

# Europe and Eurasia

## Regional EducationUSA Profile

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bermuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, 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

# 117

### EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

37 Comprehensive  
34 Standard  
46 Reference

In Europe and Eurasia, 117 EducationUSA centers (37 comprehensive, 34 standard, 46 reference) are located at Fulbright Commissions, local non-governmental organizations, universities and high schools, American Councils for International Education offices, bi-national centers, U.S. embassies and consulates, and American Spaces. EducationUSA has advising programs in 46 countries and territories in the region, and there are 151 advisers, who continue to expand the scope and quality of services and demonstrate creative innovation in programming.

### Regional Overview

Student mobility from Europe and Eurasia to the United States has increased by nearly 5 percent in the past five years to 90,996 students, according to the 2019 *Open Doors* report. However, this is a slight decrease of 1.8 percent since the 2018 report. Students from Europe and Eurasia account for more than 8 percent of the total number of international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities. The countries with the largest increases in mobility to the United States in the past year are Azerbaijan (14.8 percent), Albania (12.3 percent), and Hungary (10.8 percent). Ukraine and Georgia have had sustained, steady growth over the past five years and have more students in the United States now than at any point over the past decade.

Growth from previous years in some Western European countries—such as Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain—appears to be flattening now. This is due to a variety of reasons: improving economies incentivizing younger people to work instead of study, demography, and perceived barriers to U.S. higher

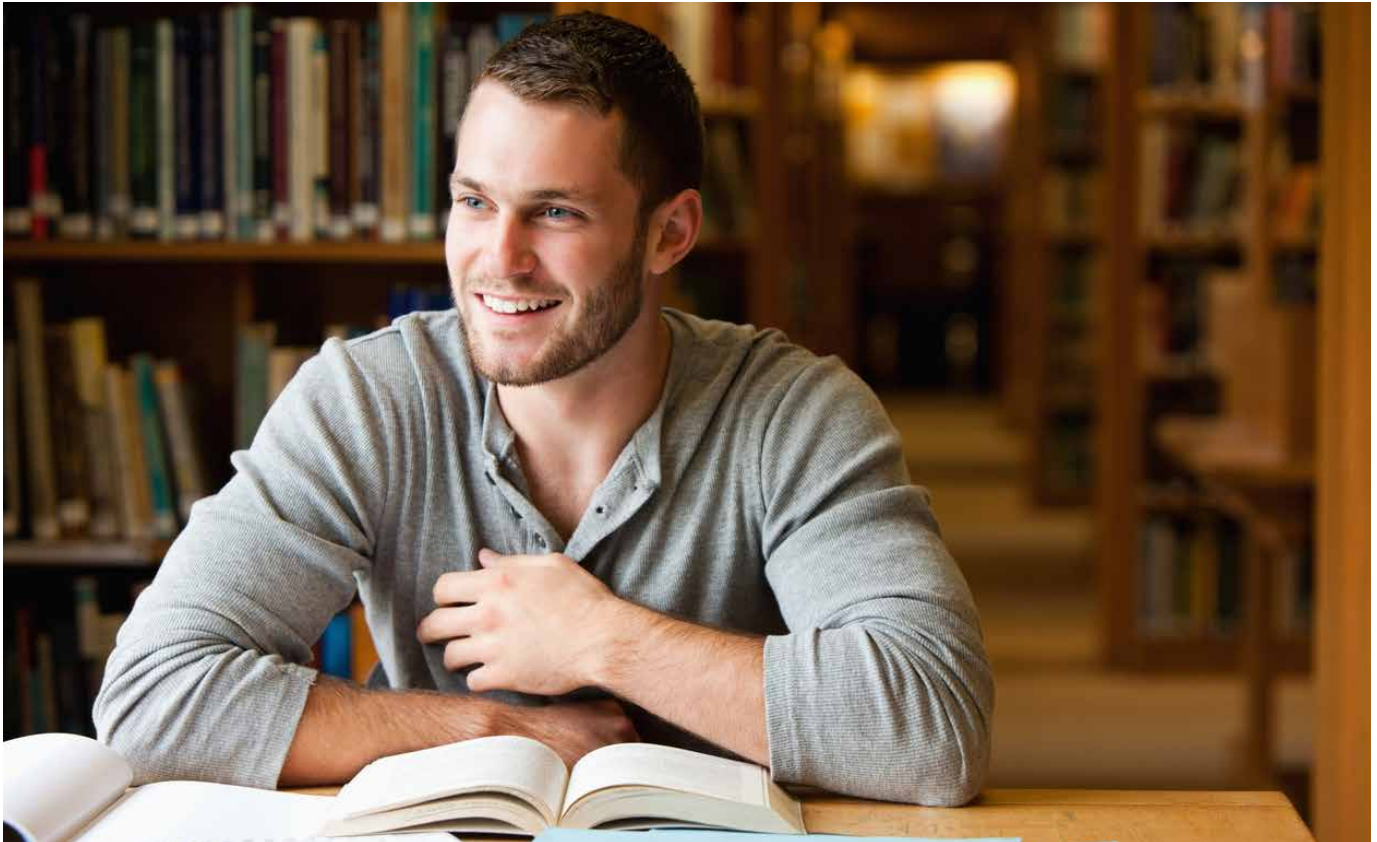
education, such as high cost and safety. The number of students coming to the U.S. from Germany declined notably by 8.5 percent due to many of these factors.

Seventy percent of students from the region are studying in full degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Since 2014 the number of undergraduate students from the region has increased more than 10 percent, representing 40 percent of all degree-seeking students from Europe and Eurasia. Luxembourg and Azerbaijan saw the greatest percentage increase in the number of undergraduate students from the region. The increase in undergraduate students is especially noteworthy in light of the 4 percent decrease in the population of people ages 15-24 in the region over the past five years (according to Eurostat).

Approximately 6.5 percent of all students from the region were studying at community colleges in the United States, and community college enrollment is particularly high among students from Albania (21 percent), Sweden (21 percent), Moldova (18 percent), Ukraine (14 percent), and Poland (10 percent). The community college model is attractive to students in Europe and Eurasia because of the relatively low cost of attendance, simplified admissions process, Optional Practical Training (OPT) opportunities, and ability to transfer to a four-year U.S. undergraduate program.

The number of graduate students from the region has declined but still makes up approximately 28 percent of the total number of students in the United States from Europe and Eurasia. Factors for the decline include a youth





population decline, an increase in English language programs offered in the region, and increased awareness of and financial support for opportunities in other countries. France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, and Turkey send the largest numbers of students to the United States. Graduate students in the region are particularly interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, business and management, computer science, and international relations. There is also sustained interest in Master of Laws (LLM) programs, especially in Western Europe, Turkey, and Ukraine.

The standard three-year European Bachelor's degree sometimes complicates students' admission to U.S. graduate programs and semester-long exchanges. As a result, thematic, non-English as a Second Language (ESL) summer programs have gained in popularity. Approximately 16 percent of students from the region are enrolled in non-degree programs in the United States, a number that is expected to grow over the next few years. Close to one-third of German students and nearly half of

the Danish students in the United States are enrolled in non-degree programs. Programs offering only English language instruction are less popular than those offering a broader range of academic credit-bearing courses. As a category, non-degree programs decreased the most in the 2019 *Open Doors* report. However, students from the following countries significantly increased their participation in non-credit programs: Belarus (50 percent increase), Greece (26 percent increase), Ireland (25 percent increase), and Cyprus (21 percent increase).

Cohort advising programs—such as EducationUSA Competitive College Clubs (CCCs) and the Opportunity Funds program—are important fixtures in advising in Europe and Eurasia. CCCs, currently offered in 14 countries in the region, help prepare students for the admission process and U.S. classroom experience. The Opportunity Funds program is available to citizens and officially recognized refugees of 10 countries in the region and provides assistance to students who are academically gifted but unable to afford application fees and tuition at

U.S. institutions. Opportunity Funds can cover the up-front costs of applying to U.S. institutions, and for those admitted with full scholarships, these funds can cover expenses that help the student get to the U.S. campus. Engaging with EducationUSA cohort programs is an excellent way to identify talented students who are a great fit for your institution; Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) can share details on the variety and types of cohort programs available in the region.

The expansion of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) program for high school students in 2018 is another factor that may begin to influence undergraduate admissions in Europe and Eurasia in the coming years. The FLEX program, a U.S. Department of State youth exchange program administered by American Councils, now operates in 16 countries in the region. The first alumni cohorts return from the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, and Slovak Republic in 2020. Six countries in the region participate in the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) program, which offers a yearlong exchange experience at

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an American high school for students from countries with significant Muslim populations. EducationUSA centers in countries with FLEX and YES programs collaborate on outreach efforts outside capital cities and engage program alumni to promote U.S. education to their peers.

Countries in Central Europe, such as Austria, report sustained interest in high school exchange programs in the United States, even as interest in higher education continues to fluctuate. This is most likely related to the perceived high cost of higher education in the United States. Several reputable organizations facilitate high school exchange opportunities in Austria, and a growing number of families are interested in funding high school exchanges independently. U.S. boarding schools are also becoming more popular, particularly in Serbia.

### Recent Trends

Concerned by demographic shifts, declining birth rates, and economic pressures, some governments in the region are responding by developing programs and policies to promote population growth, enhance workforce development programs, address concerns about brain drain, and tackle immigration challenges facing their countries. These policies include measures to increase the number of international students on local campuses, and U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs) can expect to meet students from across the region

and around the world when recruiting in Europe and Eurasia. For example, Russia seeks to nearly double the number of international students from 240,000 in 2018 to 425,000 by 2024. It is also considering granting citizenship to international students who complete degree programs and has removed work restrictions on students during their studies. Beginning in 2020, Russia plans to double the number of full scholarships it offers international students from 15,000 to 30,000.

The cost of U.S. higher education continues to be a perceived barrier to study in the United States since students in the region have access to high-quality, low-cost higher education and generous financial support for study abroad through various programs offered through Erasmus (the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students). Currency values have also been a major factor in the region over the past several years, especially the strength of the U.S. dollar compared with most other currencies, including the euro, pound, ruble, and Turkish lira. The value of some national currencies is influenced by the price of oil, especially in Russia and Norway. However, a drop in the value of a currency relative to the U.S. dollar does not always equate to a drop in student mobility to the United States.

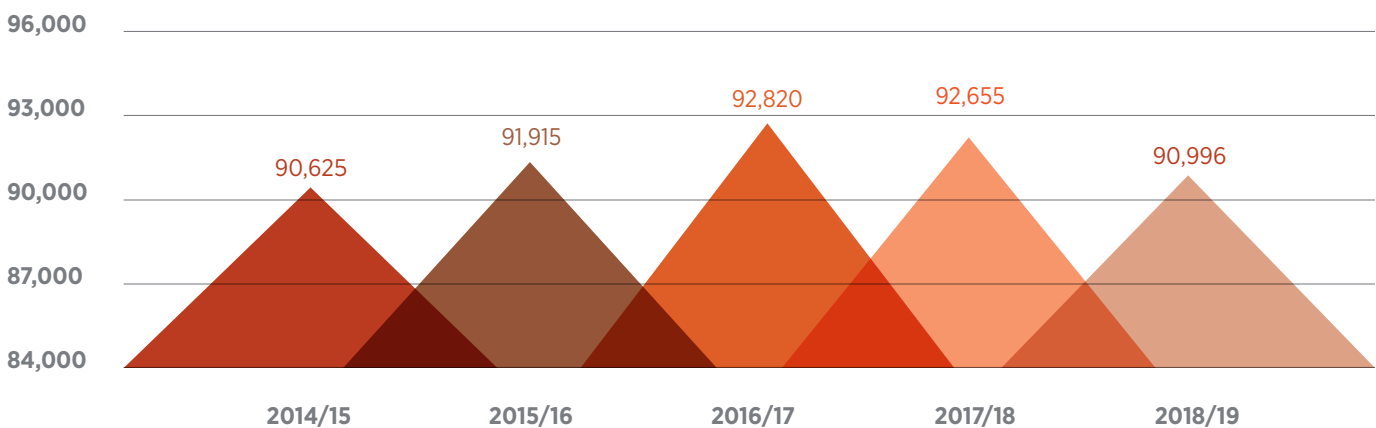
Financial aid for students from certain countries in Europe and Eurasia is

portable. These programs have varying rules and regulations, including award amounts, duration of support, and other factors that influence students' ability to study in the United States. While the need to self-fund can be a deterrent against studying in the United States, several local governments have increased their commitment to fund exchanges. In the past year, Albania, Greece, Hungary, and Kosovo have increased their Fulbright contribution to allow more students to study in the United States. The Hungarian government plans to quadruple contributions to the Fulbright Program, which will yield 50 percent more grantees by 2022 and result in more tuition support for Hungarian students in the United States and for American grantees in Hungary. Advisers stay abreast of these changes and are able to provide updated information on these programs.

Even though U.S. tuition and fees are high from a European perspective, there are cost categories in which U.S. institutions are competitive. For example, the cost of living may be less expensive in the United States than in many European capital cities. U.S. HEIs should highlight these affordable options in recruitment materials.

Brexit has loomed large for the region since the referendum in 2016. The final terms of Brexit and the degree to which the UK will participate in the EU's Erasmus Program will have major implications for student mobility across the region and to the United States. Negotiations between

## Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



the UK and the EU in 2020 should clarify the impact of Brexit on international student mobility. The UK continues to maintain a large recruiting presence throughout the region as the premiere destination in Europe and Eurasia for students from the region who wish to study in an English-speaking country.

Students and parents are closely watching how Brexit will impact students' access to education in the UK. Increased fees, difficulty obtaining visas, and regulations limiting work would likely encourage students to look elsewhere for opportunities to study in English, including those in the United States or in other countries on the continent with a steadily increasing number of English language programs. Students in the Baltic countries, Bulgaria, and Poland have been particularly focused on changes related to Brexit, and advisers in Cyprus and the Czech Republic report an increase in the number of inquiries about studying in the United States due to Brexit. The UK has itself consistently been one of the largest sending countries to the United States.

However, there are geopolitical and demographic headwinds. Recent uncertainty about Brexit has significantly weakened the pound. The undergraduate student population, and increasingly the graduate degree-seeking population, continues to decline following a drop in birth rates between 1999 and 2004. These shifts have created a surplus of UK university seats and a buyer's market for prospective international students.

European students are increasingly aware of and interested in OPT and J-1 internship programs. It is difficult for students from the region to gain practical work experience in their career field while studying in Europe, so participation in OPT is a major advantage of studying in the United States. Exchange programs between institutional partners remain popular, and short-term programs for "free mover" students (those on short-term programs independent of their institution's exchange agreements) are gaining in popularity. When recruiting students in the region, institutions should include information about OPT, the J-1 internship program, and other short-term programs in addition to semester and yearlong opportunities.

### Countries in the Spotlight

**Belarus.** Opportunities for engagement with Belarus are expected to increase as the political relationship with the United States continues to improve. The U.S. embassy is seeking to expand outreach and opportunities for exchange with Belarusians, and a U.S. ambassador may be appointed for the first time in nearly 15 years. The U.S. Consular section reopened non-immigrant visa adjudication services in Minsk in 2018, an important step in improving relations between the two countries. These positive steps will likely increase awareness of, and support for, study opportunities in the United States in the near future.

Thanks to a USA Study Abroad capacity-building grant in 2017, EducationUSA Belarus has hosted several workshops for Belarusian HEIs on establishing partnerships with U.S. institutions and developing the capacity to host American students on their campuses. While Belarus has institutional connections with neighboring countries, its political isolation over the past decade has left a void in connections with U.S. institutions. Now is the perfect time for U.S. institutions to take advantage of opportunities for academic exchange with Belarus, especially those that support the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection's priority fields—information technology, engineering, medical and social support services, psychology, and finance—and skilled labor in construction and agricultural sectors.

Belarus has one of the largest increases in student mobility rates to the United States. Compared to five years ago, 14.5 percent more Belarusians have studied in the United States. This reflects a 7.7 percent year-over-year increase between the 2018 and 2019. The country has traditionally been a graduate market, but in academic year (AY) 2018-2019, the number of undergraduate students in the United States exceeded the number of graduate students for the second year in a row. Overall, there is room for growth. The current number of Belarusians in the United States is 378, but UNESCO estimates that there are more than 22,000 academically mobile Belarusians, almost three-quarters of whom study in Russia and Poland. The United States currently ranks as the seventh most popular destination for Belarusian

students, behind countries such as the Czech Republic, Germany, and Italy.

Belarus recently changed its entry requirements for U.S. citizens and citizens of approximately 80 other countries, allowing them to visit Belarus without a visa for up to 30 days for business and tourism purposes. To take advantage of this visa-free travel, visitors must enter through the Minsk International Airport and cannot enter or exit the country through the Russian Federation. A visa is still required through other points of entry.

These visa changes have dramatically expanded opportunities for U.S. institutions to engage in Belarus, whether for student exchange or recruitment. Since these changes went into effect, EducationUSA Belarus has hosted two annual fairs for U.S. HEIs as part of the annual EducationUSA Eurasia Tour and plans to continue doing this in future years. As Belarus receives relatively few visits from U.S. HEIs, participating in EducationUSA events is an effective way to reach students and parents with a specific interest in the United States.

The EducationUSA team for Belarus, based in Vilnius, Lithuania, conducts extensive virtual outreach and programming for students in Belarus, including CCC and Opportunity Funds cohorts. The team develops Russian language content and can provide U.S. institutions guidance on marketing strategies that will resonate in Belarus and throughout the Russian-speaking community in the region.

**Hungary.** According to the 2019 *Open Doors* report, nearly 800 Hungarian students selected the United States as a study destination in AY 2018-2019, an 11 percent increase over the previous year and the largest increase in Central and Eastern Europe. Even with the decline in the Hungarian youth population over the past 10 years, student mobility from Hungary to the United States has steadily increased.

Hungary's gross domestic product (GDP) significantly exceeded the EU's average last year. Hungary is the seventh largest employer in the world in the nanotechnology and micro-nanotechnology sectors. The energy

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sector and car industry remain prominent employers in the country. The booming Hungarian economy—along with the newly established hub centers for science, research, and innovation—will demand a workforce of next-generation scientists and professionals with international expertise. Significant EU and government funding has been allocated to establish and strengthen science parks and innovation centers throughout the country.

General socioeconomic indicators—such as the increase in the number of bilingual and international high schools in Hungary, higher English proficiency levels among Generation Z, strong family commitments to provide high-quality education for their children, and the UK’s withdrawal from the EU—will likely result in an ongoing interest in educational opportunities in the United States. Furthermore, a growing number of fields in Hungarian higher education, such as tourism and international business, require curricular practical training (CPT) that can be completed abroad and presents additional opportunities to increase the number of Hungarian students at foreign HEIs.

EducationUSA Hungary has a robust countrywide advising program, with one advising center located within the Hungarian Fulbright Commission in Budapest and four advising centers hosted at American Corners across the country. The centers maintain active outreach programs that reach about 8,000 students annually, and these numbers are growing, thanks to FLEX. In the coming years, FLEX alumni will begin

university-level studies and are likely to be interested in opportunities to study in the United States.

There is also a special focus given to LLM outreach across the country, since Fulbright has several agreements with U.S. universities for LLM prospective candidates. EducationUSA Hungary will continue hosting presentations on law studies in the United States in the coming year. Hungary also has an annual Counselor Training Academy that trains counselors and teachers in the capital to assist students with the U.S. admissions process.

Every January, EducationUSA Hungary joins EDUCATIO, the largest higher education fair in the country, hosting a booth in collaboration with the Fulbright Commission and American Councils. In 2020, Wright State University from Dayton, Ohio, was the first U.S. institution to join EducationUSA at this fair, and this collaboration yielded several dozen Hungarian applicants to Wright State. This three-day fair is an excellent way for U.S. HEIs to reach qualified applicants from Hungary.

Universities in Hungary have set ambitious campus internationalization goals, which have resulted in more degree programs being offered in English and a rapidly increasing number of foreign students at Hungarian HEIs. Since 2011, the number of U.S. students studying in Hungary has grown by 72 percent. Several Hungarian universities have interuniversity agreements, as well as joint degree programs with U.S. institutions.

The Ministry for Innovation and Technology has increased its contribution to support the Hungarian-American Fulbright Program, from USD\$150,000 in 2020 to USD\$600,000 by 2022, to match the U.S. contribution. This will enable more competitive grants and shorten the waiting list of applicants. The program continues to encourage applications in all fields and representing all geographic areas in both countries, with a special focus given to first-generation students and students from traditionally underrepresented groups. The Hungarian government’s increased investment will expand the number of grantees from about 40 to more than 60 by 2022.

Finally, Hungary’s government announced a new scholarship program that will support the participation of 90,000 Hungarian secondary school students in two-week language courses, mostly in English, in several EU countries and China. The government will provide around 180 million euros in funding. The start of the program has been postponed until 2021 due to the current situation.

**Netherlands.** With a population of just over 17 million, the Netherlands has the 17th largest economy in the world. The Dutch educational system offers a rigorous curriculum, with an increasing focus on programs in English and a strong international reputation. More than 85,000 international students currently study in the Netherlands, constituting 11.5 percent of the total student population. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science strongly encourages Dutch students to study abroad, because foreign

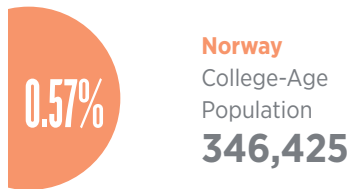
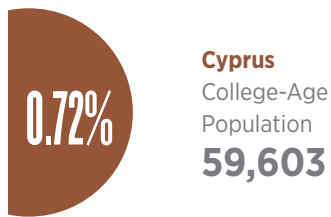
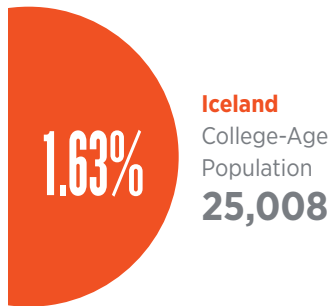
### Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2014/15	2018/19	%Change
Albania	670	993	48.2%
Ukraine	1,551	1,953	25.9%
Italy	4,863	6,114	25.7%
Azerbaijan	408	489	19.9%
Netherlands	2,257	2,681	18.8%

# 48.2%

**Albania** 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: 2017 Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

language and intercultural communication skills are becoming increasingly important in education and the labor market. As of 2020, nearly a quarter of the Dutch population has an immigrant background.

Therefore, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science prioritizes English language and intercultural communication skills, and Dutch students have some of the highest levels of English proficiency in Europe, with an average TOEFL score of 100. More than 1,200 primary and secondary schools receive government funding to offer early foreign language education and bilingual (Dutch-English) programs. In higher education, English is increasingly the primary language of instruction.

Although Dutch universities offer affordable Bachelor's and Master's degrees, mobility rates to the United States are strong and stable. The United States and its educational system enjoy a positive reputation among Dutch students. Dutch media has traditionally covered the United States extensively, including news, popular culture, and TV shows. The United States is the third most popular destination for Dutch students, after Belgium and the UK.

Undergraduate students from the Netherlands are attracted to the liberal arts system and opportunities to play sports competitively in the United States. Many Dutch students compete at high levels and some of the most talented young athletes study at one of 29 specialized schools for athletes called the Topsport Talentscholen. Graduate students are also attracted to the quality of programs in the United States. There is also a significant market for non-degree, gap year, and exchange programs, and many Dutch HEIs are interested in developing partnerships with U.S. institutions.

Degree-seeking students can obtain low-interest government loans to study in the United States, but scholarship opportunities for undergraduate students are limited. For graduate study, Dutch students can apply for grants from several foundations, including Fulbright, KHMW-Eizenga (master of business administration [MBA] and economics), VSB-fonds, and Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds.

EducationUSA in the Netherlands has two advisers housed in the Fulbright Commission in Amsterdam. The Fulbright Commission administers Fulbright programs and the Campus Scholarship Program, which assists undergraduate non-degree students in finding scholarships from U.S. universities. As Dutch students are independent and are increasingly researching opportunities online, EducationUSA advisers have redoubled their efforts to provide accurate online information in Dutch. Advisers also organize information sessions, webinars, and fairs, and actively involve alumni in outreach activities. In AY 2018-2019, a team of 20 EducationUSA student ambassadors visited nearly 40 events and reached approximately 5,000 students. Annual fairs include an undergraduate college fair, the LLM tour, an MBA fair, and the BuitenlandBeurs fair.

**Serbia.** Serbian student mobility to the United States has remained steady at around 1,000 students for nearly a decade. With the largest college-age population among the former Yugoslav republics, Serbia also boasts the highest number of students choosing to study in the United States. Serbian students take full advantage of the diversity offered by U.S. higher education, as demonstrated by their presence in 49 of the 50 states, as well as in the District of Columbia.

Foreign direct investments in Serbia are on the rise, and an international education provides an edge in career prospects. Families are aware of this, and that awareness accounts for their steady investment and interest in U.S. higher education. At the same time, companies from abroad investing in Serbia constantly

### Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2018/19	% Change
United Kingdom	11,146	-2.7%
Turkey	10,159	-3.4%
Germany	9,191	-8.5%
France	8,716	-1%
Spain	7,262	-3%

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cite the well-educated and well-trained workforce as a major attraction.

For example, the U.S. company NCR has provided a high-profile investment of approximately USD\$90 million to build a 30,000 square meter state-of-the-art technology campus in Belgrade. Although Serbian development remains regionally uneven, with the greatest areas of economic development in the Belgrade and Novi Sad regions, there have been significant investments outside of these regions as well.

Serbian is the primary language of instruction in the Serbian secondary education system. However, some schools offer instruction in minority languages, such as Hungarian and Albanian. In fact, the influence of Serbia's diverse population and student academic choices is reflected in student mobility data. Austria remains the top international study destination for students in Serbia, while Hungary remains in second place, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and the United States. Of the study abroad destinations for Serbians, the United States is the only country in the top 10 with English as its primary language of instruction. However, the increasing number of English language degree programs in Europe is starting to put pressure on the U.S. market. It is important that U.S. institutions are aware of this trend and step up recruiting efforts to maintain their favorable reputation and position.

Public schooling at the secondary level in Serbia is undergoing some positive changes. Until recently, only private schools in Serbia provided International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, A and AS levels programs, and the University of Nebraska High School program, but this is changing now as public schools expand their program offerings. For example, the Serbian government recently piloted its first IB program in Novi Sad and is set to expand this program to other public schools. Currently, the program is offered at no cost to students.

Although Serbian students have heavy course loads, they still put a relatively large emphasis on athletics. Many students are interested in athletic

scholarships (e.g., basketball, volleyball, tennis, and rowing) to help cover the cost of study in the United States.

Recently, Serbian universities have expressed increased interest in cooperating with U.S. universities, particularly in the STEM fields. Part of this interest is likely due to an increasing number of young faculty being educated in the United States and returning to teach in Serbia. This interest is still in the formative stage, but the lines of communication are definitely starting to open on the Serbian side.

Starting in the summer of 2020, EducationUSA Serbia will offer an intensive online advising course for prospective undergraduate students. Supported by the U.S. embassy in Belgrade and the U.S. Department of State, the course will run in 12-week cycles and be offered three times annually.

EducationUSA Serbia holds two large annual events: the EducationUSA College Day, where prospective students and their families learn from the firsthand experiences of U.S. alumni, and the EducationUSA Southeastern Europe Tour, where prospective students and their families meet with U.S. college and university admissions officers.

**Sweden.** Sweden has a strong history of inbound and outbound student mobility, with approximately 3,500 Swedish students studying in the United States annually. About 17 percent of Swedish students who study abroad choose the United States, making it and the UK among the most popular study destinations. There has been a decline in “free mover” students, following a trend in Sweden in which fewer undergraduate students are studying abroad. At the same time, there has been an increase in Swedish students participating in exchanges, non-degree and short-term programs, graduate studies, and OPT programs abroad generally and to the United States in particular.

Swedish students finish high school at 19 years old, and many choose to take at least one gap year before starting their undergraduate studies. Therefore, short-term study opportunities, gap year programs, and studies at a U.S. community college are of particular

interest to them. Popular fields for undergraduate study in the U.S. are the humanities, the arts, the social sciences, and STEM subjects. For graduate study, LLM, Master of International Affairs, MBA, and STEM programs are the most popular.

Swedish students attending accredited institutions abroad can apply for government-funded loans and small grants from the Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN), which can cover part of the cost of four-year undergraduate programs in the United States. In general, Swedish HEIs are interested in establishing more partnerships with U.S. institutions to create further mobility opportunities for students, faculty, and staff. The Commercial Service section of the U.S. Embassy in Sweden works actively to help establish these partnerships.

EducationUSA has two centers in Sweden. The Stockholm center, hosted by the Fulbright Commission, provides advising services and participates in study and college fairs at local high schools and external venues. EducationUSA Malmö, located in Malmö Borgarskola, houses a one-of-a-kind IB student group. This group is active in a range of activities, including outreach events, college fairs, and social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat.

### What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

Perceptions of the United States continue to be shaped by domestic and world events, and some students and families from the region still question how welcome international students are, despite the considerable efforts of U.S. HEIs and the U.S. government to encourage student mobility. As significant events, such as Brexit; the emerging Erasmus program budget; and other global pressures mount, uncertainty will impact student mobility numbers and patterns across the globe.

Over the past year, European secondary and postsecondary educational systems have continued to internationalize while placing a greater emphasis on study abroad experiences. These efforts include mandatory study abroad requirements and bilingual education systems in countries such as Spain. To support this internationalization, new scholarship

and partnership programs are expected. Changes are also expected in government higher education financial aid programs to make that support more portable.

Conversely, some changes to educational systems may dissuade students from studying abroad. The Finnish system is implementing new incentives for its students to graduate faster, for example, which would leave little time for study abroad experiences or require those experiences to be shorter.

Institutions from across the region are more visible at international education conferences and have extensive partnerships with institutions in Asia and the Western Hemisphere. These institutions are also increasing their marketing efforts to reach more American students, touting their lower costs and safe environments. As a result, institutions in Europe and Eurasia will become serious competitors to U.S. institutions, for students not only from the region, but from across the globe.

Demographics will continue to play a big role in student mobility from the region. After years of region-wide decline in the college-age population, youth numbers are expected to increase in the coming years in some countries. For example, after years of a birth rate dip in the UK, there was a recent population explosion. Consequently, the current population of 10-year-olds is testing the limits of the school system. When these students are ready to attend university, capacity at UK universities will be limited. The youth population also continues to rebound in Azerbaijan, Russia, and Ukraine, and mobility for undergraduate students is expected to continue to increase over the next three to five years. For example, the number of high school graduates in 2021 in Russia is expected to be 700,000, which is nearly a 10 percent increase from 2019. While this is significant, European countries tend to have more stable demographics and smaller under-25 proportions of their populations than does Russia.

Turkey continues to have the largest youth population in Europe and Eurasia: 16 percent of the entire population is between the ages of 15 and 24, and this number is expected to grow in the next 10 years. The economy is slowly rebounding

as well. The U.S. dollar gained 42 percent against the Turkish lira in 2018 and another 12 percent in 2019. Even though the Turkish economy still shows high levels of uncertainty, rising inflation, and unemployment, sending their children to study in the United States remains a viable option for affluent families.

### Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

Virtual programming and social media outreach are large components of advising activities for Europe and Eurasia. Internet connections and mobile data networks are widely available and generally very low in cost compared to similar services in the United States. Iceland, for example, is one of the most connected countries in the world, with 91 percent of its population using social media and 94 percent of 16- to 24-year-old students on these platforms.

All of the top social media platforms are used throughout the region, though

preferences vary among different age groups. In Slovenia, for example, Generation X mainly uses LinkedIn and Viber. Generation Y has started using Telegram more, and Generation Z can be found on Tumblr and Snapchat. Younger audiences are more drawn to Instagram and Snapchat, but Facebook is still the most commonly used platform. Twitter is less popular overall. For Russian-speaking audiences, Vkontakte is a valuable tool. Some advisers report that TikTok is also growing in popularity. WhatsApp is widely used across the region; can be employed as a form of virtual outreach; and, in some countries in Western Europe, is perhaps the most effective and utilized platform. HEIs are encouraged to learn about best practices for student engagement on social media while remaining in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For additional information, visit [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection_en).

## U.S. Study Abroad

### Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2017/18	% Change
United Kingdom	39,403	-1.1%
Italy	36,945	4.5%
Spain	32,411	3.8%
France	17,185	4.4%
Germany	12,250	-2.7%

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

Country	2013/14	2017/18	% Change
Portugal	319	857	168.7%
Iceland	485	1,129	132.8%
Croatia	330	733	122.1%
Finland	263	509	93.5%
Greece	3,066	5,223	70.4%

## Europe and Eurasia



Students want to engage with their peers, and this could happen in live chat sessions or through social media takeovers. They want to hear student (and alumni) success stories, gain insights into life on campus and in the community, and acquire inside information about studying in the United States. Using the local language is especially effective in countries such as Turkey. The advisers in Belarus, the Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine are especially skilled with social media engagement and can provide guidance to U.S. HEIs on the best ways to promote their institutions to local audiences. Since students want firsthand testimonials rather than polished marketing campaigns, U.S. institutions should seek to develop their own influencers among the international student body. These could include students from the region or from specific countries that U.S. universities seek to target for future

enrollment. This approach is especially valuable in reaching audiences in Belarus, Russia, and Turkey.

As a general rule, the popularity of webinars has decreased while shorter Facebook Live or Instagram Stories have grown in popularity. The best way to engage using virtual outreach is to work with EducationUSA advisers in cohort advising programs and provide content based on their programming needs. Even in countries without cohort advising programs, EducationUSA advisers can guide universities on which topics would be most beneficial for local audiences.

Advisers from across the region often organize webinars and conduct a call for presenters from U.S. institutions. HEIs are encouraged to participate in these events to share their expertise and promote their respective institutions. Unless an HEI

presenter wants to target a more specific audience, EducationUSA advisers in Europe and Eurasia will share the webinar information and connection details with students throughout the region, so it is not necessary to set up individual, country-specific webinars.

Many centers have their own YouTube channels, such as those in Belgium and Belarus, which feature instructional videos as well as interviews with students. Video content, especially shorter clips, is particularly popular with prospective students. Country-specific video content can be sent to the advisers for posting on their channels, though subtitles are required for the materials to be posted to EducationUSA channels.

### Successful Recruiting Strategies

With virtual connections and social media being stressed as low cost and effective means for outreach, especially with limited travel budgets, the importance of in-person engagement is often neglected, especially in Europe and Eurasia. Institutions that rely only on virtual engagement will not get the same response as those that have a sustained outreach commitment that includes virtual and in-person connections.

U.S. HEIs are encouraged to take an institution-wide approach to recruiting international students. Using alumni and study abroad students to promote U.S. institutions and programs is often more powerful than having representatives deliver the same message. Visiting faculty members can give mock lectures to promote their institutions and the U.S. classroom experience. EducationUSA advisers in the region welcome faculty-led groups to visit their centers, and they can set up meetings for U.S. students to connect with local students. This approach has been especially valuable in Russia and Belarus but can be replicated with other countries in the region. U.S. HEIs can sign up for the Europe and Eurasia newsletter to learn more about upcoming in-person engagement opportunities (<http://eepurl.com/dEQdhf>).

The content of the marketing message should also stress return on investment, which can include job and internship opportunities (CPT, OPT, resident assistant, teaching assistant). The ability to collaborate on faculty research projects

and publish scholarly articles while still at the undergraduate level is a feature of studying in the United States that is likely to be of great interest to prospective students. U.S. institutions should highlight alumni employment outcomes, especially if there are stories of alumni securing employment at prominent companies and organizations. OPT continues to be a major draw for students to study in the United States, so recruiting materials should address ways that HEIs support students in securing post-graduation opportunities.

Students in the region can be brand or location conscious, but they are open to the diverse options in the United States when they learn more about the opportunities available on campuses about which they might not have been aware. U.S. institutions in less traditional destinations for international students should focus on the benefits of studying in diverse settings and locations in the United States, such as affordability, safety, and community.

Intensive English language programs are not of particular interest to students in Western and Northern Europe because of their high levels of proficiency. Other types of short-term programs are of enormous interest, especially those that happen from the last week of July to August. The areas of thematic interest (e.g., STEM or entrepreneurship) vary from country to country, but programs that offer academic credit are the most popular. U.S. institutions need to compile information about all of the short-term programs and non-degree options offered for international students, place them in one location, and standardize the application process for those programs as much as possible.

Students in Europe and Eurasia are accustomed to simple application procedures for higher education in the region, so U.S. institutions are encouraged to make their applications as flexible and simple as possible. HEIs should accept a variety of English proficiency exams and promote any test optional or flexible policies. For students from the region, the main barrier to studying in the United States is cost, and this includes the expenses associated with the application process.

U.S. institutions need to work with their American and international alumni to represent the institution in Europe and Eurasia. EducationUSA offers dedicated alumni fairs and events throughout the year. U.S. institutions should consider training alumni, and even study abroad students, to represent the institution in a meaningful way. EducationUSA and American Spaces can engage alumni and study abroad students at student fairs, high school visits, and other outreach events.

### **Institutional Partnerships**

Institutional partnerships with HEIs continue to be an important, yet underutilized way to increase student mobility with Europe and Eurasia. Local HEIs face the same challenges as those in the United States: declining youth populations, shrinking budgets, and increased competition for students. They are looking for connections beyond the region. The partnership needs of European colleges and universities will vary by institution and department, as is the case with U.S. institutions.

Even though most European HEIs already have institutional partnerships with U.S. institutions, this does not mean that they are not seeking new ones or do not want ideas to innovate their existing partnerships. European HEIs frequently comment on how study abroad agreements with their U.S. counterparts are oversubscribed to on their side, with more European students wanting to go to the United States than vice versa, so U.S. institutions should explore options that increase mobility beyond those one-to-one agreements. EducationUSA advisers themselves can play a convening role to facilitate engagement between prospective partners, so U.S. institutions should provide this information when reaching out.

Credit transfer and program costs are major concerns for local institutions, and they often are looking for dual-degree programs, short-term exchanges for students and faculty, and research collaboration. All institutions are eager to increase the number of U.S. students on their campuses. With funds from the USA Study Abroad Branch, Fulbright Commissions and U.S. embassies in the region have provided workshops for their local HEIs on how to develop partnerships and increase their capacity to host U.S. students in the region. To date,

EducationUSA advisers in 18 countries have hosted or participated in these workshops and can provide details about partnership needs and opportunities in their countries.

There are many public and private organizations that offer programs to facilitate institutional partnership development. EducationUSA advisers have the most up-to-date and comprehensive information about those programs in their respective countries. Some examples of partnership development resources include those provided through BUTEX in the UK, Fulbright Commissions across the region, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), International Student Exchange Programs, Mission Interuniversitaire de Coordination des Echanges Franco-Américains, and other organizations. U.S. HEIs should also consider the International Academic Partnership Program in Greece, administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE), which is open to all accredited U.S. HEIs interested in developing new partnerships in Greece. This program is designed to support strategic dialogue among IIE, partners in the host country, and the U.S. higher education community.

Opportunities are also available through the U.S. Department of State's USA Study Abroad Branch. Visit the website for information on the next round of the IDEAS (Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students) program grants (<https://studyabroad.state.gov/>). While this program is not limited to Europe, it can provide support to U.S. HEIs in developing new partnerships and enhance existing partnerships that bolster study abroad opportunities. The Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) division is very active in Europe, including in the educational arena, and there are FCS representatives across the region who run programs exclusively for HEIs.

International education conferences (such as those hosted by NAFSA and EAIE) provide networking opportunities with institutions from Europe and Eurasia. EAIE is especially valuable for making connections in the region. EducationUSA hosts a U.S. Pavilion each year for accredited U.S. HEIs. The conference happens every September (in 2020 it was postponed until October), and it is an excellent venue to establish new and nurture existing partnerships.

## Europe and Eurasia

Many countries in the region have well-established vocational training programs that may include apprenticeships. Institutions that administer those types of programs are particularly interested in establishing partnerships with community colleges and/or U.S. institutions that can help to facilitate internships even for short durations. They also welcome U.S. professors as guest instructors on their campuses.

### Foreign Government and Private Funding

EducationUSA advisers stay abreast of new and evolving scholarship programs in their countries. Visit the [educationusa.state.gov](https://educationusa.state.gov) "Find an Advising Center" page to contact centers and learn more about funding opportunities for students from Europe and Eurasia.

**Erasmus+.** Launched in 2014 as the EU's reorganized flagship suite of international education and student mobility programs, Erasmus+ provides a wide range of opportunities to European and non-European students, educators, and administrators. Visit [ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en) to learn more about the program. One of the program's goals is to have 4 million participants studying abroad by 2021. Signature initiatives include Jean Monnet Activities to promote worldwide teaching and research; Horizon 2020, which provides billions of euros for research and innovation; and Marie Curie fellowships, which are awarded to individual researchers. All EU countries have Erasmus+ program administrators at the national and institutional levels who can provide additional information about how U.S. institutions can participate in these programs. The next funding and programmatic cycle for Erasmus+ will begin in 2021.

**Fulbright.** There are 23 Fulbright Commissions across Europe, each with its own program offerings. In addition to the commissions, Fulbright awards are available in each country in Europe and Eurasia. U.S. embassy websites provide more details on funding levels and eligible candidates.

**Albania.** The Excellence Fund for Albanian students, supported by the Ministry of Education, is a financial aid opportunity for students admitted to one of the top 15 global universities, as determined by their

*Times Higher Education* ranking. Students qualify if they receive a scholarship of 75 percent or more to any accredited university in the United States, and the maximum amount is 8,000 euros. The Albanian-American Development Foundation fully funds Master's degrees for selected fields of study.

**Armenia.** More than 15 private foundations provide scholarships for Armenians to study in the United States. All details are listed on the EducationUSA Yerevan center page: <https://educationusa.state.gov/centers/yerevan-american-councils>

**Austria.** The Marietta Blau Grant for Ph.D. students awards 1,500 euros per month for six to 12 months. The Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education, Science and Research offers additional support.

**Baltic-American Freedom Foundation.** The Baltic-American Freedom Foundation provides funds for citizens of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to participate in educational and exchange programs centered on economic growth and democratic processes. Funding is available for research and internships in the United States, with awards ranging from USD\$30,000 to USD\$60,000.

**Belgium.** The Belgian American Education Foundation provides scholarships for graduate studies, and the Fernand Lazard Foundation offers interest-free loans. Students who want to spend a year at a U.S. university as part of their doctoral studies often receive financial support from other organizations, such as Research Foundation - Flanders.

**Bermuda.** Bermuda has a comprehensive website for information on available scholarships ([www.bermudascholarships.com](http://www.bermudascholarships.com)). All private and government-funded opportunities for Bermudians are listed on this site.

**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). Other scholarships include the Vera Scholarship for undergraduates, the Bepina Sabalic Kunin Endowed Scholarship Fund at Georgetown University for graduates and professionals, and the Zlatko and Joyce Baloković Scholarship Fund.

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

**Denmark.** The State Educational Grant provides generous support for Danish students to participate in a youth education program after secondary school. These programs are generally similar to gap year programs, and students already enrolled in an institution of higher education can participate.

**Finland.** The League of Finnish American Societies provides funding for doctoral students. There is also student aid from the Finnish government for study abroad, including in the United States, for as much as US\$490 per month for a living allowance and USD\$860 per month for academic expenses.

**France.** The French government gives grants only to students who are going to study through exchange programs at the undergraduate level. The Monahan Foundation gives as much as USD\$50,000 for study in Master's or Ph.D. programs in STEM fields.

**Georgia.** The Georgian government's scholarship provides, on average, USD\$20,000 and is available for all fields of study, though the number of scholarships for MBA and LLM programs is limited. Students who receive this funding are expected to return to Georgia and work in the public sector for at least three years. The application cycle occurs in the spring each year.

**Germany.** The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provides semester- or yearlong scholarships for study in non-degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Arnold Heidsieck Scholarships are available from the ZEIT-Stiftung foundation and can cover one year of undergraduate studies in the humanities. The Association of German-American Societies provides funds that cover most programs, except medicine and law. Baden-Württemberg scholarships support exchange between students at universities in German states and their partner institutions.

**Greece.** Current support from Greece for U.S. studies is available only for graduate studies. More details on the foundations that provide this support can be found on the EducationUSA Greece center page: <https://educationusa.state.gov/centers/fulbright-athens>

**Hungary.** The Hungarian government offers the Stipendium Peregrinum for students ages 17 to 23 to pursue undergraduate or graduate studies abroad. In the U.S., 22 HEIs are prioritized for this funding, which covers application fees and full financial aid. The Magyar Állami Eötvös Ösztöndíj is a three- to eight-month scholarship supporting doctoral studies and research in any field. The Hungarian American Coalition Internship Program is a short-term internship opportunity for Hungarian university students at Washington, DC-based institutions, to motivate them for public service.

**Iceland.** Fara Bara is a website that posts general information about study abroad opportunities for Icelandic students, as well as Icelandic and foreign scholarships. The Thor program awards scholarships 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. The George Moore Scholarship

(new in 2020) provides support to students applying to Master's programs and includes tuition fees, research travel, visa, health insurance, and other living costs.

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

**Kosovo.** The Kosovo American Education Fund (KAEF) is an education fund administered by American Councils and dedicated to the long-term economic development of Kosovo through the education of its people. KAEF provides up to eight graduate fellowships per year to promising Kosovars for top-level training at select U.S. universities.

**Lithuania.** Through the Next 100 program (Kitas 100), the Lithuanian government offers funding for students applying to, or already studying at, universities and colleges that are listed among the top 50 institutions in world-ranking systems. The scholarships are available for the full period of study (from one to four years), and the maximum award amount is around USD\$22,500 per year. Funding is available in all academic fields and levels. Awards are administered by the State Studies Foundation, and the deadline is in early July each year.

**Luxembourg.** Every student in Luxembourg is eligible to receive financial support for higher education studies. The level of annual support ranges from USD\$5,000 to USD\$14,000 and is provided in the form of grants and minimal interest loans with generous repayment provisions. Students can use this financial support for a study abroad experience. The Centre de Documentation et d'Information sur l'Enseignement Supérieur (CEDIES) oversees this program.

**Netherlands.** The Dutch government offers low-interest loans through the DUO program. This is the only source of funding for Dutch students who intend to complete a degree in the United States at the undergraduate level. KHMW-Eizenga scholarships provide up to USD\$50,000 to Dutch nationals interested in pursuing a degree in economics or an MBA. Several foundations offer funding for prospective graduate students to the United States, including Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, VSBfonds, and Vrijvrouwe van Renswoude.

**North Macedonia.** The Ministry of Education and Science awards academic scholarships to students accepted to a top-ranked university (according to the Center for World University Rankings). The scholarships are restricted to several fields, and the maximum award is USD\$40,000 per year for tuition, airfare, and a monthly stipend.



## Europe and Eurasia

**Norway.** The Norwegian government, through the State Educational Loan Fund (Lånekassen), provides non-merit-based financial aid for Norwegian students studying in the United States through a loan and grant package. The funding is for students in full-time academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and the loan and grant package depends on a variety of factors and criteria.

**Serbia.** The Ministry of Youth and Sports awards graduate scholarships for overseas study based on enrollment at institutions that are ranked by the Shanghai Ranking as a top 500 institution. The ministry also awards scholarships for study at designated performing arts schools around the world. The funding is as much as US\$11,000 per year.

**Slovak Republic.** The Tatra Banka Foundation offers grants for all academic levels. The maximum amount is 5,000 euros per student to support IT projects. Students can apply for grants from the ESET Foundation.

**Slovenia.** The Ad Futura scholarship offers students as much as USD\$33,000 annually for the duration of their academic program. Many students combine this scholarship with other financial aid from U.S. HEIs. This scholarship program funds undergraduate studies in STEM fields or graduate studies in all fields except the fine and performing arts. The Ministry of Culture awards other generous scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students in the fine and performing arts, cultural management, and other fields.

**Spain.** La Caixa, Rafael del Pino, and the Fundacion Ramon Areces all provide support for graduate studies.

**Sweden.** The Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN) is the government's academic financial aid program and provides grants and low-interest loans for tuition, fees, and living expenses. Students can receive loans and grants for a maximum of six years of study.

**Switzerland.** The Swiss Benevolent Society of New York offers scholarships, including the Medicus Student Exchange Scholarship, the Sonja Streuli Maguire Outstanding Scholastic Achievement Award, and the Swiss Benevolent Pellegrini Scholarship. Students can apply for study

stipends and loans from their cantonal government for a semester- or year-long study abroad or exchange program.

**Turkey.** The Turkish Ministry of National Education provides scholarships for graduate study at top-ranked 500 universities in world rankings. Support for language training is also provided, if needed. Grantees are expected to return home and serve at public universities or institutions. The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) provides funding for doctoral studies. The Turkish Educational Foundation provides scholarships in selected fields for Master's level study. All three sources provide funds for transportation, health insurance, school fees, and living expenses.

**United Kingdom.** The Sutton Trust U.S. Programme welcomed its eighth cohort of students in April 2019. It provides generous support to economically disadvantaged students who have outstanding academic qualifications and want to apply to U.S. colleges and universities. BUNAC (British Universities North America Club) also provides support, offering partial scholarships for British students applying to graduate school in the United States.

**Ukraine.** WorldWideStudies grants cover university fees, study materials, and health insurance for as much as USD\$50,000 for Master's degree programs. Priority fields include agriculture, environmental studies, ecology, law and public administration, alternative energy, and aerospace engineering, but other fields are eligible for consideration.

**Regional Economics and Market Demand** Participation in OPT as a category increased overall by 4.8 percent for the region, and this rise is a testament to the continued interest in hands-on learning.

The IT sector is the most in-demand industry for many countries in Europe and Eurasia. Belarus, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine have become popular destinations for outsourcing jobs from Western Europe and the United States. Jobs in this field come with a comparatively high salary, and many governments in the region have made IT a priority for development in both the economy and education sectors. In 2019, the Latvian government allocated almost

700,000 euros to send 14 IT specialists from Latvian universities to the United States to further develop their skills and to share this knowledge with students and colleagues upon return. U.S. HEIs with strong computer science and artificial intelligence programs are well-positioned to attract Czech students who have an interest in learning from U.S. research and employing that knowledge in the Czech Republic. The number of tech companies is growing in Albania and Turkey, resulting in a high demand for graphic designers, software engineers, and software developers.

Across Western and Northern Europe, the need for data analytics and management in the transport and logistics sectors is on the rise, and the financial technology sector (sometimes shortened to "fintech") in the UK is expected to grow by 88 percent between 2018 and 2021. Construction, digital marketing, and advertising have had strong growth for the past decade, and energy expertise, especially in renewable energy, is needed to meet government targets. According to Statbel, the Belgian statistical office, almost 80 percent of job vacancies in Belgium can be found in nonprofits, scientific and administrative activities, wholesale and retail trade, industry, and construction.

Southern and Eastern Europe face daily immigration challenges, aging populations, shrinking youth populations, and a growing demand for service industries and jobs to address a host of infrastructure issues. This trend is especially pronounced in Montenegro, where local governments have focused their development efforts on these issues. The medical and social services sectors are among the fields in need of development. Skilled labor is also in high demand, especially in the manufacturing and construction fields, and attracting youth to vocational education is a priority for countries in Southern and Eastern Europe. The agricultural sector, especially in Bulgaria, Moldova, and Ukraine, needs the most development and is expected to be the fastest growing, because agricultural exports are some of the main contributors to their GDPs.

### Regional EducationUSA Events

EducationUSA in Europe and Eurasia provides a wide variety of opportunities for HEI engagement in the region, and advisers plan events throughout the

year. Visit the EducationUSA website to find information about upcoming fairs, webinars, conferences, and other upcoming events and 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 where U.S. institutions can reach their target audiences in their respective countries.

### Fairs and Conferences

**The European Association for International Education (EAIE)** holds the largest annual higher education conference in Europe, attracting thousands of participants from more than 95 countries. U.S. HEIs that exhibit at a booth have reported that the EducationUSA Pavilion led 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. Learn more about the 2021 EAIE conference at <https://www.eaie.org/gothenburg.html>.

The **EducationUSA Europe and Eurasia Regional Forum** is scheduled to take place in the fall of 2021. More than 90 EducationUSA advisers from 46 countries are expected to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to get in-depth information about trends in the region and network with colleagues from U.S. embassies and local higher education counterparts. In addition to the chance to attend a workshop, U.S. HEIs have the opportunity to represent their institutions to local audiences as part of the higher education fair.

The **Annual Eurasia and Central Asia Tour** scheduled for October 2020 will

not take place as planned. For updates, visit the "Find an Event" page at <https://educationusa.state.gov>.

The **6th Annual European LLM Tour** is scheduled for November 2020. Contact REACs Peter Baker ([pbaker@educationusa.org](mailto:pbaker@educationusa.org)) and Gordana Mirchikj ([gmirchikj@educationusa.org](mailto:gmirchikj@educationusa.org)) for more details.

The **8th Annual Russia Winter Tour** is scheduled for February 2021 and will include stops in Moscow, Novosibirsk, St. Petersburg, Vladivostok, and Yekaterinburg. This is a smaller tour with five to 10 institutions on average participating in the full tour, and it is scheduled so that those who want to attend the EducationUSA Pavilion in Vilnius may do so. The registration deadline is generally in December each year, and tour information will be available at [winter.educationusarussia.org](http://winter.educationusarussia.org).

The **8th Annual EducationUSA Southeastern Europe Tour** in spring 2021 is scheduled to include fairs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia. Sign up at [eepurl.com/bUIBOT](http://eepurl.com/bUIBOT) 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.

### U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

For the past 10 years, more than half of the U.S. students who studied abroad studied in Europe and Eurasia. According to the 2019 *Open Doors* report, the overall number increased by 3.5 percent from the previous year. The top five destinations globally continue to be the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France, and

Germany. Other European countries in the top 25 worldwide include Ireland, the Czech Republic, Greece, Denmark, Austria, and the Netherlands. Other countries in the region have seen significant increases in inbound student mobility from the United States. The following countries had the largest percentage increases: Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Turkey, Montenegro, Georgia, Kosovo, and Cyprus.

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

In 2019, U.S. embassies and/or Fulbright Commissions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the UK, and Ukraine received Study Abroad Engagement Grants from the USA Study Abroad Branch at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to carry out capacity-building projects to promote American study abroad in the region. EducationUSA centers have collaborated with local universities, embassies, and Fulbright Commissions to support these initiatives.

## Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (Face-to-Face and Virtually)

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, August, over the Christmas and New Year holidays, and around Easter. Please also note that Christmas and Easter are observed according to the Roman and Eastern Orthodox calendars, so these holidays might differ depending on the countries. Advisers in each country know about national holidays and other factors, such as examination dates, that might affect students' ability to attend events. As always, institutions should check with the EducationUSA advisers in the country they want to visit before making any travel or virtual outreach plans.