

PRESS RELEASE



U.S. EMBASSY MADRID, SPAIN

2012 Open Doors

Educational exchanges between Spain and the United States increase in both directions

*Spain third most popular destination for U.S. study abroad students
Spain 24th ranked country of origin for international students in the U.S.*

Madrid, Spain, November 13, 2012-- Over the last four years, the number of Spanish students studying in the United States has grown by 34.5 percent. According to Open Doors 2012, the annual report on international academic mobility published by the Institute of International Education (IIE) in partnership with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, the number of Spanish students enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education in 2011/12 increased from 4,330 to 4,924, a 13.7 percent increase compared to the previous year. Spain now ranks 24th among the leading countries of origin, marking Spain's first time in the Top 25 Open Door Rankings.

This year's Open Doors report shows that the total number of international students at colleges and universities in the United States increased by six percent to 764,495 during the 2011/12 academic year. This represents a record high number of international students in the United States. The strong increase in international student enrollments shows the continued conviction of international students (and parents) that a U.S. degree is a sound investment in their future careers, a finding reinforced by results of recent IIE surveys of students overseas considering studying outside their own countries.

This 2011/12 data marks the sixth consecutive year that Open Doors reported expansion in the total number of international students in U.S. higher education; there are 31 percent more international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities than there were a decade ago. A similar increase in the number of "new" international students, those enrolling for the first time at a U.S. college or university in fall 2012, indicates that this growth trend is continuing. New enrollments in 2011 were up seven percent from the prior year.

According to Christopher Medalis, Regional Director for EducationUSA in Europe, "data from this year's Open Doors report demonstrates that the U.S. higher education system continues to be highly attractive to European students, with a 1.3% increase in European mobility to the U.S. over the past year, thanks to our system's diversity, breadth, depth, and flexibility."

"Today's youth are tomorrow's leaders," said Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. "International education creates strong, lasting relationships between the U.S. and emerging leaders worldwide. Students return home with new perspectives and a global skill set that will allow them to build more prosperous, stable societies."

Kara Madden, the Educational Advisor for Fulbright España/EducationUSA, is not surprised by the new Open Doors data. "We provide free educational advising here in Spain, but interest over the last few months has exploded. Many Spanish students are looking to improve their English skills and enhance their job prospects, but just as many want to get a better understanding of the American mindset." Madden also notes that Spanish students should be open to attending U.S. two-year community colleges: "Particularly for students wanting to develop their English language skills,

community colleges can offer a high-quality learning experience with less stress at a lower cost.”

U.S. Students Studying in Spain

Looking at the reverse side of the student mobility picture, Spain was the third most popular study destination for Americans studying abroad, hosting 9.5 percent of all U.S. study abroad students in the world. Open Doors reported that 25,965 American students studied in Spain in the 2010/11 academic year.

In the 2010/11 academic year, 273,996 American students studied abroad for academic credit, an all-time high. U.S. students studying abroad increased in 17 of the top 25 destination countries. Five percent more students studied in China and 12 percent more students studied in India than in the prior year. Open Doors 2012 reports that the United Kingdom remains the leading destination for American students, followed by Italy, Spain, France and China – which remained the fifth largest host destination for the fifth year. Almost 55% of U.S. students studied in Europe, though there were significant increases in the number of Americans studying in several “non-traditional” destinations outside Europe: Brazil, China, Costa Rica, India, and South Korea, as well as within Europe: Bulgaria, Finland, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia. More Americans also studied in some of the top European destinations, with nine percent more studying in Italy, and smaller increases in study abroad to Austria, Germany, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

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Spanish students interested in studying in the United States can contact Kara Madden, the Educational Advisor for the [U.S.-Spain Fulbright Commission](#) for general information about study abroad programs, as well as some of the specific programs managed by the Fulbright Commission. Information is also available on [Twitter](#) (EducationUSA Spain / @edUSASpain) and [Facebook](#) (EducationUSA Spain).

The Open Doors Report is published by the Institute of International Education, the leading not-for-profit educational and cultural exchange organization in the United States. IIE has conducted an annual statistical survey of the international students in the United States since 1919, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972. Open Doors also reports on numbers of international scholars at U.S. universities; international students enrolled in pre-academic Intensive English Programs; and on U.S. students studying abroad. A full press kit and further details on the Open Doors 2012 surveys and their findings is on the [Open Doors website](#), and the full 120 page report can be ordered for \$69.95 from [IIE Books](#).

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State leads a wide range of academic, professional, and cultural exchanges that include approximately 40,000 participants annually, including the Fulbright Fellowships and Scholarships and the International Visitor Leadership Program, with the goal of increasing mutual understanding and respect between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. ECA sponsors the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarships for U.S. undergraduates with financial need, administered by IIE, and also manages the [EducationUSA](#) network of advising offices, providing information to students around the world who wish to study in the United States. For more information on the Department of State's educational and cultural exchange activities, visit www.exchanges.state.gov.

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