



Attracting and retaining international students in the EU

Common Template for EMN Study 2018

Final version: 5th September 2018

Subject: Common Template for the EMN Study 2018 on “*Attracting and retaining international students in the EU*”

Action: EMN NCPs are invited to submit their completed Common Templates by **4th December 2018**.

If needed, further clarifications can be provided by directly contacting the EMN Service Provider (ICF) at emn@icf.com and to Veronika Vasileva (veronika.vasileva@icf.com) and Norma Rose (norma.rose@icf.com).

1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

In view of growing labour market challenges, the EU and its Member States have increasingly looked at migration as a means to address ageing populations, sustain welfare systems and find skilled workforce. According to the OECD, the EU welcomes more migrants than any other single OECD destination, with more than two million permanent-type migration flows to EU countries in 2016.¹ Labour migrants comprise about one in three new migrants to the EU, however, at the same time, third-country migrants only comprise 4% of the total EU working-age population between the ages of 15 and 64.^{2,3}

One way to tackle this shortage in skills is through the attraction and retention of third-country nationals who choose the EU for the purpose of higher education. While the EU/EFTA as a whole is becoming an increasingly attractive destination for international students, with a 4% increase of flows in 2016, the competition with other OECD countries, such as the United States, Australia and Japan persists.⁴ The retention of international students in the EU also remains a challenge, as only a small fraction of graduates reside in an EU Member State to take up employment. In recent years, the EU and its Member States have been working on several comprehensive strategies to enhance the attractiveness of Europe's higher education system. The most prominent example at EU level is the EU's new students and researchers directive adopted in 2016 (Directive (EU) 2016/801),⁵ which notably seeks to improve and harmonise minimum legal standards for welcoming and retaining international students. At national level, some Member States have developed new national strategies for the attraction of students and many universities have increased their efforts to attract international students, for instance by organising information campaigns in third countries and increasing their social media presence. In parallel, Member States have concluded bilateral and multilateral agreements with third countries, with the aim of facilitating the admission of third-country national students to the EU.

¹ OECD, *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2018_migr_outlook-2018-en#page24

² OECD/EU (2016), *Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe 2016*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264257290-en>

³ Please note that a complete statistical overview will be presented in the Synthesis Report.

⁴ OECD, *International Migration Outlook*, OECD Publishing, Paris. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2018_migr_outlook-2018-en#page34

⁵ Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (recast).

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A number of studies have been carried out in recent years on the topic of attracting international students (see "Relevant sources and literature" below). Most importantly, the 2012 EMN Study on "Immigration of international students to the EU" and the 2013 EMN Study on "Attracting highly qualified and qualified third-country nationals" looked into the immigration and mobility policies of (Member) States, as well as the policies and concrete practical measures in place that aim to attract (highly) qualified third-country nationals. The 2018 study aims to update this information and complement it with retention policies. This topic was also touched upon by the 2015 EMN Study on "Changes in immigration status and purpose of stay: an overview of EU Member States' approaches", by outlining the conditions that regulate the changes of status between different categories of third-country nationals.

Particularly in view of the deadline to transpose the 2016 Students and Researchers Directive by 23 May 2018, it is assumed that changes to Member States' policies with regard to attracting and retaining students have taken place recently, which this study aims to capture.

2 STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of this study is to explore what national practices are in place in Member States to attract and retain third-country national students. The Study will only focus on legal migrants issued with a residence permit or long-stay visa for the reason of studies, and will thus not include beneficiaries of international protection.

More specifically, the Study aims to:

- Provide a statistical overview of the number of third-country national students present in EU Member States and Norway from 2012-2017 and 2018 data if available, the duration of studies, the number of graduates who reside in the Member States after their studies, etc.
- Examine the incentives in place in EU Member States and Norway to attract and retain third-country national students;
- Describe the admission criteria of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), language requirements and the process for recognition of diplomas;
- Provide an overview of the bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements in place with third countries covering international students;
- Outline the challenges and good practices of EU Member States and Norway with regard to the attraction and retention of international students.

3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The overall focus of this Study are third-country nationals who are granted residence permits or long-stay visas for reasons of studies, and/or are undertaking a higher education degree (Bachelor, Masters or PhD level⁶). For the purpose of this study, higher education comprises tertiary education programmes at levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). The study only focuses on full-time students. The Study covers the period from 2013-2017 for statistics and 2012-September 2018 for policy developments, to take into account changes made as a result of the transposition deadline of the Students and Researchers Directive.

For abbreviation purposes, the terms 'international students' is used in the study in the meaning of third-country national students from non-EU/EEA countries. The definitions should be read in line with Articles 3 (3) of the Students and Researchers Directive.

The following categories are excluded from the scope of this study: researchers, part-time students, third-country national family members of EU citizens, vocational post-secondary education students, trainees and apprentices, au pairs and beneficiaries of international protection.

4 EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The importance of attracting international students is well-recognised by the European Union. Promoting the mobility of third-country nationals to the EU for the purpose of study has been part of the EU's policy since 1994 with the adoption of the Council Resolution on the admission of third-country nationals to the territory of the Member States of the EU for study purposes. This is also in the context of the Bologna Process, launched with the Bologna Declaration of 1999, which is one of the main voluntary processes at European level, as it is nowadays implemented in 48 states. The Bologna Process led to the

⁶ Please note that the inclusion of PhD students in this study depends on whether they fall within the realm of students at national level.

establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The 2015 European Agenda on Migration reiterated the need for promoting the mobility of international students, calling for the EU to provide a safe haven for those fleeing persecution and at the same time also to feature as an attractive destination for the talent and entrepreneurship of students, researchers and workers.⁷ In line with this objective, the international dimension of the Erasmus + Programme encourages student mobility from third countries, providing an opportunity for students from eligible partner countries to study in an EU Member State.

In terms of the legislative framework, in October 2002, the European Commission put forward a proposal for a Directive establishing common entry and residence conditions for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service. The Directive entered into force in December 2004 with a transposition deadline for Member States of January 2007.

The Council and the European Parliament adopted in 2016 the Students and Researchers Directive, which is the result of the recast of the 2004 Directive on the conditions of admission of third-country nationals for the purposes of studies, pupil exchange, unremunerated training or voluntary service and the 2005 Directive on researchers, based on the 2011 evaluations of these Directives by the Commission.⁸

The Students and Researchers Directive clarifies the admission and residence requirements by setting out general conditions for admission, and specific conditions for researchers, students, school pupils, trainees, volunteers and au pairs. The new Directive still follows a sectoral approach. While it sets uniform and binding rules on conditions for admission for students, researchers, trainees and volunteers participating in the EU's voluntary scheme, provisions on other volunteers, school pupils and au-pairs are optional.

The Study is very topical in light of the transposition deadline of the Directive. The Directive aims to make the EU a more attractive destination for students, in particular by improving their mobility conditions, allowing them to stay at least nine months after the completion of the studies period and allowing them to work (for at least 15 h/week). Furthermore, procedural guarantees have been reinforced for all categories (decision on an application within 90 days and provision of a justification of a negative decision).

5 PRIMARY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE STUDY

The Study will aim to address the following:

- To what extent is the attraction and retention of students a policy priority for Member States?
- What is the number of students coming to the Member States for the purpose of studying? How many remain in the EU after finalising their studies to take up employment? What is the legal and policy framework in place in Member States and what recent changes have been made to policies and practices?
- In light of Article 7 and Article 11 of the recast Students and Researchers Directive, how are the admission and reception criteria for third-country national students implemented in practice by Member States (e.g. tuition fees, procedure to be granted a residence permit, recognition of diplomas, etc.)? For those Member States, which do not apply the Directive, what are the admission and reception conditions in place?
- In light of Articles 24 and 25 of the recast Students and Researchers Directive, how are the conditions⁹ for access to the national labour market or self-employment for third-country nationals while being enrolled as a student and after completion of studies implemented in practice by Member States? For those Member States, which do not apply the Directive, what are these conditions?
- Have Member States concluded bilateral or multilateral cooperation agreements with third countries covering third-country national students? If so, how do these incentivise students to take up higher education in the EU?
- What is the role of universities, companies, local governments etc. in the retention of international students (e.g. scholarships, traineeship programmes, apprenticeship contracts)?
- What challenges do Member States face with regard to attracting and retaining third-country national students?

⁷ COM(2015) 240 final

⁸ COM(2011) 587 final and COM(2011) 901 final.

⁹ Article 25 of the Students and Researchers Directive

- Which good practices are in place in Member States related to the attraction and retention of students?

6 RELEVANT SOURCES AND LITERATURE

EMN Studies

- EMN (2015): Changes in immigration status and purpose of stay: an overview of EU Member States approaches. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00.emn_study_on_the_change_of_status_final.pdf
- EMN (2013): Attracting Highly Qualified and Qualified Third-Country Nationals. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/attracting/emnsr_attractinghqworkers_finalversion_23oct2013_publication.pdf
- EMN (2012): Immigration of International Students to the EU. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/immigration-students/0_immigration_of_international_students_to_the_eu_sr_24april2013_final_en.pdf

EMN AHQs

- 2017.1234 – **Talent mobility** – requested 11 October 2017
- 2017.1233 – **Implementation of the Directive (EU) 2016/801 (research, studies, training)** – requested 26 July 2017
- 2017.1189 – **Retaining TCN Students** – requested 26 May 2017¹⁰
- 2017.1136 – **Transposition of Directive (EU) 2016/081** – requested on 27 January 2017
- 2016.1111 – **Verification of the reliability of potential students** – requested 25 October 2016

Other studies and reports

- The Conference Proceedings of the EE EMN Annual Conference on “The EU in the global race for talents: Challenges and solutions in strengthening the EU’s competitiveness”, held on 21-22 September 2017. <http://emn.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/nr9.pdf>
- OECD/EU (2016), Recruiting Immigrant Workers: Europe 2016, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264257290-en>. A study on the intra-EU mobility of third country nationals, by Yves Pascouau, Senior Adviser to EPC (European Policy Centre, a think-tank based in Brussels) on migration and mobility policies (2013) http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_3496_intra-eu_mobility_of_third-country_nationals.pdf
- A study by the Migration Policy Centre on “A Comprehensive Labour Market Approach to EU Labour Migration Policy” (2015) <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/824e91bc-d642-4626-9267-676945e15053/language-en>
- A report on learning mobility, by the JRC (Joint Research of the European Commission) (2015) http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC99969/learning%20mobility%20technical%20report_pubsy_pdf.pdf
- A study by OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), “The Impact of the Implementation of Council Directives on Labour Migration Flows from Third Countries to EU Countries” (2016) <http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/5jlwxbzkbvfl-en.pdf?expires=1519893945&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=C2DDC88488C17F6BEEC76D45022311EB>

¹⁰ Please see the 2017 EMN Inform on Retaining third-country national students in the EU: <http://emn.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Inform-student.pdf>

7 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

International level

Statistics on international mobility of students are provided by UNESCO¹¹ and OECD.¹²

EU level

Statistics are available through Eurostat on the number of residence permits issued to third-country nationals by reason, including education reasons. The Synthesis Report will also make reference to the Erasmus Plus/Erasmus Mundus Programme in the section outlining the EU policy framework and will present some general data on the number of international students who took part in these exchange programmes. This will be developed by the EMN Service Provider (ICF).

National level

Subject to availability, the following statistical data sources should be included insofar as possible:

- Statistics on the number of international students enrolled in HEIs in Member States and Norway;
- Statistics on the number of international students who have graduated in the Member State and Norway.
- Statistics on the number of international students remaining in the Member State and Norway after graduation per reason.

8 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EU 2016 Students and Researchers Directive and the EMN Glossary Version 6.0.¹³

‘Employer’ means any natural person or any legal entity, for or under the direction or supervision of whom or which the employment is undertaken;

‘Family members’ mean a third-country national, as specified in Art. 4(1) of Directive 2003/86/EC (normally members of the nuclear family – i.e. the spouse and the minor children), who has entered the territory of the European Union for the purpose of family reunification;

‘Higher education institution’ (HEI) means any type of higher education institution recognised or considered as such in accordance with national law which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers recognised higher education degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, whatever such establishments may be called, or any institution which, in accordance with national law or practice, offers vocational education or training at tertiary level. The term ‘higher education’ encompasses all tertiary institutions which may include, inter alia, universities, universities of applied science, institutes of technology, *grandes écoles*, business schools, engineering schools, IUTs, colleges of higher education, professional schools, polytechnics and academies.

‘International student’ means a third-country national who has been accepted by a higher education institution and is admitted to the territory of a Member State to pursue as a main activity a full-time course of study leading to a higher education qualification recognised by that Member State, including diplomas, certificates or doctoral degrees in a higher education institution, which may cover a preparatory course prior to such education, in accordance with national law, or compulsory training. Member States will be asked to state at the beginning of their national contribution and in the statistics provided whether doctoral candidates (PhD students) are included when referring to “students” or not;

‘Long-stay visa’ means an authorisation issued by a Member State as provided for in Article 18 of the Schengen Convention or issued in accordance with the national law of Member States not applying the Schengen acquis in full;

‘Residence permit’ is defined as “an authorisation issued using the format laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1030/2002 entitling its holder to stay legally on the territory of a Member State”;

‘Third-country national’ is defined as “any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of TFEU and who is not a person enjoying the Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Schengen Borders Code”;

¹¹ <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>

¹² <https://data.oecd.org/education.htm>

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/

9 ADVISORY GROUP

An “Advisory Group” (AG) has been established within the context of this Study for the purpose of providing support to EMN NCPs during the development of the specifications for the Study, as well as the drafting of the Synthesis Report. In addition to COM, and the EMN Service Provider (ICF and Odysseus), the members of the AG for the Study include EMN NCPs from AT, DE, EE, ES, FR, LT, LU and NL. EMN NCPs are thus invited to send any requests for clarification or further information on the Study to the following representatives of the AG:

- ★ COM: Magnus.OVILIUS@ec.europa.eu; Helene.CALERS@ec.europa.eu
- ★ EMN Service Provider: emn@icf.com; veronika.vasileva@icf.com; norma.rose@icf.com
- ★ Odysseus Expert (Philippe de Bruycker): debruyck@ulb.ac.be
- ★ AT EMN NCP: mbassermann@iom.int
- ★ DE EMN NCP: janne.grote@bamf.bund.de
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10 TIMETABLE

The following tentative timetable has been proposed for the Study going forward:

Date	Action
9 th February 2018	1 st Advisory Group meeting
27 th February 2018	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Common Template</u> for the Study to COM and AG members
22 nd June 2018	2 nd Advisory Group meeting
6 th July 2018	Circulation of the revised Common Template for the Study to COM and AG members
13 th July 2018	Deadline for comments on revised template from COM and AG members

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Date	Action
23 rd July 2018	Circulation of the <u>revised Common Template</u> for the Study to COM and EMN NCPs
13 th August 2018	Deadline for comments revised template for the Study from EMN NCPs
22 nd August 2018	Circulation of the final draft Common Template to EMN NCPs and COM
5 th September 2018	Finalisation of the Common Template and official <u>launch</u> of the Study
4 th December 2018	<u>Submission of National Reports</u> to EMN Service Provider by EMN NCPs
31 st January 2019	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM and AG Members
11 th February	Circulation of the <u>revised Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM, AG members and EMN NCPs
March	<u>Finalisation</u> of the Synthesis Report for the Study and of the National Reports for publication on the EMN website

11 TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The template provided below outlines the information that should be included in the National Contributions of EMN NCPs to this Study. The indicative number of pages to be covered by each section is provided in the guidance note. For National Contributions, the total number of pages should **not exceed 35-40 pages**, including the questions and excluding the Statistical Annex. A limit of **25-30 pages** will also apply to the Synthesis Report, in order to ensure that it remains concise and accessible.

Common Template of EMN Study 2018

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National Contribution from Member State*¹⁴

Disclaimer: The following information has been provided primarily for the purpose of contributing to a Synthesis Report for this EMN Study. The EMN NCP has provided information that is, to the best of its knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of the EMN NCPs' Member State.

Top-line factsheet [max. 1 page]

*The top-line factsheet will serve as an overview of the **National Contribution** introducing the Study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policy-makers. Please add any innovative or visual presentations that can carry through into the synthesis report as possible infographics and visual elements.*

Please provide a concise summary of the main findings of Sections 1-5:

¹⁴ Replace highlighted text with your **Member State** name here.

Section 1: National legal and policy framework in the Member State

This section aims to provide an overview of the national policies in the Member States and Norway related to entry and residence of third-country nationals as students. The focus should be put on the recent changes that have been introduced in Member States and Norway since 2012.¹⁵

Please note: Statistics provided in Annex 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 will be used to contextualise the national legal and policy framework reported on by Member States in this section.

Q1a. What is the **transposition status** of Directive (EU) 2016/801 in your national law?

[Possible visual element: map indicating transposition status in each Member State]

- transposition completed.
- in process: completion of transposition expected by: End of 2018
- other, please specify:

Q1b. Are **doctoral candidates** (PhD students) treated as students or researchers under national law?

Please note that if doctoral candidates fall within the category of researchers, these should not be considered in the answers to the subsequent questions.

- PhD students are treated as students
- PhD students are treated as researchers
- Other

Please elaborate:

Q1c. What are the **main changes** to: (a) law, (b) policy and (c) practice since 2012 with regard to international students? Please specify whether these changes were made in response to Directive (EU) 2016/081 or other national policy priorities.

Please describe briefly:

- Prospective students from Pakistan and Bangladesh should attend a personal interview at the Consular of the Republic of Cyprus in Dhaka and in Bangladesh. The above mentioned interviews take place via Skype in the presence of the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Interior and representatives of the Private Institutions of Higher Education. change since 2016
- Provision for partially (min. €3.000) pre-payment of tuition fees, as a prerequisite for issuing an entry permit. Change since 2017

Q1d. Are **any changes planned** to law/ policy/ practice regarding international students in your Member State? Such planned changes could relate both to the transposition of the Students and Researchers Directive or other changes not pertaining to the Directive.

- Yes, changes planned related to the transposition of the Directive.
- Yes, changes planned not pertaining to the Directive.
- No changes planned

If you have answered yes, please provide details about the changes planned and the approximate timeframe, i.e. are these changes planned for the short- or long-term?:

Q1e. Is attracting and retaining international students a **national policy priority, either within the national migration policies or compared to other national policies?** Please explain why.

- Yes, this is a national policy priority.

¹⁵ The last EMN studies related to this public were published in 2013 (see the study on Highly qualified migrants at https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/studies_en)

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No, this is not a major national policy priority.

Other, *please explain*:

Please elaborate:

Although there is no official document on national migration policies, still attracting international students is considered to be a priority.

Q1f. Does your Member State have a **national strategy**, or a **lower level (e.g. ministerial, regional) strategy**, for attracting and/or retaining international students?

Yes, national strategy in place.

Yes, lower level strategy in place.

No, a national strategy is not in place.

If you have answered yes, please indicate whether the strategy focuses on attraction, retention or both, and provide details about the main elements of the strategy (e.g. name, policy goals, year of adoption):

The Council of Ministers with its Decision No.75.002 dated 24.4.2013 decided to appoint a Ministerial Committee, composed by the Minister of Education and Culture (President), Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice and Public Order for the purpose of examining the existing procedure for issuing a visa to foreign students who wish to attend the Private Higher and Tertiary Institutions in Cyprus as well as for coordination and control of admission of international students at national level. In this context, the Ministerial Committee sets the national strategy.

Q1g. Does your Member State target **specific fields of studies/subject areas** (outside bilateral/multilateral cooperation) as regards the attraction and/or retention of international students? If so, please briefly elaborate on the reasons why these fields of studies/subject areas are targeted. *Please select all boxes that apply.*

Yes, specific fields of studies are targeted for the attraction of international students.

Yes, specific fields of studies are targeted for the retention of international students.

No specific fields of studies are targeted.

If you have answered yes, please provide a list of the study fields targeted and the reasons. Please differentiate clearly between attraction and retention:

Q2. Is there a current or recent **public debate** (i.e. within the past year) with regard to international students in your Member State (e.g. in Parliament, media, etc.)?

Yes, there is a public debate at national level.

No, there is no significant public debate at national level.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the main issues of the debate:

The debate evolves around the transposition of Directive 2016/801.

Q3. What is the **structure and governance of the national higher education system** in your Member State? *Please answer by elaborating on the following aspects:*

Higher education is provided by state and private universities as well as private institutions of higher education (colleges). Currently there are three public and five private universities, as well as four public and 45 private institutions of higher education.

Any public or private higher education institution to be established needs to fulfil all the requirements set by the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education. More specifically, the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, is responsible to ensure the quality of Higher Education in Cyprus and to support through the procedures provided by the relevant legislation for the continuous improvement and upgrading of higher education institutions and their programs of study.

Q3a. Is there a specific **public entity(ies)** at national level which is responsible for international students in regards to their studies and what are they competent for? What is its role in the application process/supervision of these students?

Please explain:

The Council of Ministers with its Decision No.75.002 dated 24.4.2013 decided to appoint a Ministerial Committee, composed by the Minister of Education and Culture (President), Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice and Public Order for the purpose of examining the procedure for issuing a visa to foreign students who wish to attend the Private Higher and Tertiary Institutions in Cyprus as well as for coordination and control of admission of international students at national level. In this context, the Ministerial Committee has set requirements for prospective students from third countries.

Q3b. Do migration authorities cooperate with HEIs? If yes, in what ways do they cooperate? Is there an institutionalised cooperation mechanism?

- Yes, migration authorities cooperate with HEIs.
 No, migration authorities do not cooperate with HEIs.

If you have answered yes, please explain the ways in which they cooperate:

Q3c. Is there an approval procedure¹⁶ in place in your Member State for public/private HEIs for the purpose of hosting international students? If so, are international students only allowed to study in those HEIs?

- Yes.
 No.

Please explain. If you have answered yes, please indicate whether international students are only allowed to those in those HEIs:

The Ministerial Committee has set requirements for prospective students from third countries. All students are allowed to study only to the institution that their visa is issued for.

Q3d. Is higher education for third-country nationals funded by the state (i.e. state-sponsored) in your Member State?

- Yes, higher education is state-sponsored for third-country nationals.
 No, higher education is not state-sponsored for third-country nationals.
 Other (e.g. state support depends on the student's country of origin):

Please elaborate:

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus does not fund third country nationals.

¹⁶ Article 15 of the Students and Researchers Directive

Section 2: Measures and incentives to **attract** international students

This section examines the measures and incentives to attract international students in place in the Member States in terms of admission conditions; hosting and welcoming international students; special incentives and measures; external factors; challenges and good practices in attracting international students.

2.1 Admission conditions for international students

Q4a. Which are the common immigration **admission conditions** applicable for all international students determined by the immigration authorities for the purpose of residence in the territory of your Member State?

Please elaborate:

FOR THE ISSUE OF VISA / ENTRY PERMIT

- (a) Clear criminal record
- (b) Medical examinations for Hepatitis B and C, AIDS/HIV, Syphilis and report of chest X-ray for Tuberculosis
- (c) Acceptance letter from an Educational Institution,
- (d) Payment of registration fees to the Educational Institution
- (e) Financial ability to cover tuition fees, living and repatriation expenses
- (f) Application Form M58 thoroughly completed and signed
- (g) Academic qualifications (high school leaving certificate)

FOR THE ISSUE OF RESIDENCE PERMIT

- (a) Comprehensive health insurance in the Republic
- (b) Medical examinations for Hepatitis B and C, AIDS/HIV, Syphilis and report of chest X-ray for Tuberculosis.
- (c) Sufficient funds to a personal account to cover tuition fees, accommodation and living expenses for the period that the residence permit is applied for.
- (d) A permanent address in the Republic

Are the following **admission conditions** listed under Q4b-Q4i required in your Member State? *Please answer with Yes/No and shortly describe the admission condition.*

IMPORTANT: *Please explain also under each question Q4b-4i how each of the below listed admission conditions are considered to attract international students / are used to attract them / are used flexibly in order to attract international students, or are there some that are considered disincentives.*

[Possible visual element: for the Synthesis Report, the applicable admission conditions (including fees) could be visualised in one infographic page]

Q4b. Is a proof of **acceptance** by HEI required in your Member State in order to obtain the visa/residence permit?¹⁷

- Yes.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

An acceptance letter signed by the admission department of the HEI is required.

¹⁷ Article 11 (1) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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Q4c. How is the **academic recognition** of foreign academic degrees regulated in your Member State? Is this done in a centralised manner (e.g. by a specific organisation) or by each HEI?

- Recognition of degrees carried out centrally.
- Recognition of degrees carried out by each HEI.
- Other.

Please explain:

The Cyprus Council of Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (KYSATS) is the competent authority of the Republic of Cyprus for the recognition of higher education qualifications, awarded by recognized institutions of higher education or by evaluated-accredited study programmes by the competent authorities of the country they operate or offered in.

Q4d. What are the **level of tuition fees for third-country nationals** in your Member State? ¹⁸ *If applicable, please distinguish between the different qualifications levels (ISCED levels 5-8).*

- If possible, please provide here a range of the level of tuition fees per academic year in euro/national currency:

The required fees for the academic year 2017-18 for international students for studying at the bachelor's level at the Public Universities sum up to 3.417 Euros per semester (6.834 euros per year).

The Public Universities require fees for graduate studies too that range from 5,125 euros to 10,250, according to the chosen program of study.

It should be noted that private institutions of higher education determine their own fees. However, increases to their fees are subject to approval by the Minister of Education and Culture. The fees refer to tuition, registration, admission, issuing of certificates and administration.

- Is the level of fees for third-country nationals determined centrally (e.g. by the state) or by each HEI?

The Private Institutions of Higher Education can determine their fees but increases to their fees are subject to approval by the Minister of Education and Culture.

Please explain:

- Is evidence of payment an admission condition?

- Yes.
- No.

- Are the fees capped in your Member State (i.e. is there a higher/lower threshold limit imposed)?

- Yes.
- No.

Increases to the fees of the private institutions of Higher Education are subject to approval by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus.

- Are the fees for international students the same as those for domestic students? If no, what is the difference (i.e. are they higher or lower)?

- Yes.
- No.

If you have answered no, please elaborate:

It depends on each private institutions' policies. The private institutions of higher education determine their own fees.

¹⁸ See Article 11(1)(b) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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Are specific groups of international students exempt from fees? Which ones and why?

- Yes.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on which groups are exempted and why:

This depends on each private institutions' decision. The Ministry of Education and Culture does not have this policy.

Q4e. What is the level of **administrative fees** for third-country nationals in your Member State? Please elaborate also on other types of fees (e.g. administrative fees at universities)

Please elaborate:

The fee for issuing a visa/entry permit is €85,43 and the fee for the residence permit is €34,17 with a maximum duration of 12 months. The fee for the renewal of the residence permit is €34,17.

The university fees refer to tuition, registration, admission, issuing of certificates and administration.

Q4f. Are international students required to provide a proof of sufficient **knowledge of the language** of the course?¹⁹ If so, what is the required level? Does the student have to provide an attestation (e.g. TOEFL test)?

- Yes, proof of sufficient knowledge of the language of the course is required in general.
 A proof is required for specific courses.
 No, proof of sufficient knowledge of the language of the course is not required.

If proof is required (either in general or for specific courses), please elaborate and specify the required level, using the levels defined by the CEFR:²⁰

Please elaborate:

According to the Council of Ministers' decision prospective foreign students who have scored at least 50% at the subject of English Language on their School Leaving Certificate or possess any other equivalent qualification in English (i.e IELTS with a minimum score of 5) are eligible to be registered directly to the programme of study, since they fulfil all other requirements.

However, prospective foreign students who do not fulfill the above mentioned requirement should be registered at the foundation English courses (one-year duration) before entering their main programme of study.

- The student has to provide an attestation.
 Yes, an attestation is required for all courses.
 An attestation is required for specific courses.
 No.

Q4g. Are international students automatically qualified for **health insurance**?²¹

- Yes, students automatically qualify for health insurance.
 No, students need to submit proof of health insurance.

Please elaborate:

¹⁹ See Article 11(1)(c) of the Students and Researchers Directive

²⁰ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

²¹ See Articles 7(1)(c) and 11(2) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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Q4h. Is there a pre-determined level of **sufficient resources** for international students at national level?²² If so, what is the level of sufficient resources and what type of resources are accepted?

- Yes.
 No.

– What is the level of sufficient resources and what documents are accepted as proof?

Please explain:

The students have to proof that they have bank deposits in their country of origin of at least €7.000 in an own bank account, or a bank account owned by their sponsor (e.g. parents). A recent bank statement must be submitted.

– *What type of resource(s) are accepted by your Member State? Please check all applicable boxes.*

- Bank statement.
 Guarantee by a third person.
 Other, please specify:

Q4i. Other admission conditions

If applicable, please describe any other admission conditions for the purpose of residence on the territory of your Member State:

Please elaborate:

See Q4a

2.2 Special incentives for attracting international students

Q5. Please indicate which of the incentives listed below (Q5a-Q5i) are in place in your Member State *and please provide a brief description*. What are the incentives/measures carried out 'centrally' or by individual HEIs. *If measures are carried out by the state/regional authorities, individual HEIs and/or private entities (e.g. companies, research organisations, etc.), please provide examples.*

NB: *Please also state whether measures to attract are targeted to a specific qualification level (ISCED levels 5-8) or sciences/fields of education (e.g. STEM²³).*

[Possible visual element to be included in the Synthesis report: the incentives used in Member States could be visualised in a one infographics page]

Q5a. Does your Member State carry out **promotional activities and dissemination of information in the countries of origin?** *Please select all boxes that apply and elaborate.*

- Yes, carried out centrally.
 Yes, carried out by HEIs.
 Yes, carried out by other (educational) organisations.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please explain/elaborate by giving 1-2 examples.

Educational fairs with the participation of HEIs.

Q5b. Are scholarships and bursaries available? *Please select all boxes that apply and elaborate by giving 1-2 examples (incl. the amount, type and length of the scholarship/bursary).*

- Yes, provided by the state/regional authorities. *Please elaborate by providing 1-2 examples:*
 Yes, provided by HEIs. *Please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:*

²² See Articles 7(1)(e), 7(3) and 11(1)(d) of the Students and Researchers Directive

²³ Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

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It depends on each institutions' policy.

- Yes, provided by private entities. *Please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:*
- No.

Q5c. Are there any other financial incentives or financial support (e.g. loans, tax benefits, etc.) in place?

- Yes, provided by the state.
- Yes, provided by HEIs.
- Yes, provided by private entities.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate by giving 1-2 examples:

Q5d. Are any incentives with regard to family reunification in place?

- Do family members of international students have access to family reunification in your Member State?

- Yes.
- No.

- If yes, do family members have the right to work in your Member State? N/A

- Yes.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please explain:

Q5e. Is any support targeted at spouses and other family members of international students offered in your Member State (e.g. counselling spouses to find employment, continue their education or engage in voluntary work, social and networking activities for spouses, help with enrolling children in kindergartens/schools)? *Please select all boxes that apply.*

- Yes, support for spouses available.
- Yes, support for children available.
- Yes, support for other family members available (please specify which family members this includes when elaborating below).
- No.

Q5f. Are courses offered in English/other languages than the national language(s)?

- Yes.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

It depends on the HEI.

Q5g. Are there any incentives from the state for HEIs providing courses in other languages?

- Yes.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

Q5h. Is there a possibility for a fast-track application for visa/residence permits?

- Yes.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate:

Q5i. Are any other incentives not listed above in place?

If applicable, please describe any other incentives in place not mentioned above.

Answer: No

2.3 Hosting international students: preparation, arrival and housing

Q6a. What is the nature of the document issued (long-stay visa or residence permit)? *Please indicate the type and length of the residence permit. Please select all relevant boxes.*

- Long-stay visa issued in the third country:
 Residence permit issued (please specify the type and length of the permit): Temporary residence permit (eRP) for maximum of 12 months, renewed until the end of the program of studies.
 Other (please specify):

- If your Member State issues a residence permit, is this issued in the territory of your Member State or in the third country?

- Residence permit issued in the third country:
 Residence permit issued in the territory of the Member State. *If so, do you issue a long-stay visa in the third country first (yes/no)?*: No.

Q6b. What are **processing times for visa/residence permit applications** for third-country nationals in your Member State (minimum, maximum and average)?

Please elaborate: Avg. 3 months.

Q6c. What are the main requirements for the **renewal of a residence permit** for international students (e.g. does the student need to prove his/her attendance in HEI courses or is the study progress measured)?

Please explain: The student has to prove that he continues his/her studies and that he is still registered at the HEI. The student must also provide a transcript to prove that he/she has a sufficient academic progress.

Q7. Please indicate if the **hosting initiatives and measures** listed below (Q7a-Q7e) are in place in your Member State. Please state which institution is responsible for these measures.

Q7a. Is induction and orientation support provided in your Member State (incl. opening a bank account, registering in the healthcare system, etc.)? *Please select all relevant boxes.*

- Yes, state-organised measures for support in place.
 Yes, support provided by HEIs.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the support measures provided:

Some HEIs may provide relevant information to their students.

Q7b. Is **support with finding housing and accommodation** provided in your Member State? Please select all boxes that apply.

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- Yes, state-organised measures for support in place.
- Yes, support provided by HEIs.
- Yes, support provided by other organisations.
- No, support not available.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the type of support provided:

Q7c. Are preparatory courses (incl. language courses, orientation courses, multicultural sessions, intercultural awareness/diversity courses) offered in your Member State?

- Yes, state-organised measures for courses in place.
- Yes, courses provided by HEIs.
- Yes, support provided by other organisations.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the courses provided:

Language courses may be offered by the HEIs

Q7d. If applicable, please describe any other hosting initiatives and measures not mentioned above.

Please elaborate:

2.4 Rights of international students

Q8. Right to work

Q8a. How many hours are international students allowed to work per week or months per year?²⁴

[Possible visual element to be included in Synthesis report: map indicating the number of hours in each Member State.]

Please elaborate:

20 hours per week.

Q8b. Are any restrictions in place in your Member State in terms of the **type/field of work international students** are allowed to work in?

- Yes, restrictions in place.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the type of restrictions in place:

The students must be full-time students and they must have spent at least six months of full-time study in Cyprus. Additionally, they may work only in the following fields:

- porters, petrol-station attendants and car-wash attendants
- care givers in homes for the elderly
- workers in agriculture/livestock farming, fishing and bakeries
- building and home cleaners
- fast-food delivery drivers

²⁴ See Article 24 of the Students and Researchers Directive.

Q8c. Do students need to obtain **prior authorisation** for the right to work in accordance with national law?

- Yes, prior authorisation required.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the purpose of this prior authorisation and the entity responsible for granting it:

The competent authority, Department of Labour, controls the labour market needs.

Q8d. Are international students entitled to exercise **self-employed economic activity**?

- Yes, self-employment possible.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

Q9. Do students have the right to **carry out in parallel to their studies or defer their studies for a training or a job** in the Member State?

- Yes, deferral of studies possible.
 Yes, carrying out a training/job in parallel to studies possible.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

Training is allowed, only if the program of studies includes such training, as part of the studies

Q10a. Do students have to **complete their studies within a maximum period of time**?

- Yes.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please indicate the period:

The duration of program of studies plus 50% of this duration.

Q10b. In accordance with Directive 2016/801 Article 21(3),²⁵ Member states may withdraw a visa/residence permit in case of a lack of progress in the relevant studies. Has your Member State transposed this provision?

- Yes.
 No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on how the lack of progress is assessed by your Member State:

"insufficient progress" is explained as a) not having completed the foundation course or b) not attending regularly the courses of each academic year or c) not completing the studies programme on time (on time means 50% more than the regular time of the studies programme)

Q11. Do the **number of years** an international student possesses a residence permit for the purpose of studying count towards being granted access to long-term residence or citizenship?

- Yes.

²⁵ See Article 21(2)(f) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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No

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the regulations in place:

External factors affecting attracting international students

Q12. Based on existing national sources (evaluation reports, media reports, etc.), what are the **external factors** affecting the attraction of international students in your Member State? Please select all relevant boxes.

- HEI rankings
- Member State is a hub for specific fields
- Language in which courses are taught
- Culture
- Socio-economic factors (e.g. living costs)
- Other (please specify):
- No information available.

Please elaborate:

-High quality education

-Wide range of Higher Education Institutions

-Affordable cost

-English as the language of instruction in many programs of study

-Multicultural, social, academic environment

2.5 Challenges and good practices in attracting international students

Q13. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State on attracting international students and for whom is it considered a challenge/good practice (HEI, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice: why is this considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/surveys/evaluation reports/interviews/other?

a) Challenges:

b) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

-The systematic participation at Educational Fairs in specific countries resulted in attracting quality students from these countries.

- In light of the challenges that have emerged due to recent developments in the European and international area of higher education, Cyprus is in constant cooperation and negotiation with other countries for the signing of a number of educational agreements and memoranda of understanding. The main objective of these agreements is the cooperation in the areas of Sciences, Research and of Higher Education.

So far, Cyprus has signed Agreements on the Mutual Academic Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications for the access and continuation of studies to Higher Education Institutions with Germany, Italy, Romania, Russia, China and Jordan and Oman.

Section 3. Measures and incentives to **retain** international graduates

3.1. Measures and incentives for the retention of international graduates.

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This section examines the measures and incentives to retain international graduates after their studies in place in the Member States. Statistics provided in Annex 1.4 and Annex 1.5 will be used to contextualise the measures and incentives reported on by Member States.

NB: in your answers to Q14-16, if applicable, please indicate whether the policy/offer/strategy differs between qualification levels (ISCED levels 5-8).

Q14. Measures and incentives to **retain** international graduates in Member States.

Q14a. What are the conditions for **access after study** to national labour market/ self-employment/ start up or spin-off activities/ research project?

Please briefly outline the conditions:

- For what period of time does your Member State allow students to stay after studies in order to seek employment or set up a business?²⁶ What happens after this period?

Currently the students are not allowed to stay, once they have finished their studies. With the transposition of Directive 2016/801, they will be allowed to stay for a maximum period of 9 months.

Please elaborate:

- Does your Member State have any restrictions in place regarding the job field in which the international student can seek employment or set up a business?

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the restrictions in place:

Currently the students are not allowed to seek employment or set up a business, once they have finished their studies. With the transposition of Directive 2016/801, they will be only allowed if they have completed a master's degree and only in a field relevant to the studies completed.

- Does the international student require a minimum level of degree in order to be allowed to stay after studies in order to seek employment or set up a business?²⁷

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please indicate the minimum level required:

Currently the students are not allowed to seek employment or set up a business, once they have finished their studies. With the transposition of Directive 2016/801, they will be only allowed if they have completed a master's degree and only in a field relevant to the studies completed.

Q14b. Are there any other particular **policy measures** or incentives to retain international students in place? Please select all relevant boxes:

Lowered salary requirement for a work/residence permit.

Unrestricted access to the labour market.

Other incentive(s).

No.

If you have answered yes, please briefly elaborate on the measures or incentives in place.

²⁶ See Article 25(1) of the Students and Researchers Directive

²⁷ See Article 25(2) of the Students and Researchers Directive

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Q15. Are there **initiatives of HEIs or the private sector** whereby support is provided to students following the completion of their studies? (e.g. in specialised or niche areas, in the form of counselling, contract with students to commence work with a company after the completion of their studies). Please also consider initiatives at a regional level. *Please select all relevant boxes and if applicable, please provide best practice examples of the initiatives of universities/HEIs, private sector, local governments, etc. in the retention of international graduates (e.g. in specialised and niche areas, in the form of scholarships, apprenticeship contracts, counselling, etc.).*

- Yes, initiatives implemented by HEIs.
- Yes, initiatives implemented by the private sector.
- Other initiatives.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate and provide 1-2 examples of best practices:

The HEIs may implement such initiatives after the transposition of Directive 2016/801.

Q16. Does your government and/or HEIs implement any strategies in your Member State to **encourage former international graduates** (i.e. international alumni who have already left the Member State) to establish and/or maintain a connection to the national labour market)? *Please select all relevant boxes.*

- Yes, strategy implemented by HEIs.
- Yes, strategy implemented by the government.
- No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the main elements of the strategy:

3.2 Challenges and good practices in retaining international students

Q17. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State on retaining international students and for whom is it considered a challenge/good practice (HEIs, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice: why is this considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/studies/evaluation reports/surveys/interviews/other? Please briefly summarise the input and findings of these experts/studies/evaluation reports/interviews/other.

A) Challenges:

Please elaborate:

B) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

Section 4: Bilateral and multilateral cooperation with third countries

Q18. Has your Member State concluded and/or intends to conclude any **bilateral and/or multilateral agreements** with countries of origin concerning international students? Please distinguish between agreements in place with countries with developed economies and those with developing economies²⁸ as classified by the United Nations²⁹ and summarise and provide an overview of the type of agreements – without listing all the agreements and detailed provisions.

[Possible visual element to be included in the Synthesis report: map indicating the regions/countries of origin with which agreements are in place.]

²⁸ This distinction is relevant as the objectives and purpose of such agreements could differ significantly between these two categories.

²⁹ http://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/Classifications/DimCountries_DevelopmentStatus_Hierarchy.pdf

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Yes, bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned with industrialised countries. *Please elaborate on the aspects listed below):*

- The most common provisions of the agreements;
- Most common world regions/countries of origin with which agreements have been concluded;
- Are specific fields of studies or qualification levels covered in the agreements?
- Are specific categories of persons covered under the agreements? (e.g. specific age groups; gender; other socio-demographic characteristics).

Yes, bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned with developing countries. *Please elaborate on the aspects listed below):*

- The most common provisions of the agreements;
- Most common world regions/countries of origin with which agreements have been concluded;
- Are specific fields of studies or qualification levels covered in the agreements?
- Are specific categories of persons covered under the agreements? (e.g. specific age groups; gender; other socio-demographic characteristics).

No bilateral/multilateral agreements in place or planned.

Q19. Are there any measures or incentives in place to avoid **brain drain** in the country of origin when attracting and retaining international students?

Yes, measures related to brain drain in place.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the measures in place:

Q20. Do HEIs in your Member States have **initiatives and cooperation agreements with HEIs** in third countries in place? If so, what types of agreements and for which purpose (e.g. student exchange programmes)? *If there are many different agreements in place, please only provide 1-2 examples of agreements in place.*

Yes.

No.

If you have answered yes, please elaborate on the initiatives/cooperation agreements in place and provide 1-2 examples:

Q21. What are the (a) **challenges** and (b) **good practices** that have been observed in your Member State with regard to bilateral and multilateral agreements and for whom is this considered a challenge/good practice (HEIs, Member State, student, other)? For each challenge/good practice, why is it considered a challenge/good practice and is this based on input from experts (if so, which experts)/studies/evaluation reports/surveys/interviews/other? Please briefly summarise the input and findings of these experts/studies/evaluation reports/interviews/other

A) Challenges:

Please elaborate:

B) Good practices:

Please elaborate:

Annex 1 National statistics

Please fill in the attached excel sheet with the respective statistics for your Member State. The Statistical Annex consists of the following:

- Annex 1.1.: Contextual statistics on the types of HEIs
- Annex 1.2.: Number of students per field of study
- Annex 1.3.: Number of international students enrolled in universities by top 5 nationality and gender
- Annex 1.4.: International students who have graduated, interrupted or terminated their studies
- Annex 1.5.: International students who have remained in the Member State **at least two years** after graduation per reason



Statistical
annex_students study_