-EU countries, the United Kingdom and the United States were the only countries to appear multiple times among the top 3 destinations for graduates from any of the EU countries.

### Distribution of type of mobility scheme among credit-mobile graduates (at least 3 months abroad for a study period and/or work placement) at bachelor's or equivalent level, 2022



Note: ranked on EU programmes.

(\*) Undercoverage.

(\*\*) Undercoverage: data refer only to the Flemish Community.

(\*) Based on data rounded to the nearest 100.

(\*) 2020.

(\*) 2021.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: educ\_uae\_mobc01)



**Figure 4: Distribution of type of mobility scheme among credit-mobile graduates (at least 3 months abroad for a study period and/or work placement) at bachelor's or equivalent level, 2022 (%)** Source: Eurostat (educ\_uae\_mobc01)

The final analysis in this article also concerns credit-mobile graduates but focuses on people who had graduated from bachelor's or equivalent programmes.

Data are presented for 3 types of credit mobility programmes in Figure 4

- EU programmes are those financed via programmes such as [Erasmus+](#)
- other international/national programmes are other bi- or multilateral programmes, for example partnerships between universities
- other programmes concern students who organise their mobility which is credited by their home institution.

Note that mobility which isn't recognised in a student's home institution and therefore falls outside the student's programme at their home institution (so-called bridge mobility) is excluded.

Across the EU, around 2 out of 3 (65.6%) credit-mobile graduates from bachelor's or equivalent programmes had participated in EU programmes in 2022. Other international/national programmes had a share of 9.2%, while other programmes made up the remaining 25.3%.

- In 24 of the EU countries, a majority of credit-mobile graduates from bachelor's or equivalent level studies in 2022 had participated in EU programmes, with this share reaching 100.0% for graduates from Ireland and

Cyprus. Aside from Ireland and Cyprus, there were a further 11 EU countries where the share of credit-mobile graduates that had participated in EU programmes was higher than 90.0%. Sweden, France and the Netherlands were the only EU countries where the share of credit-mobile graduates that had participated in EU programmes was below 50.0%.

- In Denmark, just over a third (34.6%) of credit-mobile graduates had participated in other international or national programmes; the next highest shares were 25.9% in Sweden and 16.6% in Austria.
- There was only 1 EU country – the Netherlands – where the residual category of 'other programmes' accounted for the highest share of credit-mobile graduates; a majority (51.5%) of credit-mobile graduates from the Netherlands participated in other programmes.

## Source data for tables and graphs

[Learning mobility statistics: tables and figures](#)

## Data sources

### Source

The standards for international statistics on education are set by 3 international organisations: the [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#) institute for statistics (UIS); the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) ; [Eurostat](#) , the statistical office of the EU.

The source of data used in this article is a [joint UNESCO/OECD/Eurostat \(UOE\) data collection](#) on education statistics and this is the basis for the core components of Eurostat's database on education statistics; in combination with the joint data collection, Eurostat also collects data on regional enrolments and foreign language learning. More information about the joint data collection is available in an article on the [UOE methodology](#) .

### Classification

The [international standard classification of education \(ISCED\)](#) is the basis for international education statistics, describing 9 different [levels of education](#) .

Data by fields of education are classified according to the [ISCED-F 2013](#) classification. The fields of education are broad domains, branches or areas of content covered by an education programme or qualification. The classification has a 3-level hierarchy based on broad fields (the highest level), narrow fields (the 2nd level) and detailed fields (the 3rd level) of education.

### Key concepts

The UOE data collection covers **domestic educational activity** . In other words, it concerns education provided within a country's own territory regardless of ownership or sponsorship of the institutions concerned (whether public or private, national or foreign) or of the education delivery mechanism (whether face-to-face or at a distance). In particular, all students studying within a country, including internationally mobile students from abroad, should be included in the statistics of the reporting country. Students who have left the reporting country to study abroad shouldn't be included by the reporting country even where such students are partially or fully funded by national or subnational authorities. Concerning short exchange programmes (of at least 3 months but shorter than 1 academic year), students who remain enrolled in their home institution and where credits for successful completion of the study abroad are awarded by the home institution should be reported by the country of the home institution in which they are enrolled.

By contrast, **educational activities which take place abroad** – for example, in institutions run by providers located in the reporting country – should be excluded.

In cases of **cross-border distance learning/e-learning** , students should be reported by the country of the institution providing the service, not the country of residence of the student. Equally, **students who commute across borders** should be reported by the country where they are enrolled rather than where they are resident.

The **country of origin** for learning mobility data should, in principle, refer to the country of prior secondary education. However, countries might use the country of prior residence or citizenship or another concept. Information on the definitions currently used by countries is available under Table 1 for degree-mobile students, Figure 3 for degree-mobile graduates and Table 4 for credit-mobile graduates.

More information on the concepts used for these statistics can be found in the [Methodological manual on learning mobility in tertiary education](#) .

## Context

### Bologna process

Since the introduction of the [Bologna process](#) (see the article on [Education and training statistics introduced](#) ) a major expansion in higher education systems has taken place, accompanied by significant reforms in degree structures and quality assurance systems.

Removing obstacles to student mobility across Europe was 1 of the operational goals of the Bologna process; more broadly this goal was to support the mobility of students, teachers and researchers. It established a European Higher Education Area to facilitate student and staff mobility, to make higher education more inclusive and accessible, and to make higher education in Europe more attractive and competitive worldwide.

The European Higher Education Area has brought about far-reaching changes which make it easier to study and train abroad. Both the 3-tier bachelor-master-doctorate degree structure and advances in quality assurance have facilitated student and staff mobility, while the use of mobility and quality assurance tools (such as the [European credit transfer and accumulation system \(ECTS\)](#) or the [European quality assurance register \(EQAR\)](#) ) have facilitated mutual trust, academic recognition and mobility.

### Erasmus+

In 2014, the [Erasmus programme](#) was superseded by the [EU's programme for education, training, young people and sport](#) , referred to as [Erasmus+](#) . The programme currently covers the period 2021 to 2027 and has an overall budget of € 26.2 billion (which is nearly double the funding of the 1st funding period (2014–20)).

In the field of higher education, Erasmus+ gives students and academic staff the opportunity to develop their skills and boost their employment prospects. Students can study abroad for up to 12 months (during each cycle of tertiary education). The programme currently covers all EU countries, as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye.

More information about [higher education initiatives](#) is available in the article on [Education and training statistics introduced](#) .

## Other articles

- [Education and training in the EU – facts and figures](#)

## Main tables

- [Education and training \(t\\_educ\)](#)

## Database

- [Education and training \(educ\)](#) , see

Participation in education and training (educ\_part)  
Learning mobility (educ\_uoe\_mob)  
Education and training outcomes (educ\_outc)

## Dedicated section

- [Education and training](#)

## Methodology

### Metadata

- [Education and training](#) (ESMS metadata file – educ\_uoe\_enr\_esms)

### Manuals and other methodological information

- [International Standard Classification of Education \(ISCED\) 2011](#)
- [ISCED 2011 Operational Manual – Guidelines for classifying national education programmes and related qualifications](#)
- [UOE data collection on formal education – Manual on concepts, definitions and classifications – 2023 edition](#)
- [UNESCO OECD Eurostat \(UOE\) joint data collection – methodology](#)

## Legislation

- [Regulation \(EC\) No 452/2008](#) of 23 April 2008 concerning the production and development of statistics on education and lifelong learning
  - [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No 912/2013](#) of 23 September 2013 as regards statistics on education and training systems
  - [Summaries of EU Legislation: statistics on education and lifelong learning](#)

## External links

- [Council of Europe – The European Higher Education area at 20: new publication](#)
- [European Commission – Erasmus+ – EU programme for education, training, young people and sport](#)
- [European Commission – European Education Area](#) , see
  - [Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond \(2021–30\)](#)
  - [Higher education](#)
  - [Mobility and cooperation](#)
  - [The Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area](#)
- [European Education and Culture Executive Agency \(EACEA\)](#) , see
  - [Eurydice](#) , see
    - \* [Towards Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education in Europe](#)
    - \* [National Student Fee and Support Systems in European Higher Education](#)
    - \* [Mobility Scoreboard](#)
- [OECD – Directorate for Education and Skills](#) , see
  - [Higher education policy](#)
  - [Skills beyond school](#)
- [UNESCO – Education transforms lives](#) , see
  - [Higher education](#)