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Agenda

1. Introduction: European initiatives on country-based alumni and the importance of international talent in innovation, economic growth.
2. Findings of Nuffic's research on international graduate retention in the Netherlands.
3. Case Study Presentation: Germany's DAAD Campus Initiative for International Talents.
4. Interactive session: audience will work in groups to discuss various topics/questions from the session.



Country-Alumni Engagement



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Germany Alumni



Sweden Alumni Network



Alumni UK



Campus France



Study in Czechia

[Australia Global Alumni](#)

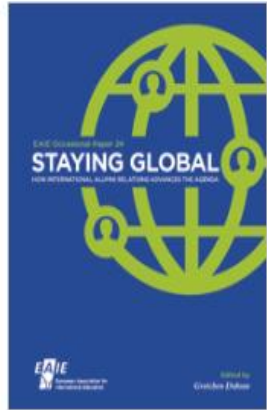
[Alumni Hungary](#)

[Danida Alumni Network](#)

Taiwan Alumni Association (TAA)

Eramus Mundus Alumni (EMA),
EU ALUMNI,
Barcelona Alumni

Why global alumni networks



*Rincón & Rutkowski
EAIE, 2015*

Strategies of
engagement for the
future of European
higher education
(Chapter 5)

Members: Former scholarship-holders, then others

Purpose:

- Support internationalization of its higher education
- Brand country through reputation of its higher education
- Public diplomacy
- Talent attraction & retention
- Innovation

How to Stay Competitive?



*Rincón & Körmeling
Summer Forum, 2018*

Economic benefit

Innovation

Entrepreneurship

A National Alumni Strategy to
Stay Competitive (p.14)



Who is Nuffic?

- Nuffic is the Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education
- Our ambition: All pupils and students have the opportunity to acquire international competences
- As a knowledge center and linking pin, one of our key tasks is to support education through **research** and **knowledge**



Before we begin:

A few words about my journey in the Netherlands as an international graduate...



My talking points today

Stay rate and labour market position

of international graduates 2013-2022

May 2025

nuffic
meet the world

NUF2025/02 - Translation from the original Dutch version



Periodical research

Staying after graduation

Why international students decide to make the Netherlands their new home

5 December 2023

nuffic
meet the world



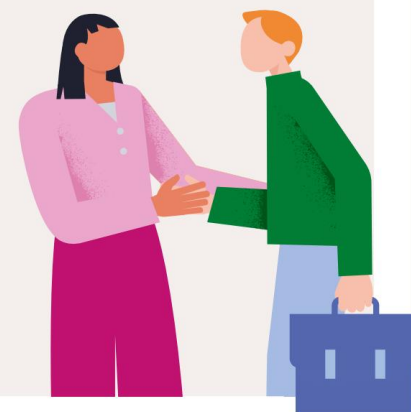
NUF2023/10 Original version

Hiring international graduates

The employers' perspective

June 2025

nuffic
meet the world



NUF2025/05



1

Stay rate and labour market position of international graduates 2013-2022

What is stay rate?

Stay rate:

The percentage of international students who are in the NL a certain number of years after graduating from a Dutch HE institution.

And how about international graduates?:

Prior education abroad & do not hold Dutch nationality

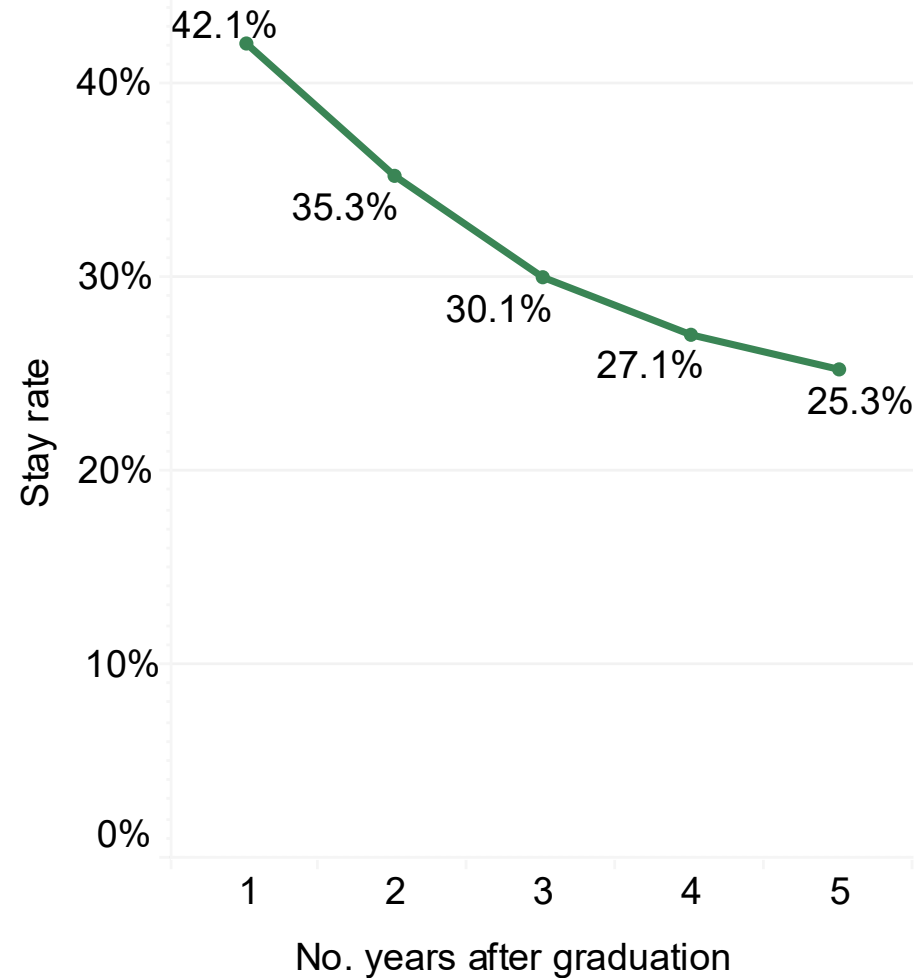
Higher education system in the NL:

University of Applied Sciences (UAS) (36)

Research Universities (RU) (13)

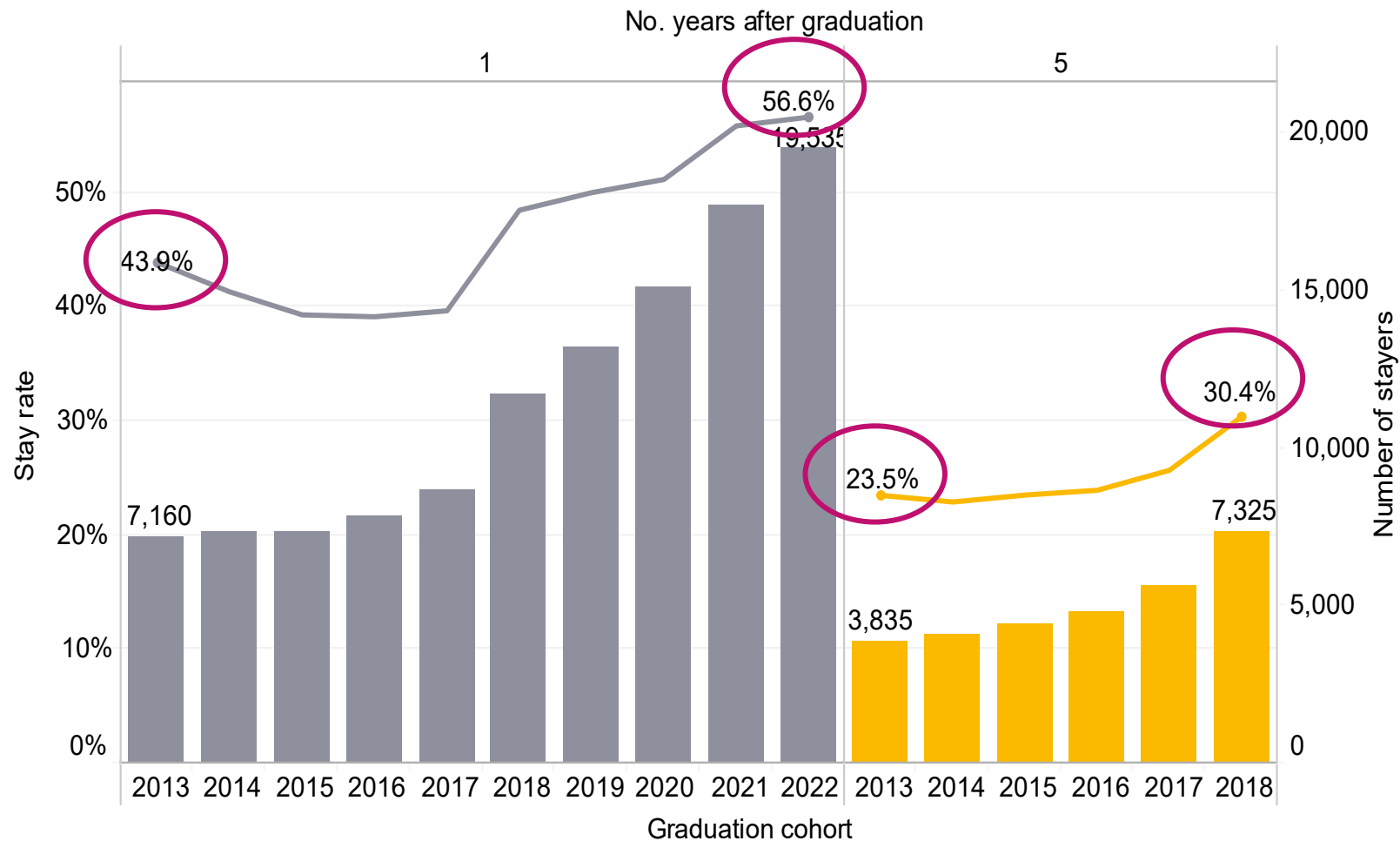


Total stay rate



25% of international graduates
still live in the Netherlands 5
years after graduation

Stay rate per graduation cohort



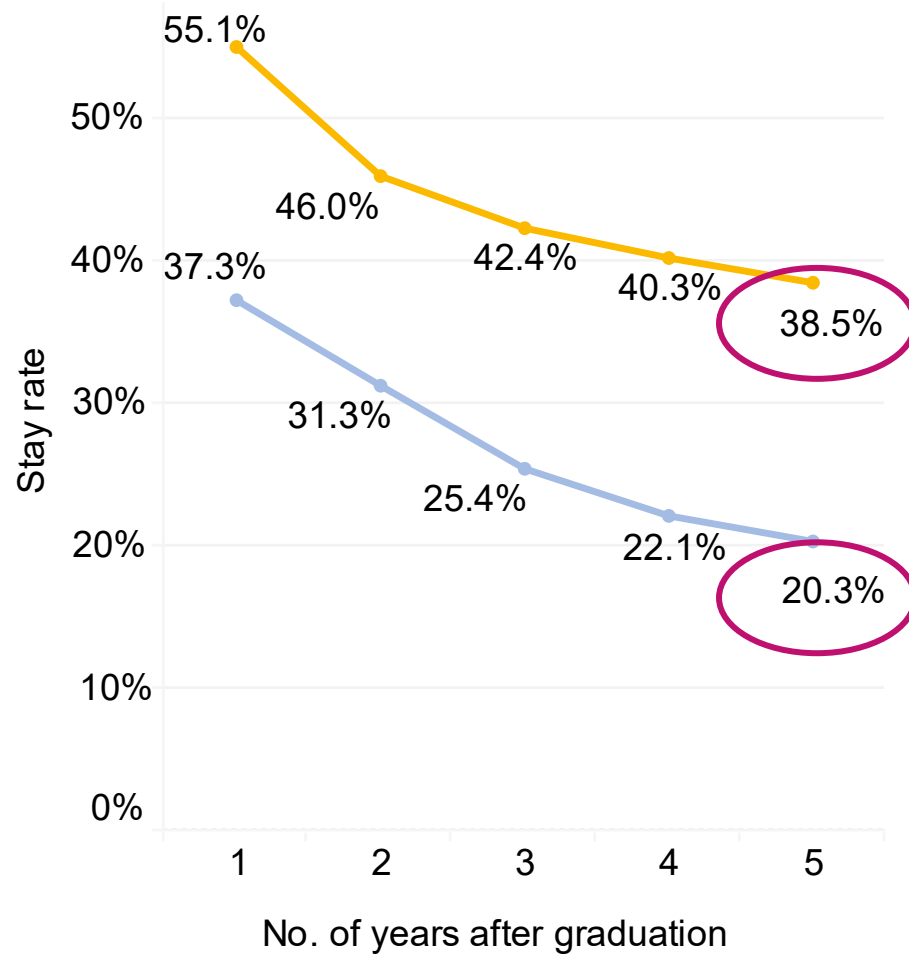
Stay rate is higher among more recent cohorts

“5 years after graduation. 80% of staying international graduates (i.e., stayers) has a paid job.”





Stayrate EEA/non-



Nationality
■ EEA

■ non-EEA

5 years after graduation, the stay rate of non-EEA graduates is almost double that of EEA graduates

Fields of study



Which two fields of study have the highest stay rates at universities of applied sciences (UAS) and research universities (RU)?

- A. Engineering & Economics
- B. Education & Engineering
- C. Economics & Education

Fields of study



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- A. Engineering & Economics
- B. Education & Engineering**
- C. Economics & Education

Fields of study	UAS stay rate	RU stay rate
Education	53%	100%
Engineering	35%	41%
Economics	21%	23%

“For most fields of study, stayers in paid employment are more likely to work in study-related labour market sectors than in other sectors.”



2

Staying after graduation – Why international students decide to make the Netherlands their new home



Why do they stay after graduation?



Quality of life and career opportunities are the two most important reasons for staying in the Netherlands

Other important reasons:

- Work-related
- Societal
- Personal
- Housing
- Legal status

Why do they leave after graduation?



Not suitable work **the** is the most important reason for leaving

Other important reasons:

- Financial
- Societal
- Personal
- Language
- Housing
- Legal status

What is the biggest challenge for those who stay?



Meeting the Dutch language requirements in job applications

7 out of 10 experience this

3

Hiring international graduates – The employers' perspective





Attitude of employers in the NL

8 out of 10 employers experience more advantages than disadvantages with having different nationalities in the workplace

Diversity, innovation, and personal qualities among the main advantages

International graduates in the labour market mean:

- Larger talent pool
- Specialized knowledge
- Knowledge and language of foreign markets

Obstacles & Needs



Language barriers and administration as most common disadvantages

Needs:

- What employers need to do themselves
- Needs from government
- Needs from higher education institutions

Conclusion



5 years after graduation, 1 in 4 international graduate live in the Netherlands

➤ with 80% of them having a paid job

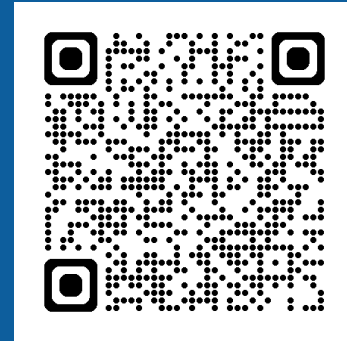
Stay rate rising among recent graduation cohorts

Not being able to find suitable work as the biggest reason to leave

Language experienced as a challenge both by employers and international graduates

Thank you for your attention.

**For our reports and
dashboards:**





Ekaterina Ershova
DAAD

From enrollment to employment



- Across Europe, we face demographic and labour market pressures
- In Germany, the „Fachkräftemangel“ is now widely seen as a core threat to innovation and productivity
- International students and academics are a valuable yet underused resource to address these gaps
- Germany is an attractive study destination. The key question is:
How do we not only attract, but also retain and anchor international talent locally?

Campus Initiative overview

- Time frame and funding:
 - The initiative runs from 2024 through 2028, funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space with a total funding of about € 120 million.
 - By March 2024, 114 projects across 104 universities in all federal states were selected for funding
- Scope and scale:
 - Of the 114 project, 89 are FIT projects and 25 are Profi Plus projects
 - By mid-2025, over 2,000 individual measures had been implemented across these projects, reaching more than 12,000 participants

Programme lines: FIT & Profi plus



The Campus Initiative consists of **two core strands**:

- **1. FIT – Förderung Internationaler Talente:** Focuses on supporting international students during their studies and easing the transition into the labour market
 - Orientation programmes, academic and language support, social integration opportunities
 - Career counselling, internship preparation, job application training
 - Career fairs and matchmaking, regional employer management

Programme lines: FIT & Profi plus



The Campus Initiative consists of **two core strands**:

- **2. Profi plus** – Academic Training for the German Labour Market: Targets international academics with foreign degrees to help them adapt to the German market
 - Academic and language training, professional development courses
 - Job application training, rhetoric courses
 - Company visits, strengthening of cooperation with industry partners

Intended impacts

The **Campus Initiative** aims to increase retention of international graduates in Germany by:

- Facilitating access for international prospective students to study programmes at German universities
- Increasing academic success and employability of international degree-seeking students/graduates and international academics
- Removing existing barriers (Language, cultural, administrative)
- Strengthening university capacity to support international students and graduates
- Fostering regional networks & cooperative structures between university and employers
- Signaling that Germany takes global talent retention seriously

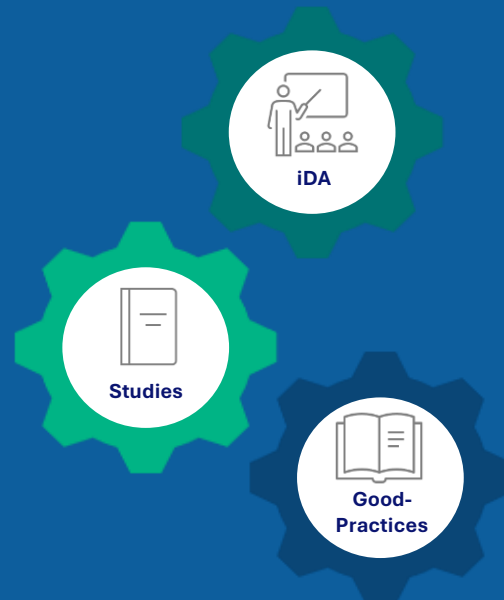
Research Agenda & Knowledge Transfer



Research and transfer

TRAINING, STUDIES AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER TO SUPPORT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Supporting higher education members through training and knowledge transfer through studies and good-practice publications.



- Training for higher education employees on all aspects of recruiting and qualifying international students to successfully enter the labor market
- Key questions and topics need to be scientifically examined in order to prepare the findings for policy and practice
- Publication of good-practice examples and networking between higher education institutions and industry (community building)

Stakeholder Engagement



Policy Recommendations and Stakeholder Engagement

CONCERTED EFFORTS BY ALL STAKEHOLDERS: TEN RECOMMENDATIONS

Bringing together relevant stakeholders to build awareness of necessary improvements and to initiate their implementation.



1. Facilitate access to Germany's higher education system
2. Simplify and speed up the visa application process
3. Support higher education institutions through funding programmes.
4. Promote fair long-term migration partnerships
5. Provide and promote attractive courses and programmes
6. Improve outcomes, language skills and integration for international students
7. Actively support students' transition from higher education to employment
8. Expand career development programmes
9. Take a systematic approach to identifying and tapping potential
10. Engage in partnerships and funding programmes

Selected illustrations – Alumni Engagement



Alumni engagement as an effective tool for supporting long-term retention (examples from selected FIT projects):

- **University of Siegen:** Hosts an Alumni Career Day where international alumni, often working in HR, run „World Café“ sessions on job interviews, workplace culture, and career planning in Germany
- **Saarland University and htw saar (QUAZAR Project):** Established peer-to-peer alumni mentoring between employed international graduates and current students in STEM
- **Reutlingen University:** Runs a series called „International Alumni: Insights – Stories – Voices“ where international alumni share their personal challenges and successes in integrating into the German workforce
- **Alice Salomon University Berlin:** Organizes a 4-week webinar series on „Career Pathways in Global Health“ featuring international alumni now working at Ada Health, Doctors of the World, Boehringer Ingelheim, and others

Conclusion: The DAAD Campus Initiative



- Transforms academic mobility into regional talent retention through structured support, bridging programmes, and network linkages
- Two strands – FIT and Profi plus – provide tailored pathways for both students and postgraduates/academics entering the labour market
- In the future: Focus on institutionalising and expanding successful models, ensuring long-term impact beyond pilot phases
- Integration with alumni networks strengthens sustainable ties between international graduates and regional development.



Your Turn

1. How does your institution support international students/alumni navigate your country's labour market?
2. Which challenges does your institution face in supporting internationals in their career journey?
3. How does your institutions grow its international alumni network to support career development?



Děkuju. Thank you.

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