

4. CONNECTING TO GLOBAL RESEARCH

4.10. Foreign scholars in the United States

The presence of foreign scholars in US higher education institutions is an indicator of the international attractiveness of the country's universities and of opportunities for researchers in the United States.

In 2007/08, US higher education institutions hosted 106 000 foreign scholars. They conducted research or teaching activities. Most were however engaged in research and two-thirds in the life, biological, health or physical sciences and in engineering.

Just 20 countries account for 80% of foreign scholars in the United States. China is the leading country of origin and Asia the most important region. More than 22% were Chinese, around 9% were Korean or Indian, and 5% Japanese. France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom each provided between 2% and 5% of foreign academic staff. Canada accounted for 4.5% of the total.

Mobility of scholars, compared to the size of the local academic population, varies across countries. For most OECD countries, from one to three scholars have positions in US universities per 100 working at home. Academic mobility is most significant from Korea (14 per 100), the Netherlands (8), the Russian Federation (6) and from Canada, Iceland, Ireland, Italy and Mexico (4 each).

The population of foreign scholars working in the United States has steadily increased over the past 14 years from the 60 000 hosted in 1993/94. After a decline during the two academic years following the post-September 11 security-related change in visa policy, numbers have grown since 2004, and in 2007/08 they increased by 8% from the previous year.

Expansion of the population of foreign scholars has been driven by a massive and sustained arrival of Asian academics. Although many Asian academics worked in US universities in the mid-1990s, the number of scholars from Korea, India and China has kept growing at average annual rates of 8 to 9%. Growth in academic mobility from Turkey (7%), Chinese Taipei (6%) and Italy (6%) has also been rapid. The increase in mobility from most European countries has been moderate (around 2% a year on average).

Although most foreign scholars are still men, women are more numerous than in the past; in 2007/08 female academics accounted for 34% of all foreign scholars in the United States.

Open Doors data

The Institute of International Education (IIE) is a non-profit international organisation for educational and cultural exchange. The IIE conducts an annual statistical survey of the internationally mobile student population in the United States. Open Doors is a long-standing, comprehensive information resource on international students in the United States and on US students studying abroad. It highlights key facts and trends in international flows of scholars to the United States.

International scholars are defined as non-immigrant, non-student academics (teachers and/or researchers, and administrators). Scholars may also be affiliated with US institutions for activities such as conferences, colloquia, observation, consultations or other short-term professional development activities. The survey is limited to doctoral degree-granting institutions.

Source

OECD, based on data from the Institute of International Education (IIE), June 2008.

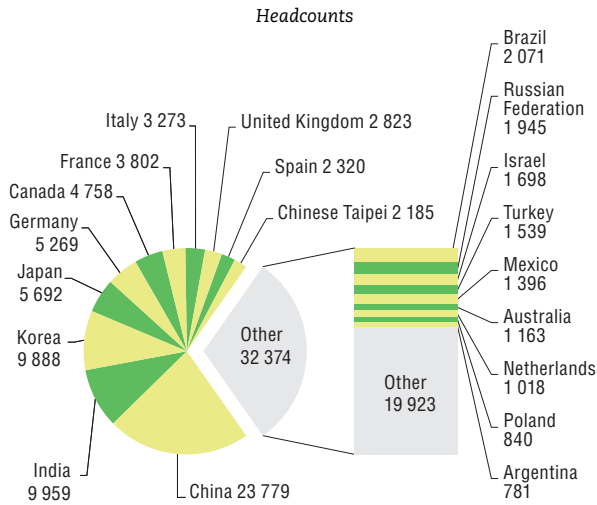
Going further

Institute of International Education (2008), *Open Doors 2008: Report on International Educational Exchange*, New York, www.openddoors.iienetwork.org/page/OpenDoors2008.

Figure notes

The base year for the number of scholars per 100 university researchers in the economy of origin is 2007 for Argentina and the Russian Federation; 2006 for Chinese Taipei, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Poland, Spain and Turkey; 2002 for Austria, Finland and Switzerland; 2003 for other economies.

Top 20 places of origin of foreign scholars in the United States, 2007/08

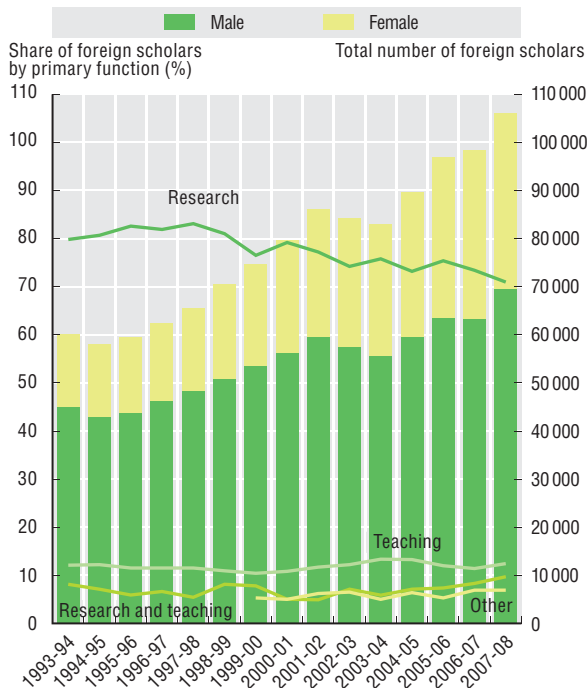


106 123 foreign scholars working in the United States higher education sector in 2007-08

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/746356032852>

Growth of foreign scholars in the United States, by gender and activity, 1993/94-2007/08

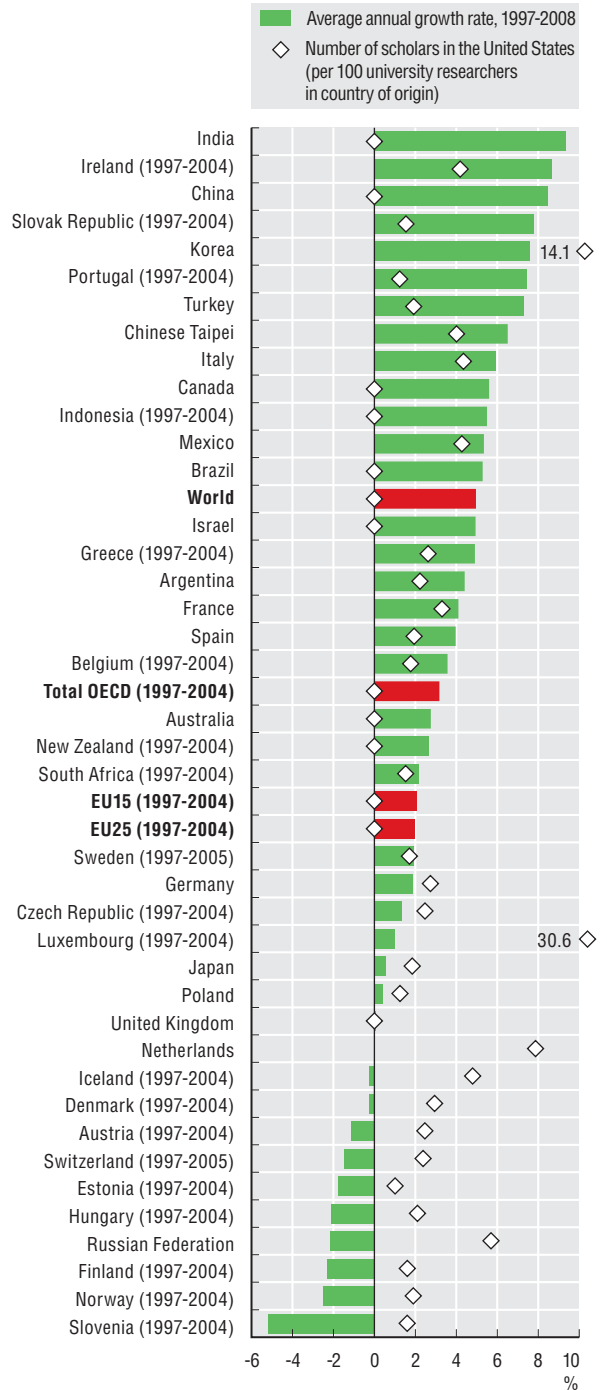
Headcounts and percentage of total foreign scholars



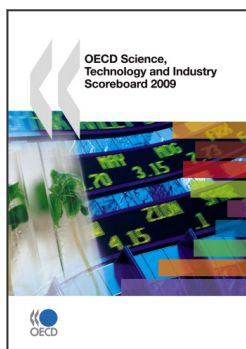
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Growth in foreign scholars in the United States, by economy of origin, 1996/97-2007/08

Average annual growth rate



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/746383883227>



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