



GERMANY

Student exchange, staff mobility still gaining popularity

Michael Gardner 07 June 2019

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supported more academics and students in 2018 than ever before, with figures peaking at over 145,000 individuals. The 4% increase in students and academics benefiting from DAAD support contrasts with what the organisation refers to as “confusing and partly worrying developments worldwide”.

A recent analysis by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) of 'Talent Attractiveness' indicators among its 36 member countries puts Germany third for attractiveness to university students*, after Switzerland and Norway.

DAAD has registered the largest number of applications from abroad for its 'Study Scholarships for Graduates' scheme, which enables international students to participate in various postgraduate programmes.

The study scholarships were sought most of all by students from the Russian Federation, followed by the United States, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Greece and Italy. Western Europe, Asia and North America continue to be the most important target regions for German applicants. While the United Kingdom is still the most popular country regarding one-year scholarships for graduates and doctoral students, numbers are now declining.

“In many places, we are seeing new walls and fences being erected again – 30 years after the opening of the Iron Curtain,” says DAAD President Margret Wintermantel.

“While the ambiguous results of the European election confirm our general concern, they do also allow for some optimism. It cannot be appreciated highly enough that increasing numbers of young people are seeking to experience going abroad.”

Presenting DAAD's 2018 statistics in Berlin, Wintermantel noted that DAAD would maintain its efforts to get more and more people interested in international exchange. “We are convinced that it is key to guaranteeing our values of freedom, equal opportunities and fairness,” she said.

“The dynamics of change that we are witnessing both in Europe and worldwide, and not only in higher education and research, call for focused programmes and initiatives,” DAAD Secretary General Dorothea Rüländ added, referring to new strategic programmes

developed by the organisation.

One of these programmes, 'Lehramt.International', provides grants for students in German teacher training courses to gain teaching experience at schools abroad. Similar support is offered to graduates from such courses for six- to 12-month stays abroad.

Among the other new programmes are 'HAW.International', aimed at supporting students and academics at German *Fachhochschulen* (universities of applied sciences) in collaborative schemes with international partners, and 'A New Passage to India' programme, designed to enhance knowledge of India among young German scientists and scholars and to support the exchange of academics between the two countries.

Rüland also stresses the significance of the period after studying. "Many international graduates are eager to stay on in Germany for a while so that they can gain experience in their profession," she explains. "This means that they have to feel they are welcome in society and need opportunities to integrate themselves. Ultimately, they need to perceive that they can get ahead with their careers and with their families."

*The OECD Indicators of Talent Attractiveness score seven dimensions: quality of opportunities; income and tax; future prospects; family environment; skills environment; inclusiveness; and quality of life. The indicators also take into account how difficult it is for prospective migrants with required skills to obtain a visa or residence permit.

Michael Gardner Email: michael.gardner@uw-news.com

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20190607112812210>