



International Students in Higher Education - Comparison of Main English Speaking Destination Countries

This Research Snapshot updates Research Snapshot No.3 (http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/PublicationsAndResearch/Snapshots/03SS05_pdf.pdf) using the latest available annual data from the top five main English speaking destination countries for international students¹. The data show that Australia has maintained its position as the third largest English-speaking destination for international students in higher education, behind the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Australia's annual growth in 2006 (5%) was equal with Canada and outstripped the growth of other major English speaking destination countries.

International Students—number and percentage annual growth on the previous year

	 Australia 2006	 USA 2005–06	 UK 2005–06	 Canada 2004–05	 New Zealand 2006
	Number %	Number %	Number %	Number %	Number %
Source markets where the source market is in the top five list of a destination country					
China	46,075 15%	62,582 0%	51,080 -4%	30,516 6%	21,034 -21%
India	25,431 15%	76,503 -5%	19,250 15%	7,044 10%	2,136 13%
Malaysia	14,932 -3%	5,515 -10%	11,490 0%	873 -8%	1,516 14%
Hong Kong	9,948 -7%	7,849 9%	9,575 -12%	2,670 -9%	451 -13%
Indonesia	8,772 -8%	7,575 -2%	1,160 1%	861 7%	376 -10%
Republic of Korea	5,590 5%	59,022 11%	4,195 5%	4,944 12%	2,141 2%
Japan	3,413 -1%	38,712 -8%	6,660 1%	1,812 1%	1,978 -3%
Canada	2,879 13%	28,202 0%	5,235 9%	- -	523 2%
United States of America	2,579 -1%	- -	21,490 0%	9,462 5%	2,430 -2%
Nigeria	106 31%	6,192 -2%	9,615 18%	1,089 23%	31 24%
France	849 25%	6,640 1%	n/a n/a	7,869 6%	306 13%
All countries	172,297 5%	564,766 0%	234,350 2%	140,724 5%	42,652 -10%
Other selected source markets					
Singapore	7,862 -6%	3,909 4%	3,360 -9%	585 -1%	309 -4%
Thailand	4,891 -6%	8,765 1%	4,235 7%	399 2%	651 -1%
Nepal	1,111 68%	6,061 25%	n/a n/a	153 21%	22 -27%
Sri Lanka	2,491 16%	2,157 8%	2,775 14%	1,251 2%	127 -15%
Mexico	382 -2%	13,931 7%	1,855 -6%	1,893 4%	65 -22%
United Kingdom	1,932 1%	8,274 0%	- -	2,079 -3%	697 -8%
New Zealand		929 3%	n/a n/a	153 -6%	- -
Australia	- -	2,806 6%	2,010 2%	651 -5%	

Top five source market colour key:

 1st  2nd  3rd  4th  5th

n/a: UK numbers only available for top 35 non-EU source markets

.. Not defined as international students in this market

- China and India continue to be important source markets for each of the five main English speaking destination countries.
- When US study abroad students are included in the Australian figures, students from the United States of America also represent a major source market (an estimated 8,000 enrolments are in short courses in addition to the 2,579 enrolments in courses leading to a higher education qualification).
- Declines in some of Australia's traditional markets have not been accompanied by commensurate growth in the other English speaking destinations.
- Significant growth is occurring from countries in Southern and Central Asia such as Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- While international students travel widely, some source markets (such as Nigeria and Mexico) are more concentrated in some destination countries than others, indicating a regional or cultural connection to that particular destination.
- Data from each of the destination countries have, as far as possible, been extracted on the same basis. However, caution should be exercised when undertaking comparisons between destination countries due to scope differences between data sets.

¹ - Australian statistics sourced from AEI International Student Data (<http://aei.dest.gov.au>)

- United States of America statistics sourced from the Institute of International Education—Open Doors publication

- United Kingdom statistics sourced from the British Council for the top 35 countries. 'All countries' number does not include EU countries.

- Canadian statistics sourced from Statistics Canada for enrolments at Canadian universities.

- New Zealand statistics sourced from Education Counts. New Zealand statistics are for full-fee students attending a tertiary organisation (not necessarily a Higher Education organisation).