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## The mobility and recognition parallax: Perspectives from beyond Bologna borders

P. J. Wells

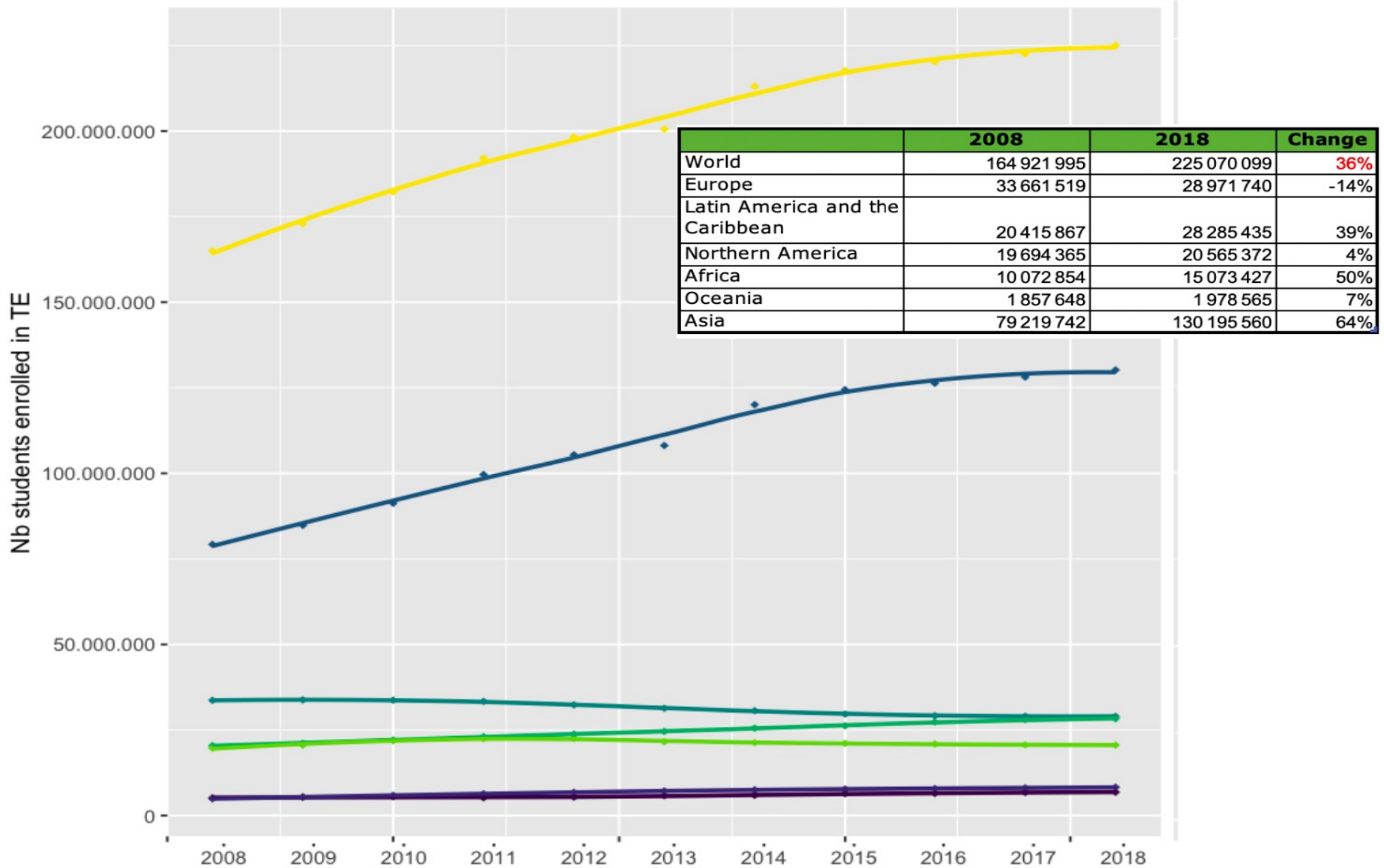
## Global mobility – *some stats:*

- **More than 235 million people are currently enrolled in higher education globally**
- **6.3 million are international students – a number that has more than doubled in the past 20 years and is likely to double again in the next two decades**
- **50 % of these study outside their home region**



Region

- Africa (Northern)
- Africa (Sub-Saharan)
- Asia
- Europe
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Northern America
- World



# 5,571,402

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD

1 211 931

2 214 161

1 225 253

190 423

224 480

505 155

## A Second Generation of Updated Regional Recognition Conventions



- Lisbon Convention (1997)
- Tokyo Convention (2011)
- Addis Convention (2014)
- Buenos Aires Convention (2019)
- Arab States Convention (2022)

# UNESCO Global Convention Snapshot @ 11.2024

**1.6+ million (25%)**

of the world's 6.3 million mobile students are hosted by the States Parties



**Major actors**

in international education



**+ 20 Member States**

Are reported to be well-advanced with ratification procedures, including countries in all UNESCO regions



Andorra



Armenia



Australia



Cabo Verde



Côte d'Ivoire



Croatia



Cuba



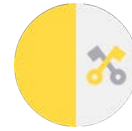
Estonia



France



Finland



Holy See



Iceland



Japan



Lithuania



Nicaragua



Norway



Palestine



Romania



Slovakia



Sweden



Tunisia



United Kingdom



Uruguay

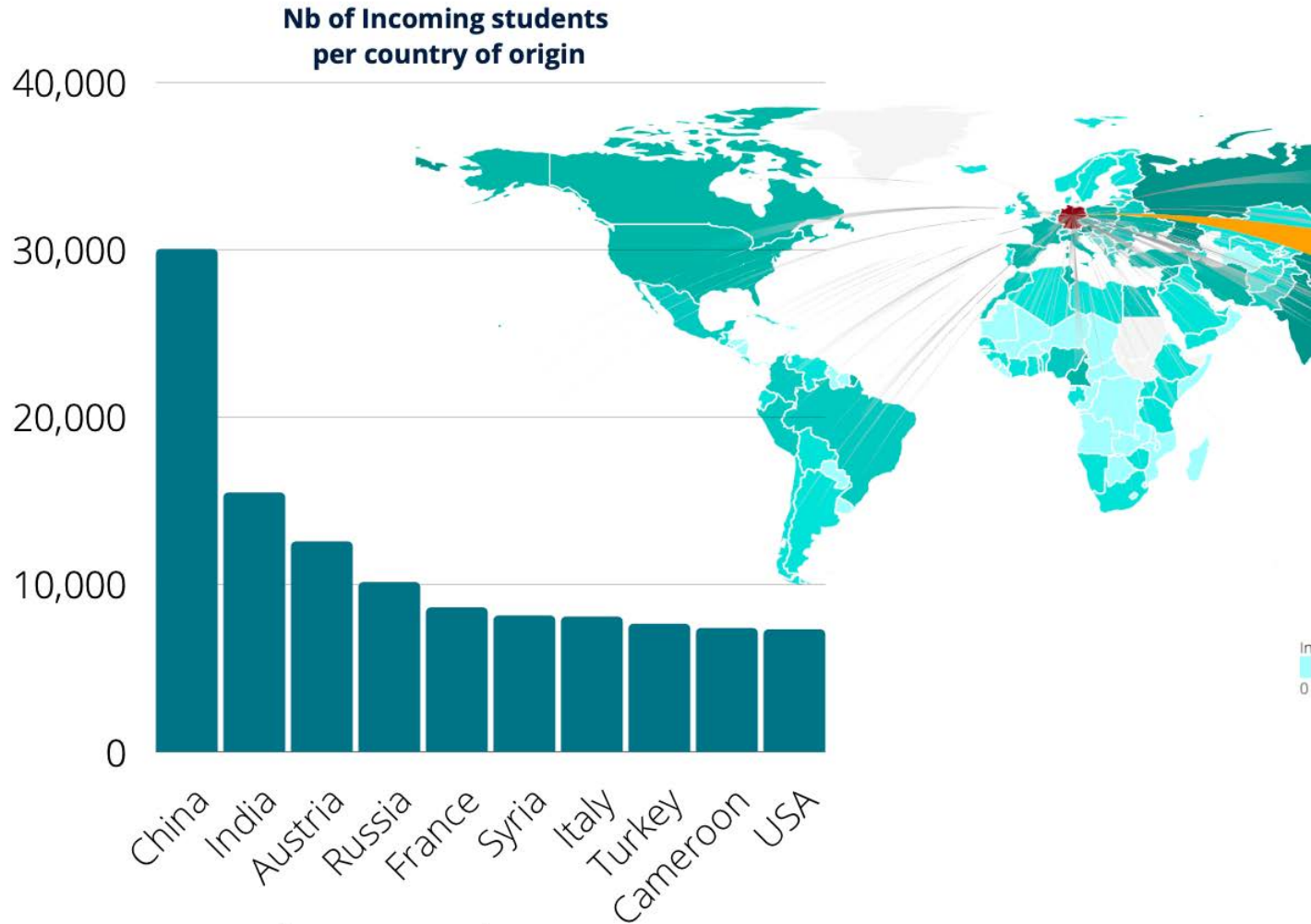


Yemen

An Unmitigated  
Success or  
smoke and  
mirrors?



# International Students in Germany



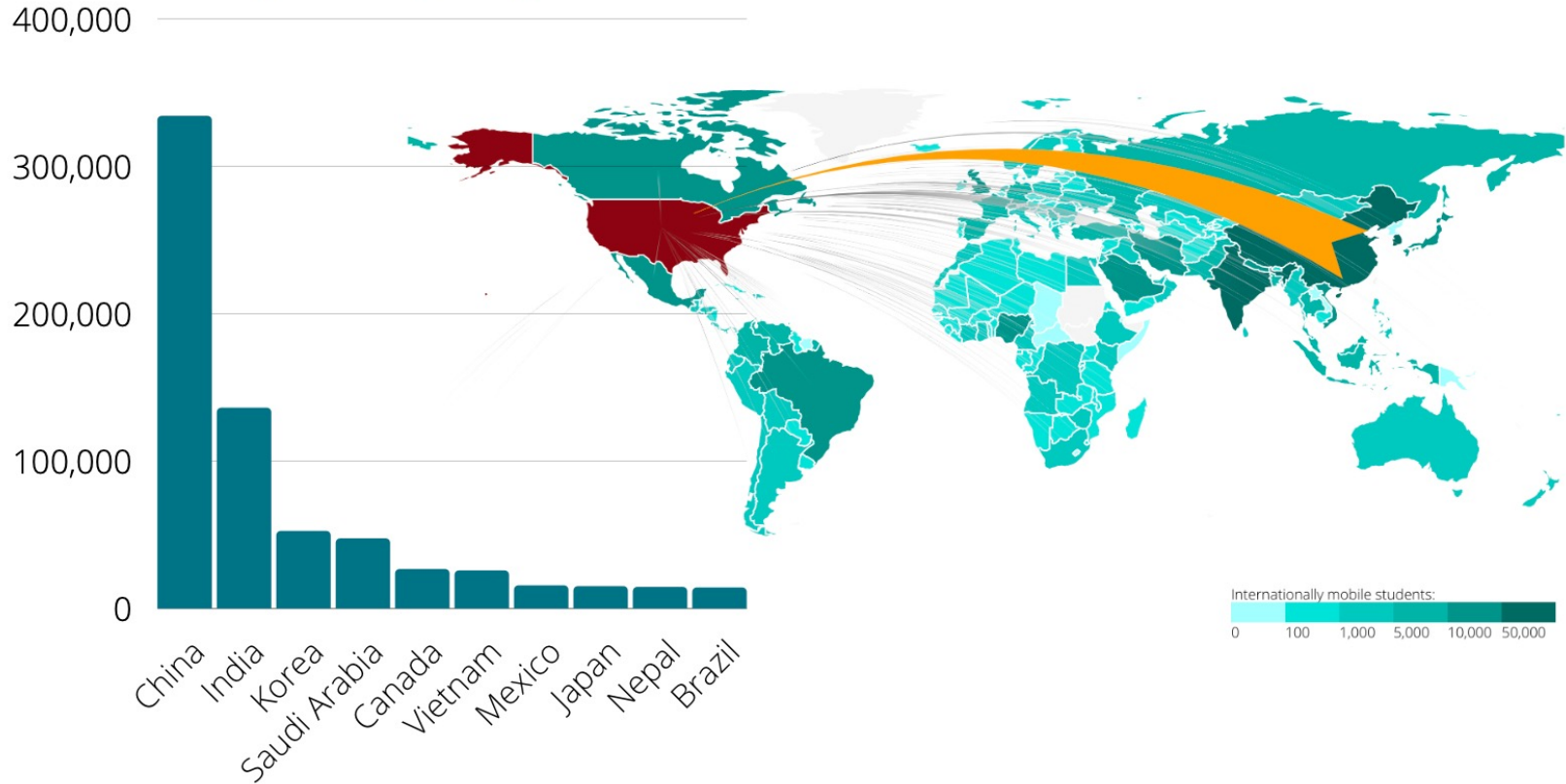




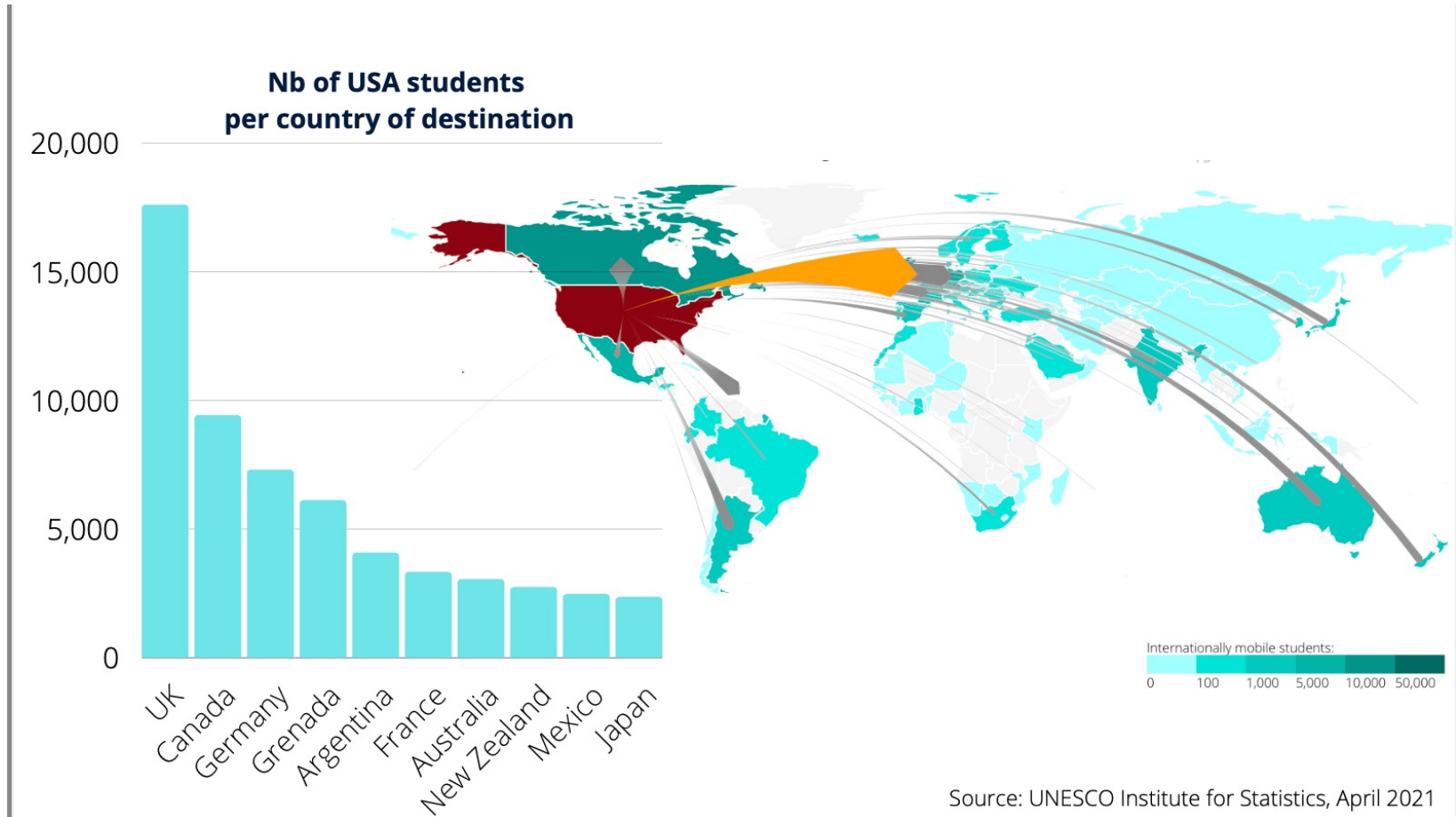
A one-way street?

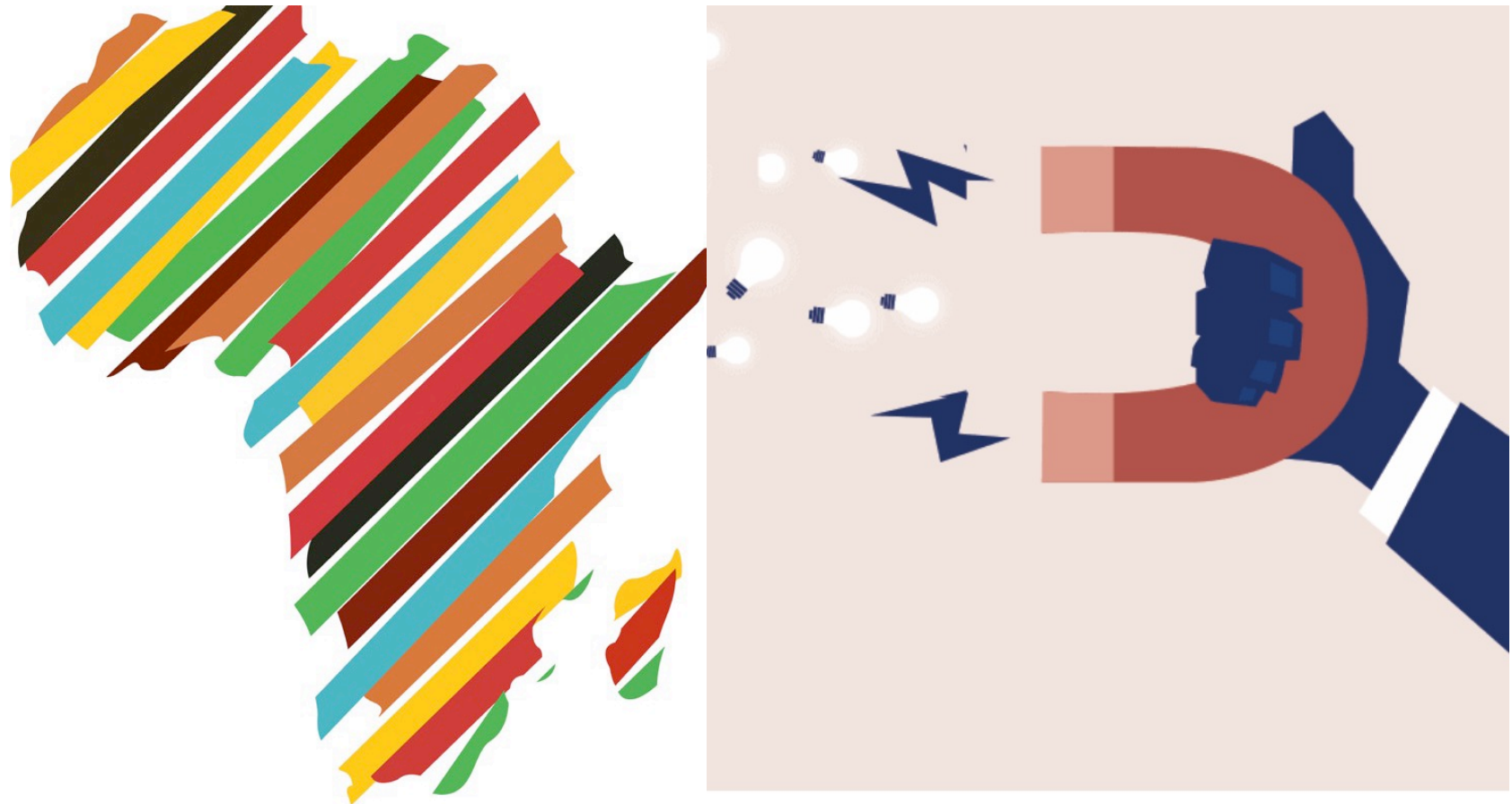
# Destination USA

**Nb of Incoming students per country of origin**



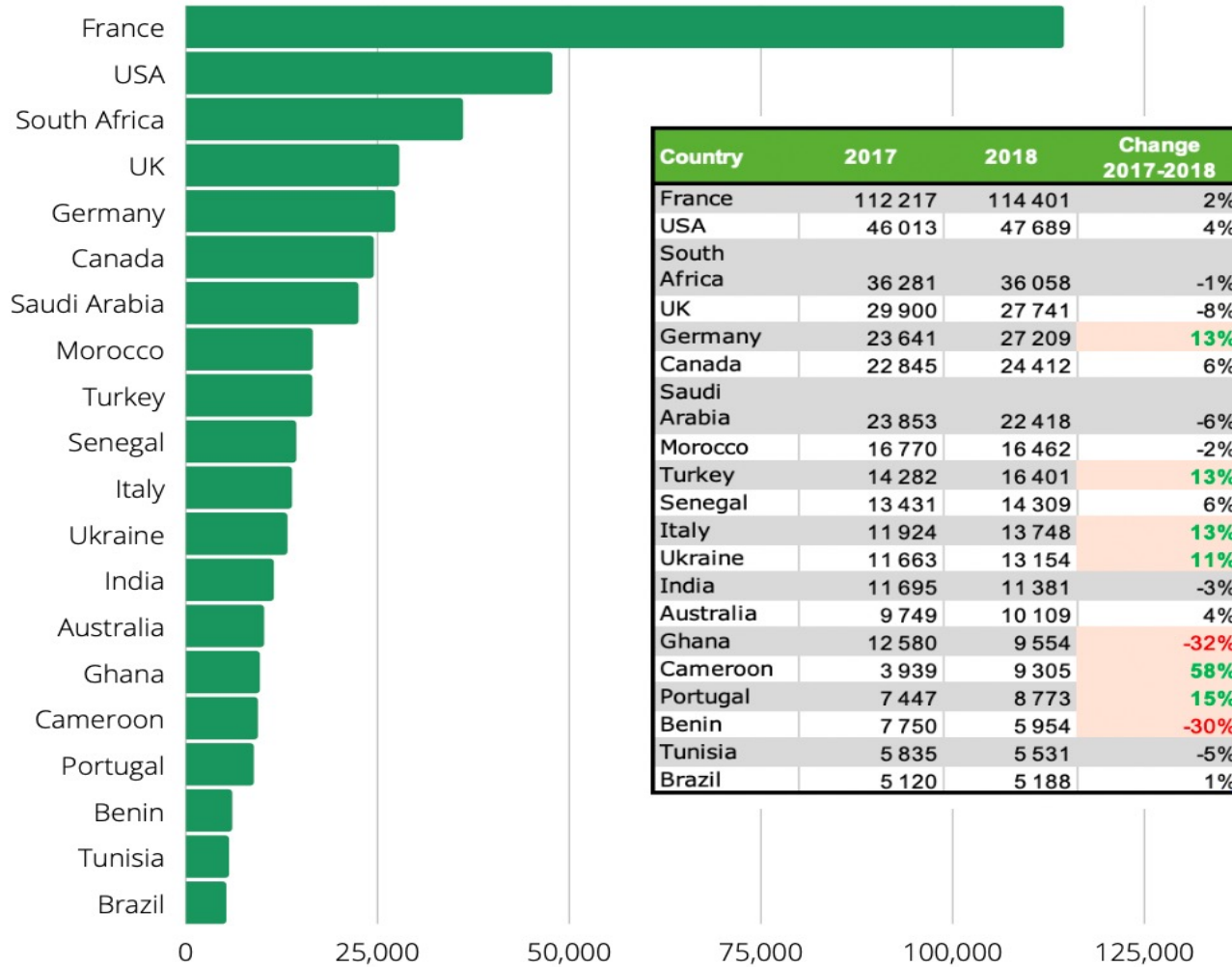
# USA: Outward mobility

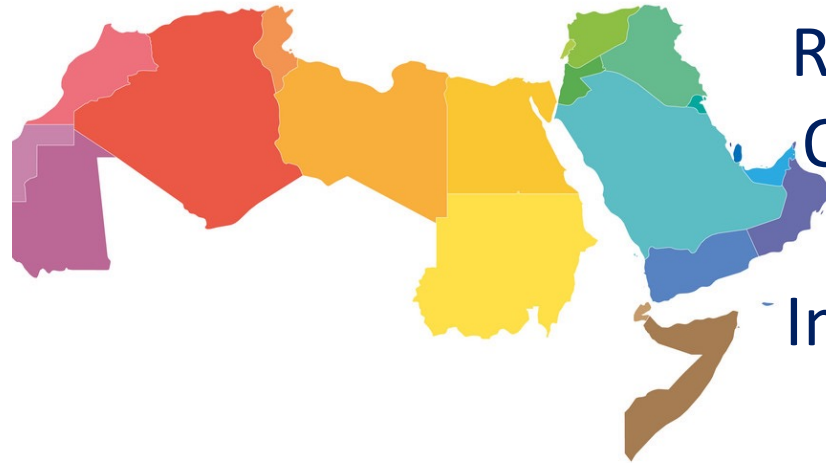




Internationalization or Brain Drain?

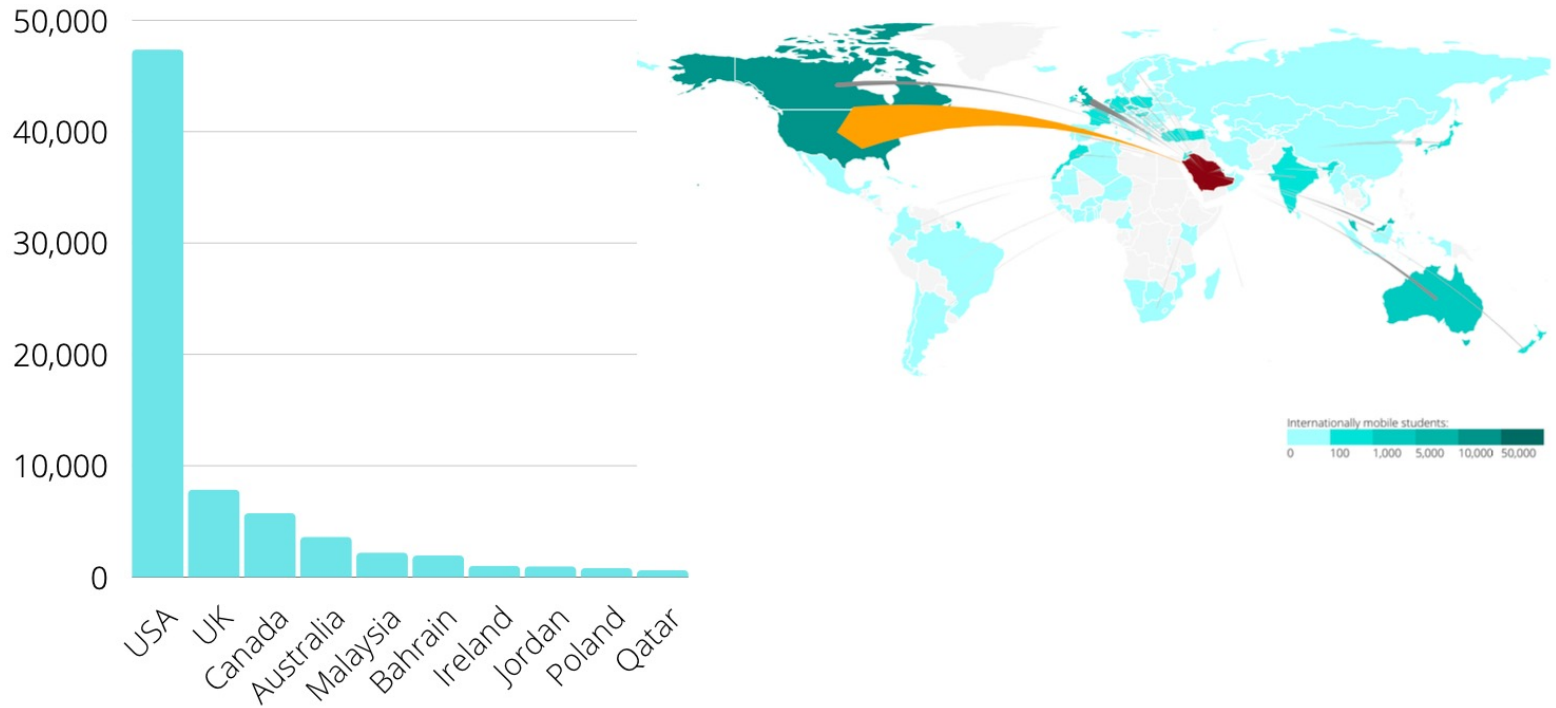
# Inbound students from Africa





## Recognition of Qualifications for Imported Skills

# Number of Saudi students per country of destination

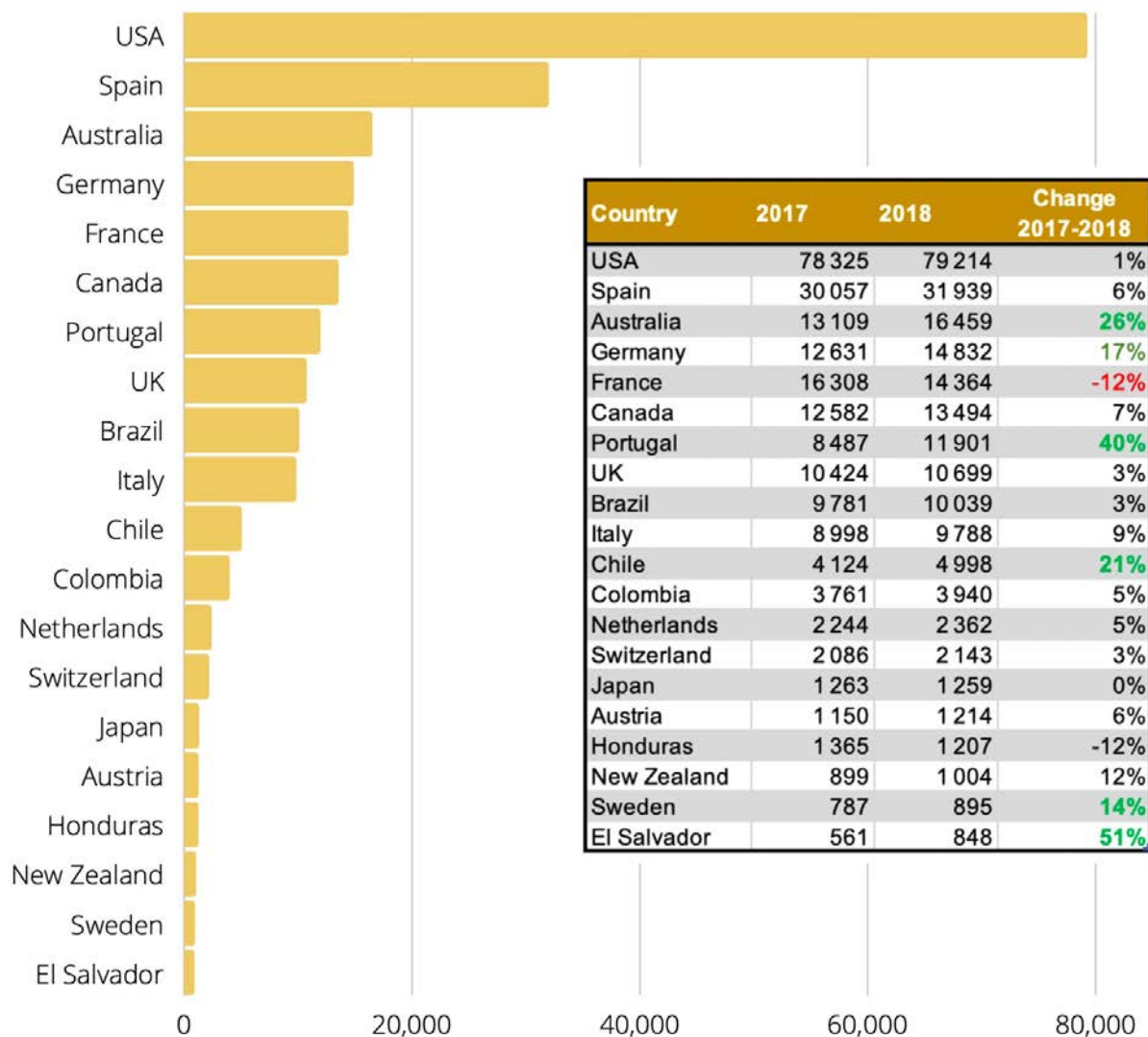


# Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)





# Inbound students from LAC



# Asia-Pacific

You may have heard the soft flutter of bat wings at dusk, noticed them flitting around at night, or even seen them sleeping under roof eaves, in trees and caves during the day. But apart from these brief encounters, have you ever wondered how bats may have traditionally held deeper symbolic meaning in various cultures?

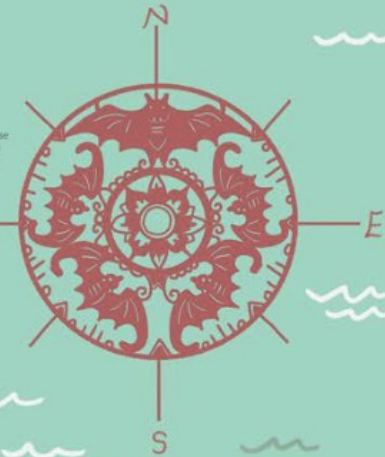
This visual map guide celebrates the many positive bat symbols and folklore found across the Asia-Pacific region. Our ancestors recognised the importance and wonder of bats!

Look out for our full write-up and get updates by following [rimba.ngo!](https://rimba.ngo/)



a project under

Rimba



The Five Blessings (五福 wǔfú) in Chinese culture are health, wealth, longevity, love of virtue and peaceful death. They are represented symbolically by five bats (五福 wǔfú).

In traditional Chinese culture, bats are lucky symbols because the word for bat (蝠 fú) sounds like the word for blessing (福 fú).

In Bani folklore of Papua New Guinea, Gigenbunda was a mythical giant flying fox female spirit who left thunderstorms and strong winds in her wake, striking terror and awe but also representing the river boat with fruit trees by dispersing seeds during her nocturnal visits.

Flying foxes are perceived as protectors and saviours in Samoan folklore. According to legend, Samoan Princess Leatoga berated and warned flying foxes about the king's hunting plans. In return, the bats rescued her from being burned alive and also brought her food when she was stranded on an inhospitable island. She later bestowed the name "Manufofo" on her son, meaning "rescued by flying foxes".

In New Guinea and Papua New Guinea, the indigenous Arapesh and Iatmul carved out flying fox motifs on their war shields to represent triumphant head-hunters.

For Samoan moa, the pepe—the local name for flying fox—is a coming-of-age tattoo that, etched from the waist to the knee, symbolising protection over a warrior.

The Samoan war god Sapo took the form of a flying fox to guide his people in battle. If they saw it flying fox ahead, it means victory would be theirs; if it flew back towards them it was a warning to retreat.

Folklore of the Aboriginal Wik in Australia tells of two brothers who broke taboo by spearing and cooking flying foxes. The bats escaped and carried the boys up into the sky as punishment, leaving them there to serve as a grim reminder now immortalised in the Gemini constellation.

Flying foxes were important animals to the Aboriginal people of Cape York, Australia, and a common feature in their traditional rock art.

The 'tik' language, meaning flying fox, is a 21,000-year-old language or homophone used in Malay and Javanese traditional textiles and pottery.

The 'tik' language choreography, seen in the traditional Malay Zupak dance, represents humility and restraint, inspired by the flying fox wrapping up its mighty wings' strength when not in flight.

According to a traditional Bani belief from Sarawak, Malaysian Baniwats bats act as shamans' messengers to the upper-world during the Gawa harvest Festival.

The indigenous Iban in Sarawak traditionally featured the flying fox toasty known as 'semawut', as a toasty meal.

Lucky bat motifs can be found on traditional ceramics, jewellery and textiles in Chinese, Peranakan and other Chinese-influenced communities across East and Southeast Asia.

Locals believe that flying foxes roosting in the Viet Mahatup temple grounds in Vietnam are calling forth blessings from Buddha when they circle the temple during their fly-out every evening.

In Chinese opera, the Zhong Kui character wears a bat motif on his mask.

A tale from ancient China: The gods look pity on Zhong Kui when he committed suicide. They named him King of Ghosts and tasked him to discipline demons, with bats acting as his helpers who scout out demons for him to vanquish.

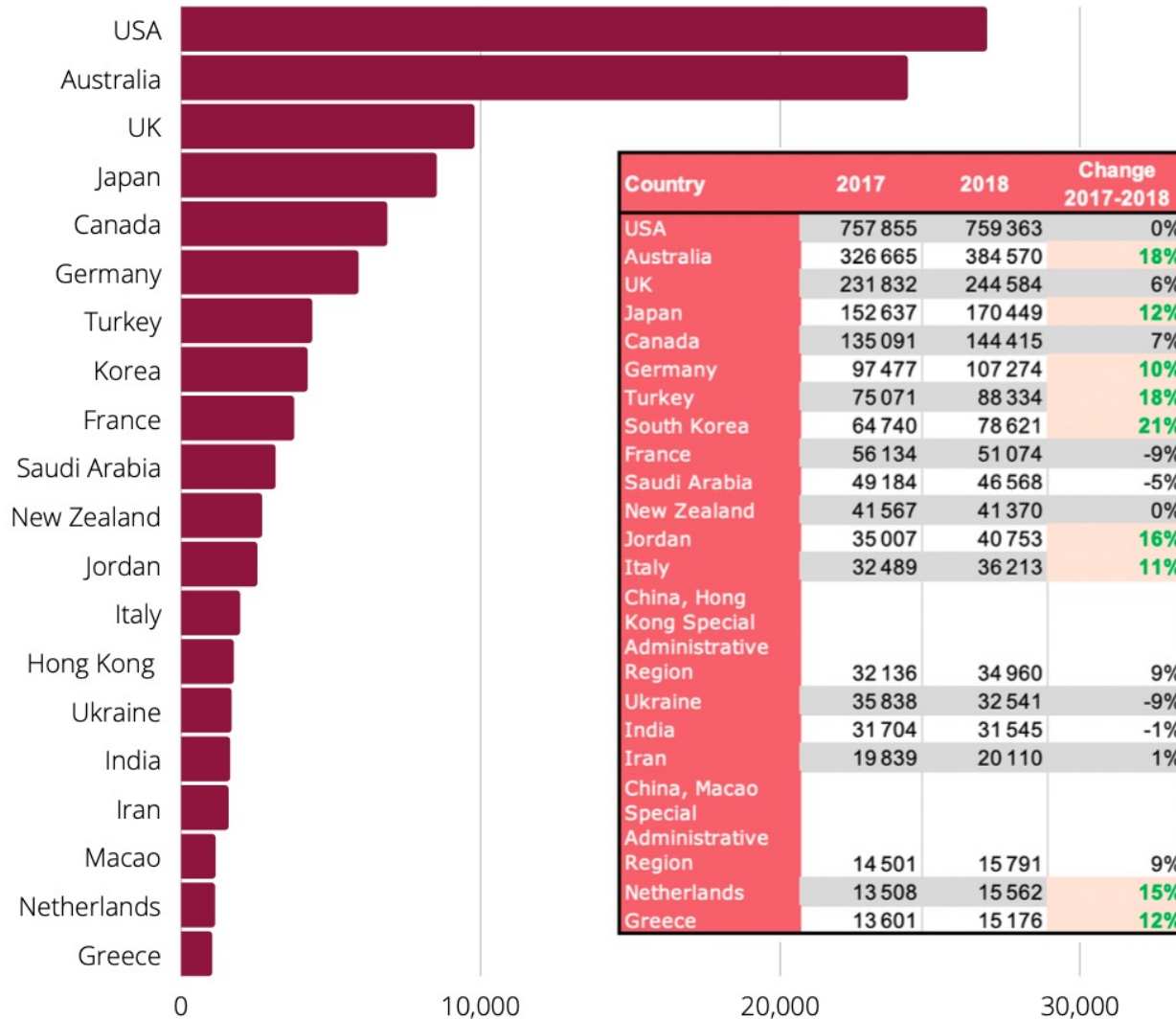
In India, Hindu devotees of the goddess Kali worship and protect flying foxes which roost in sacred groves. Bats also feature as symbols of love in Tamil Sangam poetry, dating back more than 2000 years.

The indigenous Iban Men in Sarawak, Malaysia perform a traditional dance called 'Tayang Lawat', mimicking the graceful movements of flying foxes.

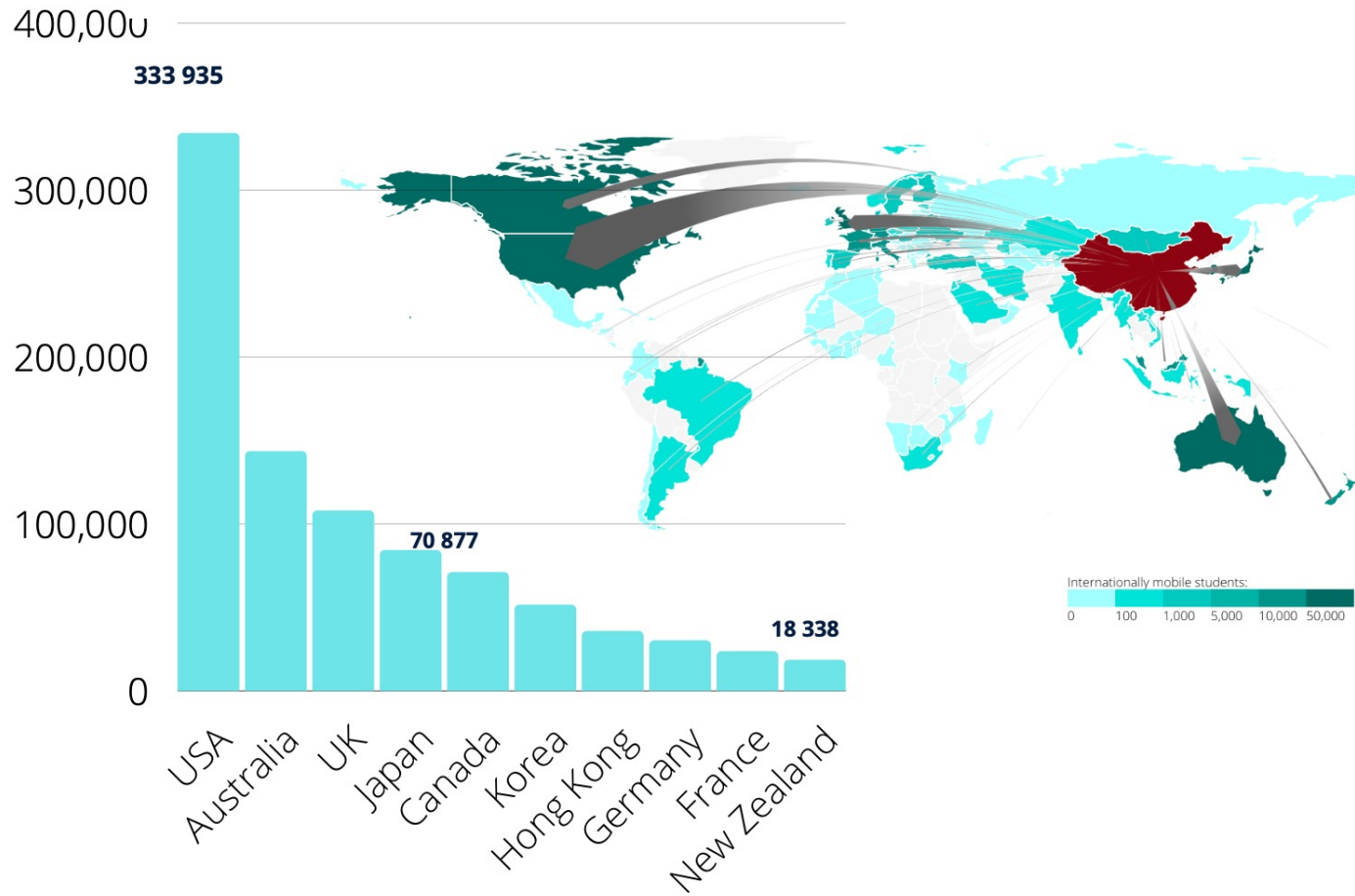
# A Celebration of Bats in Asia-Pacific Cultures

illustrated by Reumena Yee

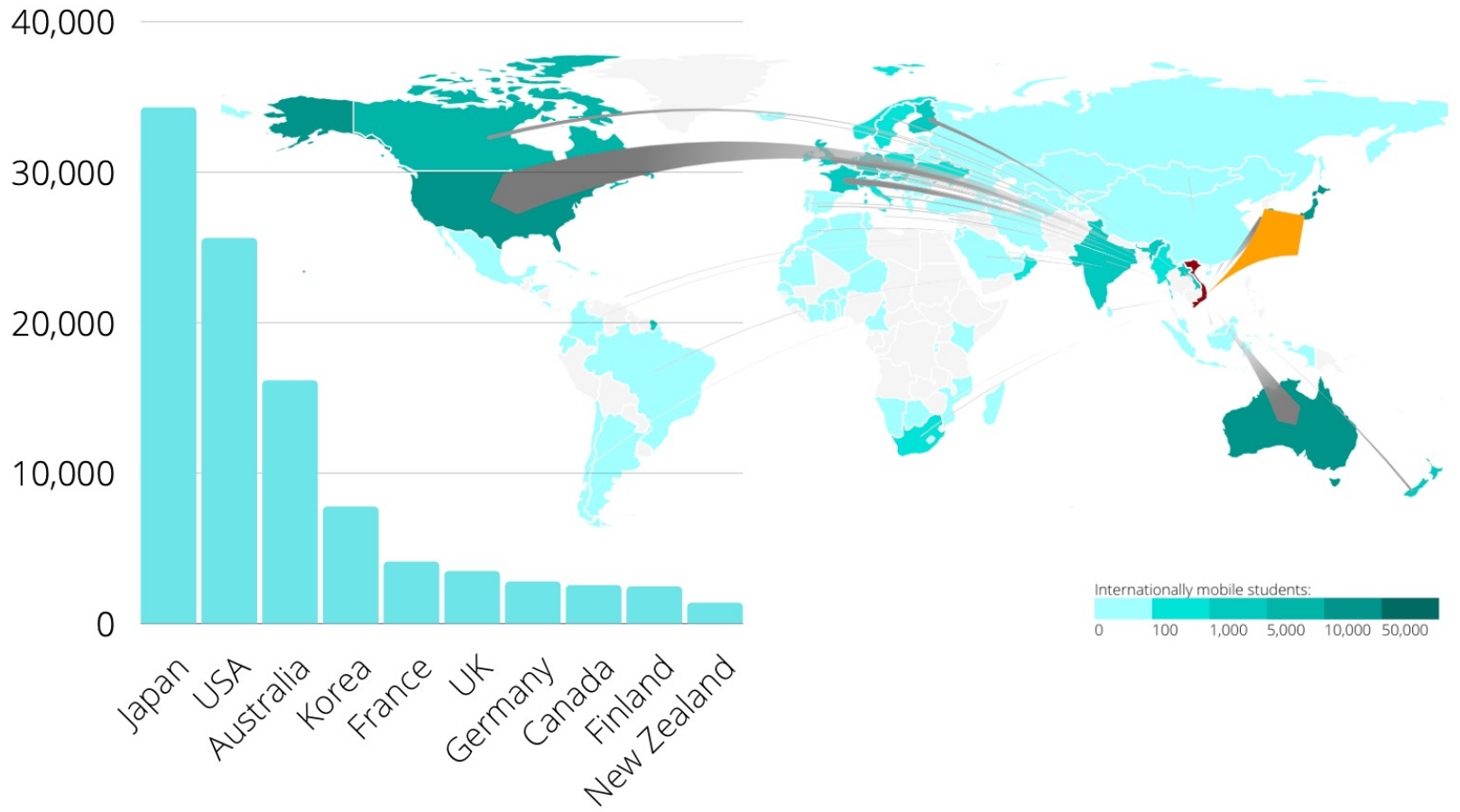
# Inbound students from Asia-Pacific



# Number of Chinese students per country of destination



# Number of Vietnamese students per country of destination



# A-P Mobility Programmes and Recognition Information



## Study on Enhancing Intra-ASEAN University Student Mobility



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### Asia-Pacific Network of National Information Centres (APNNIC)

APNNIC is a regional network of National Information Centres (NICs) of the parties to the Tokyo Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the Asia-Pacific region. The APNNIC portal provides free and authoritative information on the recognition of qualifications to help facilitate physical or virtual mobility of students and academics. To date, the twelve Parties to the Tokyo Convention are Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, China, Fiji, Holy See, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and Turkey. Additional countries are nearing completion of their procedures to become a Party.



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Education  
2030



Depending on where you are and which way you look,  
mobility may have different priorities and complexities ....

# Changing Times ....



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UNESCO Conventions, Mobility and Recognition: <https://www.unesco.org/en/higher-education/global-convention>

Data: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

Graphics: © T.I.M.E. Association



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