

# Indian enrolments soar in Germany

The number of Indian students in the country grew by 24% in 2010-2011. So, what's driving them to Deutschland?

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Indian students are increasingly turning to less popular destinations like Germany, for higher education. Campuses in that country attracted 24% more Indian students in 2010-2011 compared to the previous year. Their ranks grew from 4070 in 2009-2010 to 5038 in 2010-2011. The number of total international students also went up.

German institutions saw the biggest increase - 39% - in a year in new admissions from India.

The number of Indian students in Germany has fluctuated since 1995 - the year from which official data became available.

What might make more students interested in the country now is Germany's adoption of a bill to launch the EU 'Blue Card', a new work and residence permit for international graduates.

According to an embassy press release: "Some of the provisions of the bill are better prospects of gaining residency for foreign graduates of German universities, lower income

requirements to enable highly qualified specialists acquire a permanent settlement permit, and a simpler temporary residence permit procedure for researchers."

Christiane Schlottmann, director, DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) regional office, South Asia, points to the various factors behind the pattern. She elaborates, "The recent years have witnessed a change in student mobility worldwide. Many students are seeking new destinations in Europe and even Asia itself, for example Singapore. Various factors like stringent visa rules, lack of employment opportunities after graduation and social threats in

the traditionally popular destinations affect this trend. In Europe, Germany is the most popular destination for international students due to international degree programmes (IDP) taught in English medium, tuition fee waivers, career opportunity after graduation and above all, social security. Germany tops the list of the most internationalised countries in the higher education arena

(THES Survey 2011)."

The positive indicators of its economy are believed to be a key determinant. According to The Economist data, Germany's GDP expanded at a rate of 2.5% in the third quarter as compared to the euro zone's 1.4%, Britain's 0.5% and the United States' 1.5%. The unemployment rate too is lower than the other major economies.

Financial reasons made Indian Vivek Ghewari choose this country. "Applying to universities in the USA was ruled out because it was virtually impossible to afford the two-year education and stay there without scholarships, even though I had good credentials. Hence, I diverted my attention quite early towards Europe, especially towards those countries which offered masters' programmes in English," says

Ghewari, who is pursuing a dual MSc (mechatronics), Technical University of Hamburg-Harburg and master of technology management/ MBA at Northern Institute of Technology Management, Hamburg-Harburg. He has a BTech from NIT Surathkal.

## THE EU 'BLUE CARD'

Germany has adopted a bill, which when implemented, will give international graduates of German universities "unrestricted access to the job market in their search for a post that fits their qualifications. After finishing their studies, they can work in Germany for a year in any capacity to earn a living. The previous restriction to a 90-day period has been abolished," says a press release. After landing a job, they no longer need the Federal Employment Agency's permission, which was earlier required to get a residence permit

## GROWING RANKS

Number of Indian students in Germany

- 2010-2011: 5038
- 2009-2010: 4070
- 2008-2009: 3516

Number of International students

- 2010-11: 252,032
- 2009-10: 244,776 (11.5% of all enrollees)
- 2008-09: 239,143 (11.8% of all enrollees)

