

**Promote Two-Way Flow of International Students,
Improve Quality of International Students Education in China**

Speech on the Sino-Australian Forum on Transnational Education and Student Mobility

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Dear participants:

Good morning. It's a great honor for me to attend today's forum. Today, I will present an overview of the work on international students in China.

1. Overview of the International Students in China

In 2009, the MoE launched the "Plan for Study in China" with the target to attract 500,000 international students to study in China by 2020. Since 2009, both the number of international students studying in China and those funded by the Chinese government scholarships have kept increasing steadily. In 2009, 238,184 international students from 190 countries came to study in China. In 2014, the number of students and that of countries increased to 377,054 and 203 respectively.

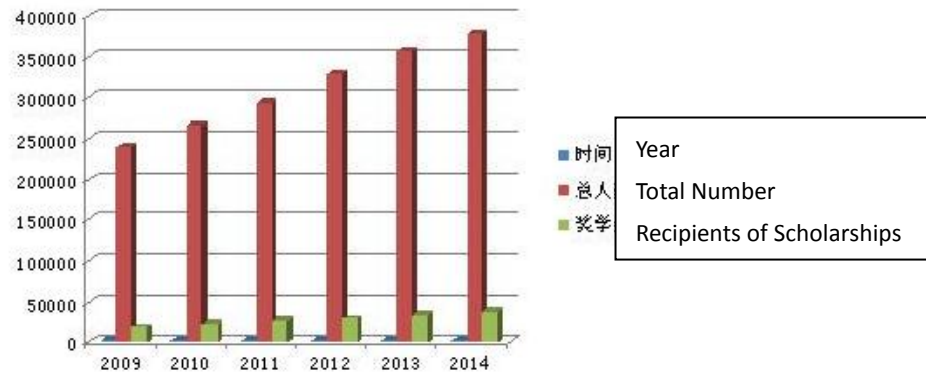


Figure 1: Number of International Students in China, 2009-2014

From 2009 to 2014, the main source countries of international students are Korea, the US, Thailand, Russia, Japan and Indonesia. Since 2012, the growth rate of international students from Korea and Japan has been slowing down but that of students from Thailand, Indonesia and Russia has kept increasing steadily. There was a remarkable growth of US students, which was driven by the “100,000 Strong Initiative” program co-implemented by the Chinese and the US governments. 100,000 US students were sent to China in the past four years and 10,000 Sino-US Cultural Exchange Special Scholarships were provided to US students by the Chinese government.

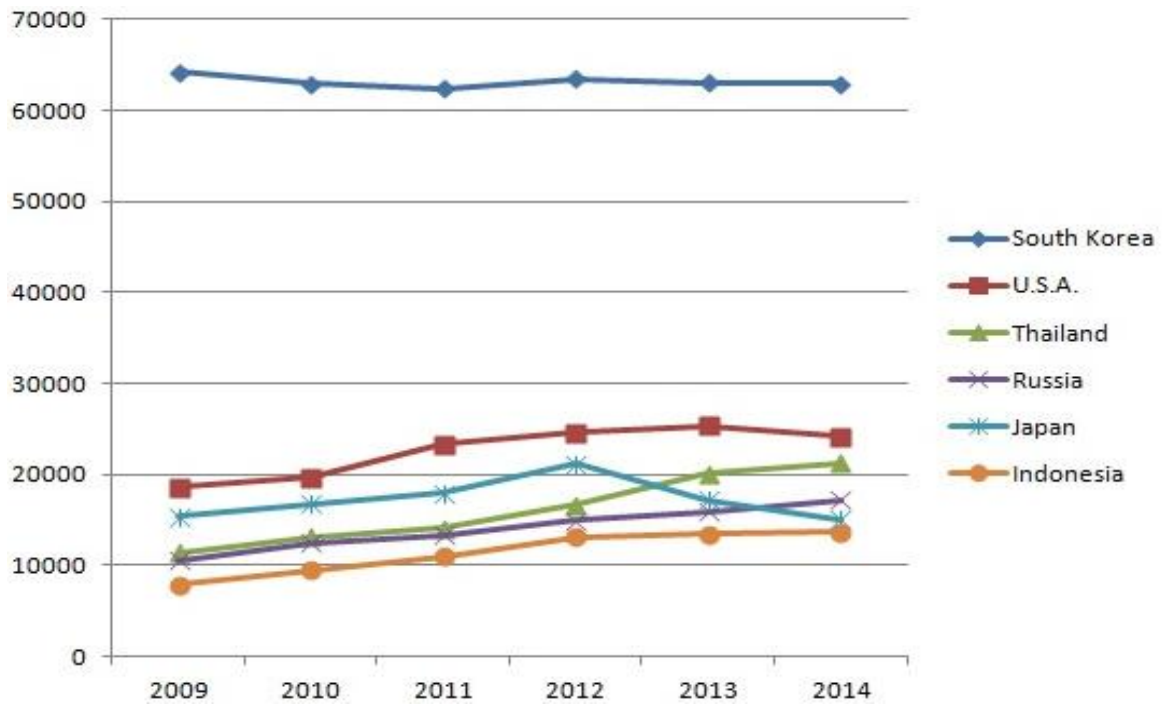


Figure 2: Tendency Chart of the Main Source Countries for International Students, 2009-2014

From the perspective of the distribution of the main source countries of international students, most are the neighboring countries with Korea being as the top one source country. There are around 5,000 students from Australia, making Australia ranked the 19th of all source countries.

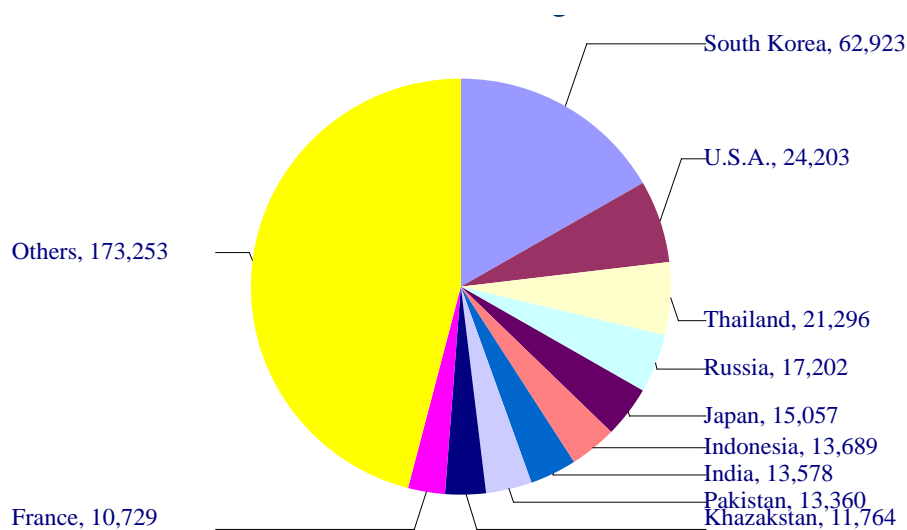


Figure 3: Distribution of International Students by Source Countries, 2014

From the perspective of the area distribution of international students' destinations, most belong to the eastern and coastal areas. Among the most popular 10 provinces, only Hubei lays in the inland area. Beijing and Guangzhou had a decrease in 2014 in terms of the number of international students while Jiangsu and Zhejiang enjoyed a slight increase.

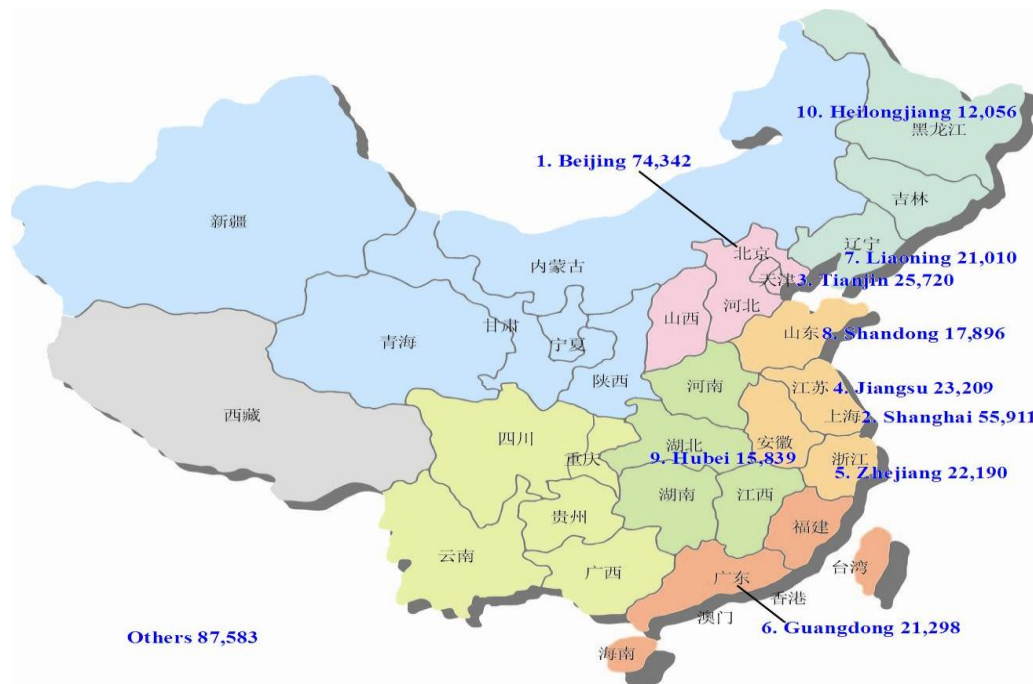


Figure 4: Area Distribution of Destinations, 2014

From the perspective of international students' categories, non-degree students take up 56% of the total population, in other words, less than half of the international students in China intend to pursue a degree. Degree education is largely made up by undergraduate students, taking up 31% of the total while post graduates taking up 13%.

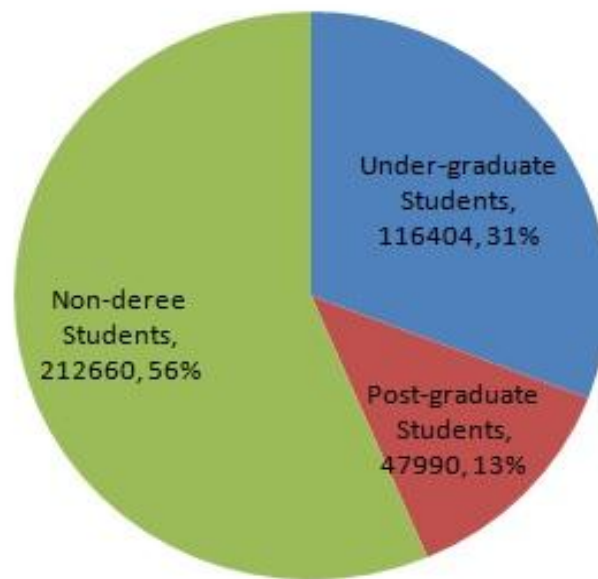


Figure 5: Categories of International Students, 2014

From the perspective of disciplines, the majority of international students choose Chinese language as their discipline, taking up around 52% of the total. Western medicine is the second popular discipline because China has more medical education resources, better clinical practice environment, more medical cases and can provide English-taught courses which attracts students from neighboring countries to study here. In 2014, of all the international students funded by the Chinese government scholarships, the number of students studying science and engineering outnumbered those studying Chinese language and foreign trade for the first time.

2. Challenges in the International Students Education in China

From the above statistics, it can be seen that international students education in China still has some problems in terms of scale and structure and is facing many challenges. To be more specific:

2.1 The main reason for the problems is that compared with the developed countries, we are still lagged behind in terms of the overall Chinese higher education development level. With the development of higher education, the problems will be solved gradually.

2.2 The overall competence of the university's faculties and teachers serving international students should meet the international standards. For example, universities should practice accordant management for both domestic and international students, that is, same teaching and living standards should be applied to both Chinese students and international students.

2.3 The structure of international students needs to be optimized. First, there is need to adjust the current regional distribution of the main destinations which is the majority of students gathering in the eastern and coastal regions while neglecting the central and western regions. Second, there is need to adjust the distribution of students' categories which is the majority choosing non-degree education rather than degree education. Third, there is need to change the distribution of disciplines which is the majority choosing Chinese language instead of other disciplines.

3. Main Measures Taken

3.1 To establish quality assurance system and appraisal mechanism for international students education

This year, MoE initiated the building of quality assurance system for international students education. Currently, we are at the stage of setting up expert panels and the index system. Australia has good experience in this field. The establishment of

quality assurance system is of great significance. We would like to learn and communicate more with Australian colleagues.

3.2 To provide preparatory programs for international students funded by Chinese government scholarships

In 2014, the Chinese government provided Chinese government scholarships to 36,943 international students, most of which were degree students covering various levels from undergraduates to postgraduates. We designated 10 universities locating in different provinces including Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Tianjin and Shandong to provide preparatory programs to international students based on their disciplines to increase their Chinese language level and to teach them professional knowledge to minimize the gap between them and Chinese students at the commencement time of study in order to help international students better fit into their study and living in China.

3.3 To develop exemplary English- taught courses

As English is not used as the medium of instruction in China, we have natural disadvantages in attracting international students compared with the US, the UK and Australia. Therefore, we have developed English-taught courses in order to attract more international students. In 2013, we selected 150 exemplary English-taught courses nationwide, covering 12 disciplines. In 2014, some of these courses have been videotaped and we hope more students benefit from them by uploading the courses onto the online platform.

3.4 To revise the relevant regulations and policies, to raise the scholarship stipend standards and to optimize the environment In terms of regulations and policies, the

MoE is revising the “Regulations on Recruitment and Education of International Students in China” and the “Interim Management Measures on Work-Study Program for International Students in China”. The revised regulations will be released this year. As shown from the communication with Australian colleagues, Australia shows great interest in international students taking internships in China. The MoE welcomes more international students to take internships in relevant enterprises/organizations as part of their study in China. This year, the Chinese government raised the standards of scholarships substantially and made a monetization reform in order to maximize students’ benefits. Meanwhile, scholarships will be more diversified. Except from the current scholarship programs, short-term credits program will be added in.

3.5 To provide training to university faculties and staff

For the past two years, the MoE has completed the “Thousand Talents Training Program”, which provided training to nearly 1,400 university executive personnel working with international students of more than 700 universities nationwide. The MOE will continue providing the similar training programs. On the other hand, the MoE will also send university executive personnel overseas for training in this regard. Australia has lots of advanced experience in student management, we hope Australia could assist us to carry out relevant training programs.

That’s all. Thank you.

(Audio Transcription)