



DAAD KIWi

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service



# Uzbekistan 2022

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→ 326 funding recipients from Uzbekistan (2021)  
← 38 funding recipients from Germany (2021)

**DAAD Lectureships:**  
Mirzo Ulugbek National University, Tashkent (NUU);  
Fergana State University, Fergana;  
Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages;  
Uzbek State World Languages University (WLU), Tashkent

**Language support**  
Uzbek State World Languages University (WSU) in Tashkent

## Country and Economy

Uzbekistan has the largest population in Central Asia. It has a well-developed industrial and agricultural base. Around a quarter of the population work in agriculture, which dominates life outside cities. It contributes almost 30 per cent of GDP. Industry accounts for over 20 per cent, although this will increase further under government plans. The country gained independence in 1991, but has not yet completed the transition from a soviet centrally planned economy to a system oriented around market economics. Uzbekistan has not yet joined the Eurasian Customs Union, which includes Russia, Kazakhstan and other states. Uzbekistan has held observer status in the Union since 2020. Uzbekistan has been a full member of the Organization of Turkic States (OTC) since 2019. The Organization was previously known as the Turkic Council or the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States.

## Population

Uzbekistan's population has grown stably and steadily over recent years. Its demographic structure indicates a young population. This suggests a sufficiently large and potentially growing number of potential university applicants. It should, however, be born in mind that population growth is mainly taking place in rural areas that are mostly agricultural in character. In these areas, however, there is a need to improve the situation of school and higher education. As such, population growth will not automatically lead to increased numbers of potential students with adequate or high levels of qualifications.

## Higher education system

The Uzbek higher education system currently comprises 186 higher education institutions<sup>1</sup>. This is, however, only a snapshot in time, as numerous new educational institutions with university status are currently being set up, mainly with foreign involvement. Higher education institutions and universities fall into two groups. The first group is by far the larger and comprises Uzbek state higher education institutions. The second group is smaller in terms of numbers and includes branches of foreign academic institutions or new institutions set up in Uzbekistan by foreign academic institutions. These are privately funded, and are governed by local law with associated national accreditation. A large number of Uzbekistan's higher education institutions are in Tashkent.

There are over 20 foreign higher education institutions or branch campuses. These offer a range of subjects including technology, economics, law, the humanities and medicine. The overwhelming majority of foreign universities and universities founded with foreign support are concentrated in the capital, Tashkent. They charge considerable fees which leads to the social selection of students. At the same time, these fees correspond to students' aspirations, and the career expectations of the students and their families.

Nevertheless, compared to other countries in the region the level of education is high. Respectable levels of achievement are evident in certain scientific disciplines such as physics and mathematics, and also in certain social sciences and humanities subjects. Demand significantly exceeds supply for places in higher education. The Uzbek government strictly regulates and limits access to higher education.

## Russian: the lingua franca

Russian remains the key language of communication in politics, business and academia. Switching languages from Russian to Uzbek complicates the educational process, as does the lack of up-to-date academic literature in the Uzbek language. English is the most important foreign language, followed some way behind by German and French. Nevertheless, the massive focus on promoting the English language, which had been evident since 2010, has been declining gradually since 2017. German is again attracting renewed attention, as clearly indicated by growing student numbers.

## Internationalisation and education cooperation

Under the Uzbek government's reform policies, higher education institutions are to massively expand their level of internationalisation and open up in teaching and research. This has led to high levels of demand for Germany's cultural communicators in the country. Even small regional institutions are increasing their activities, looking for advice on scholarships and opportunities for cooperation. Uzbekistan has a dynamic economy, but tangible financial shortages are still a prominent feature of the national budget and the higher education system. Universities and research institutes face funding shortages both for staff and equipment. Against this background, the opportunities to study in Germany seem attractive and demand is high. This applies both to the scholarships that are available, but also to the possibility of privately-funded study visits to Germany. A limited number of scholarships are available to Uzbekistan, but these are massively out of proportion to the absolute number of applicants. That said, a closer inspection of the suitability and qualifications of the Uzbek applicants does put the ratio into perspective.

According to the HRK Higher Education Compass, 46 cooperation arrangements are currently in place between German and Uzbek higher education institutions (as of June 2022). Potential applicants are mainly interested in economics and business administration, engineering, IT and German studies, with medicine growing more and more strongly. There is also increased interest in work placements and professional training.

Work placements have become a compulsory element of BA courses. These may be completed at the university itself or in schools. In the case of engineering sciences programmes, students may complete placements in industry.

A significant shortage of workers has been identified, particularly in engineering sciences. In response, plans are in place to set up universities of applied sciences broadly along the lines of the German model. These will offer more practice-oriented study programmes.

Other international players are also active in higher education in Uzbekistan, particularly South Korea, Russia, the US and China. Other countries (or their higher education institutions and organisations) are also working more and more closely with partners in Uzbekistan; the UK and France are two such cases. The creation of new higher education institutions and joint degree programmes has led to a continued increase in the number of teachers and experts being posted to

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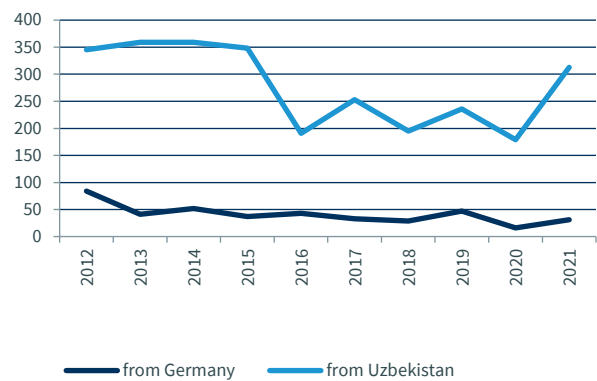
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.edu.uz/en/otm/index>

Uzbekistan. Exchange programmes are highly sought-after by Uzbek universities.

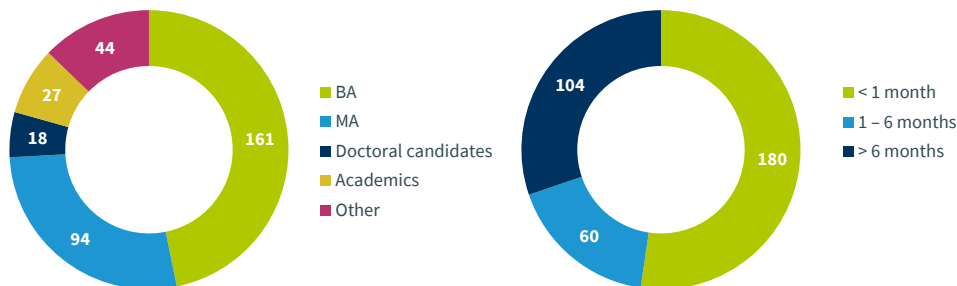
**Selected funding figures by status**

Individual funding	Uzbekistan	Germany
BA students	53	18
MA students	62	1
Research scholarships for international doctoral candidates and early-career academics	3	-
Academics, including postdocs	5	3
Project funding	Uzbekistan	Germany
BA students	90	-
MA students	30	1
Doctoral candidates	14	1
Academics, including postdocs	13	6
EU	Uzbekistan	Germany
ERASMUS mobility grants	13	7

**DAAD funding Uzbekistan 2012-2021 (not including EU mobility programmes)**



**Distribution of DAAD funding recipients 2021 (not including EU mobility programmes)**



**Subject distribution 2021 (including EU mobility programmes)**

