BRITISH COUNCIL

Research

Market Intelligence Brief

India

Contents

1 Executive Summary

India is one of the world's major emerging powers. Its economy was the sixth largest in the world in 2021, similar in size to major western economies such as the UK and France. Looking ahead, it is expected to be the fastest growing major economy over the coming years, propelling it to become the third largest economy by 2030, only behind the US and China. With an estimated population of 1.38bn in 2020, India is the second most populated country and alone accounts for almost one-fifth of the global under 25 population. By 2027, it is expected to overtake China and become the most populous country, making it an increasingly influential player in economic and demographic terms on the world stage.

Given the sheer scale of its population, India has one of the largest education systems in the world. According to UNESCO, in 2020 there were more than 290m enrolments in its education system, across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels combined. However, rising levels of domestic demand, alongside historic underfunding of education has created a range of challenges within India's education system. High dropout rates have led to low levels of education attainment, and high student-teacher ratios negatively impacts on the teaching and learning experience throughout the system. According to the QS Higher Education System Strength rankings, India ranks 26th out of 50 countries analysed. Within the scoring framework, India records the second lowest score of all countries analysed in terms of the "Access" indicator, which measures the chances of gaining a place at a world-class university. Indeed, India currently has just eight universities ranked in the global top 500, compared to China with 26, including six in the top 100. However, in July 2020, a new National Education Policy (NEP 2020) was approved, with the aim of transforming India into a vibrant knowledge hub through the implementation of systemic and institutional improvements to regulation, governance and promotion of multidisciplinary academics and research in Indian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The NEP reaffirms the longstanding aspiration to spend 6 per cent of GDP as public investment in education, though actual expenditure has historically fallen short of this target, estimated at just 3.1 per cent of GDP in 2021/22.

After China, India is the world's second largest sender of internationally mobile tertiary students, sending a total of around 460,000 students in 2019. Large numbers of students travel from India to the traditional English-speaking host markets each year, including the US, UK, Australia and Canada, with these four countries alone accounting for over 70 per cent of Indian outbound students in 2019, according to UNESCO.

After several years of decline between 2010/11 and 2016/17, the volume of Indian students enrolled in UK HEIs has grown very strongly in recent years, including during the Covid-19 pandemic, primarily due to the announcement that the Graduate Route would be reintroduced in summer 2021. In 2020/21, there were a total of 82,260 Indian students enrolled in UK institutions, an almost fivefold increase on the level seen in the 2016/17 academic year, underlining the phenomenal resurgence of India as a major origin market of international students in the UK.

Over the last decade, India has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world. The economy experienced a sharp contraction in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but growth prospects for the future remain bright, which will underpin significant growth in middle-income

households. Given its favourable demographic outlook, continuing pace of urbanization and expanding middle class, continued strong growth in Indian outbound student mobility is expected over the medium term. However, despite the positive economic outlook, Oxford Economics forecasts that by 2030 India's GDP per capita will be around US$5,340 (current prices). While this represents strong growth from the current position, it will remain well below the Emerging Asia average of around US$14,565 in 2030, underlining the significant degree of catch-up still required.

At present, India is the UK's 15th largest market for transnational education (TNE), with 8,465 enrolments on UK TNE programmes in India during the 2020/21 academic year. However, there is considerable scope for growth given recent and forthcoming regulatory changes. Details of revised, less restrictive, UGC guidelines for the development of joint, dual and twinning degree programmes were released in May 2022, though TNE models such as franchise, validation and distance / online leaning remain outside the regulatory framework. Also, according to NEP 2020, selected foreign universities from around the world will be enabled to operate in India, and UGC is working on drafting the necessary regulations, which will likely not require parliamentary approval. The Indian government recently announced that the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar could act as a base for foreign universities in India. A recent survey from the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) indicates that several universities from the US, UK, Australia and Canada are seriously considering India as a destination for establishing an international branch campus.

In May 2021, the UK and India announced the '2030 Roadmap for India-UK future relations', which is a broad and wide-ranging agreement to increase collaboration between the two countries across a wide range of areas, including education. The plan specifically states the aim of increasing cooperation on research, developing a mutual recognition of qualifications, along with an array of initiatives aiming to facilitate the movement of students and professional skilled workers between the two countries. As part of the agreement, both countries have agreed to continue collaboration on the UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), initiated in 2006 with the aim of strengthening education and research collaboration between the UK and India.

2 Introduction

This report was produced by the British Council's *Insight and Engagement* team, with external research support provided by Oxford Economics.[1] This report is designed to provide UK education institutions with unparalleled data, insight and analysis to support their international education strategies, recruitment activities and partnership development work. The report is also targeted at a UK and Indian policy maker audience, by highlighting opportunities and barriers to education and research cooperation that exist between the two countries.

Using the latest data from the most reliable sources, this Market Intelligence Brief represents a window onto India's education system and student population, as well as the economic and demographic factors, and policy priorities and developments that shape the country's international education outlook. The report examines various aspects related to the internationalisation of India's education system – including student mobility, transnational education progammes and research collaboration – and highlights national level education projects and partnerships between the UK and India.

The information contained in this report is based primarily on desk-based research and data analysis, supplemented with insight and context provided by British Council colleagues on the ground in India, coordinated via our South Asia Regional Insights Hub.

While the British Council makes every effort to ensure that the information provided in the report is accurate and up to date, the British Council makes no warranty (whether express or implied) and accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the report. The British Council does not assume any legal liability, whether direct or indirect, arising in relation to reliance on the report. Any references to third party organisations in this report are not an endorsement by the British Council of those organisations.

Comments, queries and suggestions in relation to this report are welcome and may be submitted to Sandeepa Sahay, South Asia Regional Insights Hub lead at email sandeepa.sahay@britishcouncil.org

[1] www.oxfordeconomics.com/

3 Macro Environment

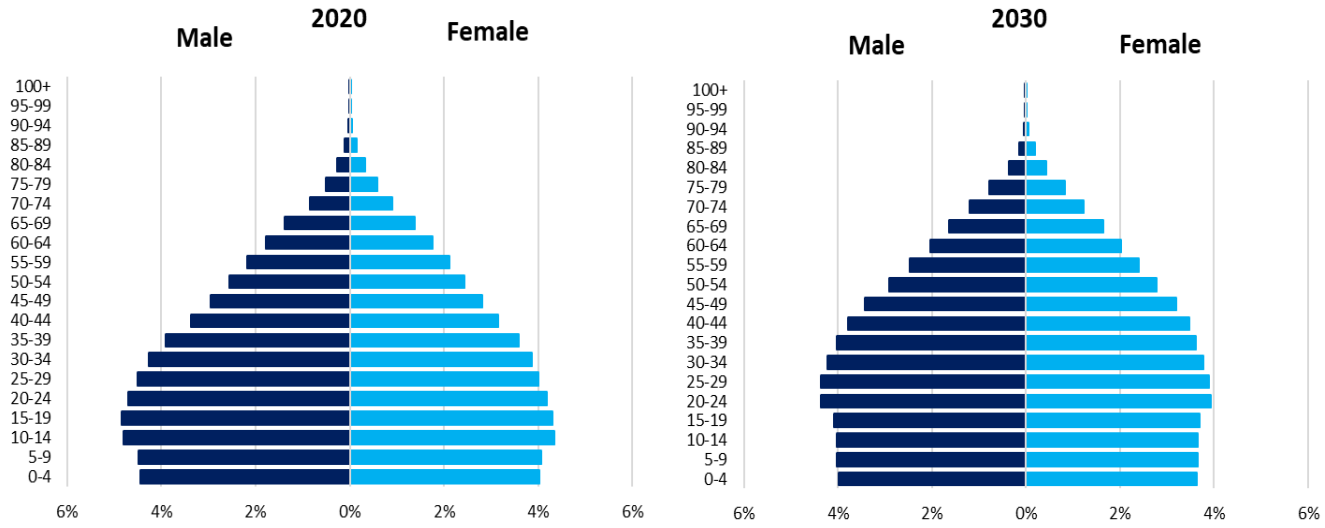
3.1 People

After almost doubling in population in just 40 years, India is now the second most populated country in the world and is home to one in every six people on the planet. Its population of 1.38bn in 2020 was just marginally behind China (1.44bn) and is more than four times larger than the next largest country in the world, the United States.[2]

The country is made up of 28 states and nine union territories which vary considerably in terms of size and prosperity. The largest state, Uttar Pradesh, is situated in the north of the country and has an estimated population of over 200m, which would make it the fifth largest country in the world. By contrast, Sikkim is the smallest state, with a population of around 0.7m.[3]

Looking ahead, although population growth in India is expected to slow considerably over the coming decades, India is expected to overtake China by 2027 and become the most populous country in the world, with a total population of 1.50bn expected by 2030, according to the United Nations Population Division.

Figure 1: India's population pyramid, 2020 and 2030



Source: UN Population Division

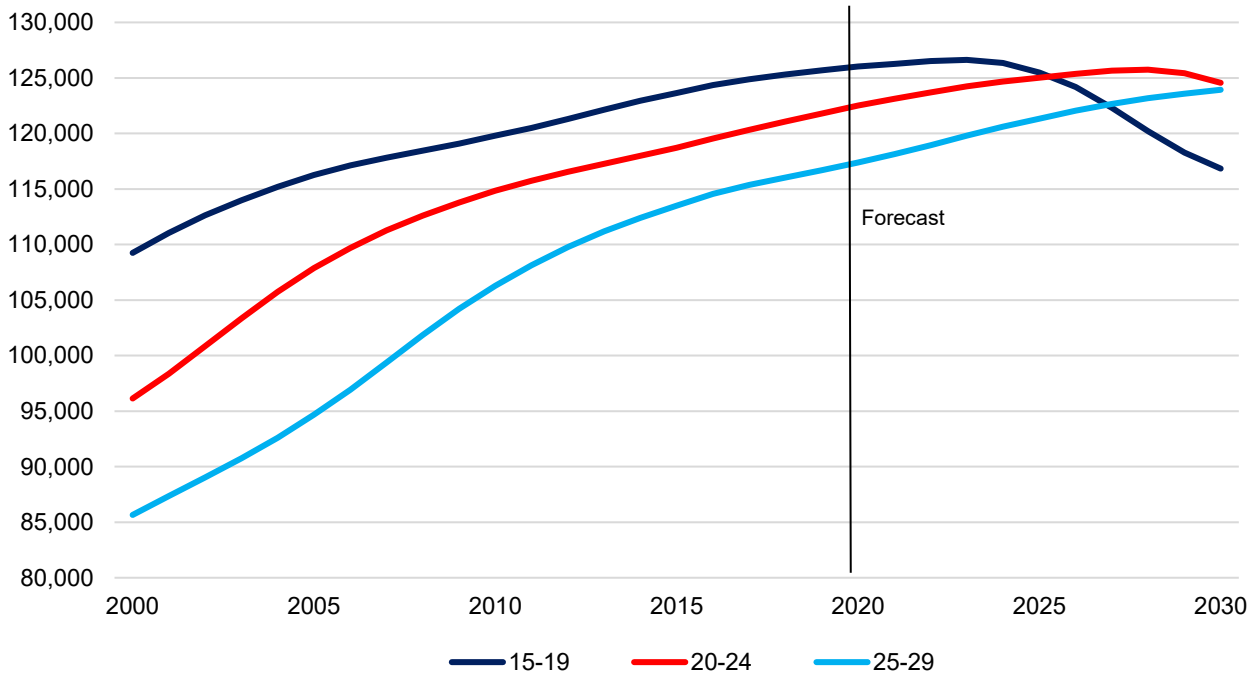
Equally remarkable as the size of the population in India is its age profile. With a median age of just 29[4], around 45 per cent of the population is under the age of 25 and indeed India alone accounts for almost one-fifth of the global under 25 population. However, according to the United

[2] World Population Prospects, *United Nations Population Division*
[3] Population of India, *IndiaCensus.net*
[4] Median age, *CIA World Factbook*

Nations, India's under 25 population peaked around ten years ago and with the country's fertility rate expected to continue to decline in the years ahead, the share of the population aged under 25 is expected to fall to around 39 per cent by 2030.

But while the scale and youthfulness of the population provides a significant economic opportunity for the country, low labour force participation rates[5] and low levels of education attainment within the general population have historically limited the contribution of population growth to economic growth within the country.

Figure 2: India's student age population (000s)



Source: UN Population Division

In 2020, it was estimated that only around 35 per cent of the Indian population lived in urban areas. While this is considerably below the global average rate of 56 per cent and the lower-middle income country average of 42 per cent, India's urbanisation rate is expected to increase considerably in the coming decades, with the urban population expected to outstrip the rural population by the mid-2040s.[6]

India is extremely diverse in terms of language and religion. In the 2011 census, there were 121 languages spoken by 10,000 or more people, with many more spoken by smaller numbers of people across the country. According to the 2011 census, around 44 per cent of the total population said that Hindi was their mother tongue, while 129 million Indians spoke English.[7]

[5] Labour force participation rates would be considerably higher if subsistence agriculture workers were included in official data
[6] World Urbanisation Prospects, *United Nations Population Division*

[7] Census 2011, *CensusIndia.gov.in*

According to the Education First English Proficiency Index, India ranks 48th out of 112 countries analysed and has "moderate proficiency". Compared to regional peers, India ranks sixth out of 24 countries in Asia, slightly ahead of China and only behind wealthier, more developed economies in the region such as Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea, as well as Philippines.[8]

According to the 2011 census, India has a majority Hindu population (79 per cent in 2011), with the remainder comprising of Muslims (14 per cent), and Christians (2 per cent), as well as adherents of other religions including Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism.

The census was due to be updated in 2021 but was postponed due the Covid-19 pandemic. The Indian government is yet to confirm an updated schedule, with the census now unlikely to happen until late 2022 at the earliest.

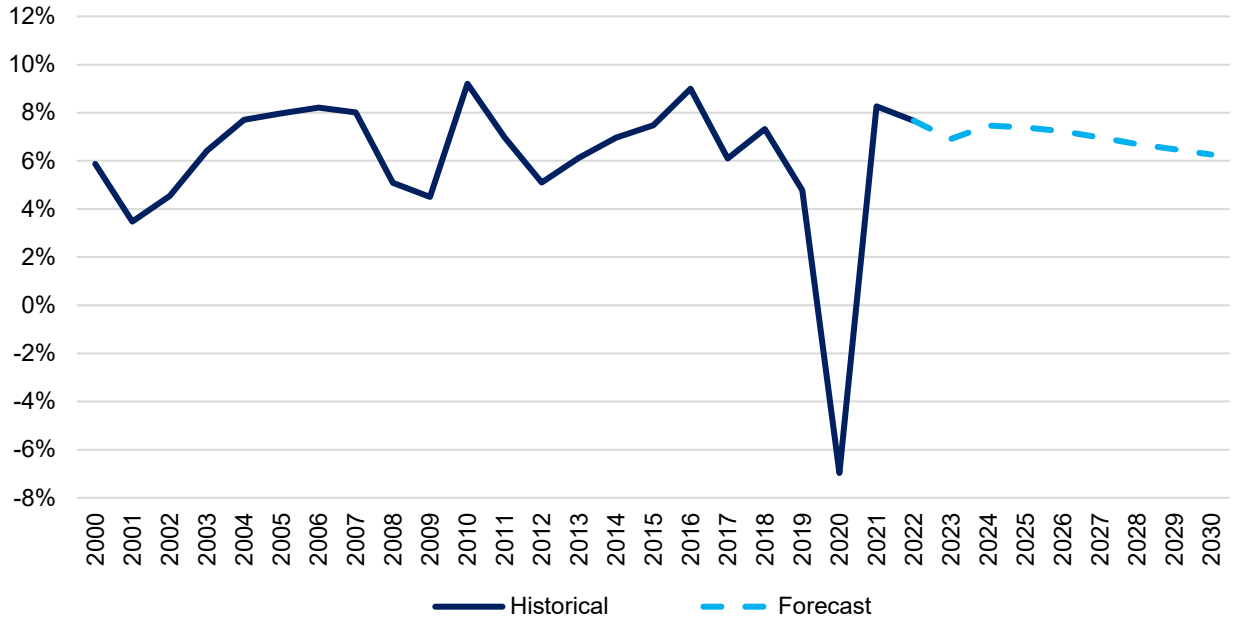
3.2 Economy

The 1991 economic reforms unshackled India from slow growth, with the economy steadily picking up over the following two decades. Average GDP growth was around 8 per cent between 2005 and 2007, supported by strong domestic demand, before falling to 5 per cent in the wake of the global financial crisis. But the new national accounts data, introduced in early 2015, showed India's growth rising to 7 per cent and propelled the country into the economic "fast lane" alongside China. The trickle-down effect from high headline growth has however been weak. This is because services – the fastest-growing sector in the Indian economy since the 1990s – accounts for only around one-third of total employment. Agriculture accounts for more than 40 per cent, despite growing at an average rate of 3 per cent per year since 1990. India's GDP per capita was just US$1,885 (current prices) in 2020, compared to US$6,555 for emerging Asia as a whole, with India currently classed as a lower-middle income country by the World Bank.[9]

India is often considered to be the poster child for developing countries. This is based on its success in achieving high growth rates, despite almost skipping the industrialisation phase of economic development. The share of agriculture in India's real GDP has fallen from around 52 per cent in 1950 to 15 per cent in 2020. This has been matched by a steady rise in the share of services, while manufacturing's share has stagnated at around 15 per cent since the 1970s. There remains however an ambition to grow the manufacturing sector through the Make in India initiative which was introduced in 2014, with the aim of creating world-class infrastructure, minimising red tape, promoting innovation-friendly policies and improving the ease of doing business in the country. To date, the success of the initiative has been limited, with the manufacturing share of Indian GDP falling well short of the 25 per cent target by 2022.

[8] English Proficiency Index, *English First*
[9] The World by Income, *World Bank*

Figure 3: India's real GDP growth



Source: Haver Analytics / Oxford Economics

Economic growth in India was recorded at 4.5 per cent in 2019, the slowest pace seen since the global financial crisis in 2009. Alongside a global economic slowdown, the implementation of major economic reforms including the unified tax system and demonetisation, contributed to the relatively weak growth performance during the year.

Following the marked slowdown seen in 2019, the Indian economy was particularly hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. The economy contracted significantly in mid-2020, before showing tentative signs of recovery by the end of the year, with an overall GDP decline of 6.5 per cent recorded for the year. Since it gained independence in 1947, Indian GDP has declined only four times, the last being in 1979. As such, the sharp decline in economic output in 2020 was the largest in the country's history, with the contraction approximately twice as severe as the global average impact from the pandemic (-3.4 per cent).[10]

While the headline GDP contraction shows the scale of the Covid-19 impact at an aggregate level, the economic ramifications had a disproportionately large impact on the poorest households in India. Microdata from the largest private survey in India, CMIE's 'Consumer Pyramids Household Survey' (CPHS), show that rural poverty increased by 9.3 percentage points and urban poverty by over 11.7 percentage points year-on-year from December 2019 to December 2020. Further, analysis by Pew Research Centre estimates that the pandemic pushed 75m more people in India into poverty. From 2011 to 2019, the number of poor people in India was estimated to have dropped from 340m to 78m. That number would have fallen further in 2021 to 59m without the pandemic but is instead projected to rise to 134m.[11]

[10] Oxford Economics
[11] Covid pandemic pushes 75 million more people into poverty in India, *CNBC.com*

After the slowdown in 2019 and large contraction in 2020, India's economy bounced-back strongly in 2021 with estimated growth of 8.1 per cent, with GDP returning to its pre-pandemic peak level by the end of the year. Growth is expected to ease slightly to 7.3 per cent in 2022, with growth expected to settle at around 6.5-7 per cent in the medium term according to Oxford Economics' latest forecasts, which will see India retain its place as one of the fastest growing emerging economies globally over the next decade. By contrast, the recovery in employment levels within India is expected to be somewhat more muted, with employment not expected to return to its pre-pandemic peak level for several years.

At sectoral level, services has been the fastest growing broad sector over the last decade, ahead of the manufacturing and agriculture sectors, with particularly fast-paced growth seen in the IT services sub-sector. Over the next decade, the IT sector will continue to be amongst the fastest growing services sub-sectors, alongside the rebounding accommodation and catering sector as the pandemic subsides, according to Oxford Economics. Meanwhile, the pharmaceuticals sector has been the fastest growing manufacturing sub-sector over the last decade, recording double-digit annual growth on average since 2010. Indeed, India is the largest provider of generic drugs globally, with the domestic pharmaceutical industry including a network of 3,000 drug companies and 10,500 manufacturing units. Comparatively low production costs, fast-paced economic growth and government policy support for the sector are expected to contribute to continued strong growth and export earnings for the sector in future.[12]

The fast-paced economic growth outlook for India over the next decade is expected to underpin a significant expansion of middle-income households within the country. In 2020, there were an estimated 4.3m households with an income of US$35-70,000 in India, which is expected to more than triple to 13.5m households by 2030, which should act as strong driver of continued growth in outbound student mobility from the country over the next decade. India's GDP per capita is also expected to see strong growth in the period to 2030, rising to around US$5,340 (current prices) by 2030 from US$1,885 in 2020. However, despite this fast-paced growth, even by 2030 India's GDP per capita is expected to be well below the Emerging Asia average of around US$14,565 in 2030, which underlines the significant degree of catch-up still required.

Income distribution varies markedly across India, with annual per capita income in 2019 ranging from INR 436,000 in the western state of Goa to INR 45,000 in the eastern state of Bihar[13]. Much of the East and Northeast regions of India are relatively poor, whereas the South and West of India are relatively wealthy, with all seven states in these regions having a higher per capita income than the national average. However, demand for study abroad may be better assessed at city level as opposed to state level, with tier 1 cities (and increasing tier 2 cities) generally considered as offering most potential for recruiting international students.

Since economic liberalisation in 1991, the Indian government has eased the country's investment policies and India has become a major recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), ranking as the fifth largest recipient globally in 2020, according to UNCTAD. Singapore (34 per cent) and the US (27 per cent) were the largest source markets for FDI inflows to India in FY2020-21, with the

[12] Indian Pharmaceutical Industry, *IBEF.org*
[13] Net State Product per capita, Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2019

IT and construction sectors attracting the largest inflows. At state level, the largest FDI inflows were to Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka.[14]

Throughout 2021, the Indian rupee's valuation remained relatively stable, trading at around 74 rupee per US$ and around 100 rupee per GBP. Looking ahead, according to Oxford Economics, the currency should benefit from India's relative growth outperformance in the medium term and should continue to attract robust capital inflows. However, the rupee is expected to depreciate moderately against the dollar and pound over the long run, given the inflation differential between the economies.

While economic growth in India is expected to remain comparatively strong over the next decade, it is important to note that there has been a significant Covid-19 "scarring" impact on the Indian economy. Indeed, despite having one of the most stringent lockdowns globally in 2020, India's direct fiscal response to the pandemic amounted to just 2.5 per cent of GDP, with the lion's share of the fiscal package earmarked for liquidity and financing support schemes. Fiscal constraints limit the ability of the government to keep bolstering investment trends forever. Consequently, investment is expected to remain around 8 per cent below the pre-pandemic baseline even by 2025.

3.3 Government and education policy

India has a federal form of government with division of power and responsibilities distributed at three levels – national, state and local bodies - under the provisions of its constitution. This means that each level has its own jurisdiction in matters of legislation, taxation and administration in governance and service provision to citizens.

The distribution of legislative powers between the union and states on different subjects is in line with the three lists of the constitution: the union or central list, state list and concurrent list. Education is a concurrent subject and under the provisions, both national and state governments have powers to legislate, finance, design and implement programmes. The overall direction of the education policy, governing tenets and principles are set out by the central government and within this framework the state governments formulate their state policy and plans. The state governments are mainly responsible for policy implementation and most education provision takes place at this level.

The Ministry of Education is the top-level body of the country which formulates national education policy and issues guidelines on national education schemes, missions and programmes at the national level. It carries out these functions through two departments - the Department of School Education and Literacy and the Department of Higher Education.

At the state level, the Department of Education works as the top-level administrative body which is branched into Directorates of Education to manage different verticals created by the state. These are supported by district and block level education offices, state level boards, councils and agencies. The local bodies also run schools in many states.

[14] India – an attractive destination for foreign investments, *IBEF.org*

More than three decades after its last National Education Policy (NEP) was passed in 1986, a new and updated policy was approved in July 2020[15]. The policy is based on the pillars of "access, equity, quality, affordability, accountability" and aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge hub through the implementation of systemic and institutional improvements to regulation, governance and promotion of multidisciplinary academics and research in Indian HEIs. Key highlights of the NEP include:

School Education

Restructuring school curriculum: The NEP recommends that the existing structure of school education should be changed to make it more relevant to the needs of students at different stages of their development. The current 10+2 structure of school education will be redesigned into a 5+3+3+4 design comprising: (i) five years of foundational stage (for ages 3 to 8), (ii) three years of preparatory stage (for ages 8 to 11 or classes three to five), (iii) three years of middle stage (for ages 11 to 14 or classes six to eight), and (iv) four years of secondary stage (for ages 14 to 18 or classes 9 to 12).

Achieving foundational literacy and numeracy: A large proportion of the students currently enrolled in elementary school in India have not attained foundational literacy and numeracy. As such, the NEP recommends that every student should attain foundational literacy and numeracy by grade three. To achieve this goal, a National Mission on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be setup under the Ministry of Education. All state governments must prepare implementation plans to achieve these goals by 2025.

Addressing high dropout rates: The Right to Education Act, 2009, has been successful in achieving near universal enrolment in elementary education in India. However, analysis of gross enrolment ratios in school education by grade shows that enrolment ratios decline significantly at higher grades, indicating high dropout rates from the schooling system. Dropout rates are highest amongst various socio-economically disadvantaged groups, with the NEP recommending the creation of special education zones in areas with a large proportion of disadvantaged children.

School regulation: The NEP recommends that the Department of School Education should only be involved in policy making and overall monitoring of the schooling system and should not be involved in the regulation of schools. An independent State School Standards Authority is recommended for each state, which would set basic uniform standards for public and private schools, with a self-regulation or accreditation system to be instituted for schools.

Higher Education

Increasing gross enrolment ratio: The NEP sets the ambitious target of reaching a gross tertiary enrolment ratio of 50 per cent in higher education by 2035, from 29.4 per cent in 2020. Given the logistical and infrastructural challenges posed by the booming youth population, the NEP advocates the use of distance learning and online programmes to expand access to the higher education system.

[15] National Education Policy 2020

International collaboration and partnerships: Selected global universities will be permitted to operate in India, facilitated by a legislative framework which would give the foreign universities exemptions from regulatory and governance norms on par with Indian universities. At the same time, top Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries.

Restructuring of institutions: All higher education institutions will be restructured into three categories: (i) research universities focusing equally on research and teaching, (ii) teaching universities focusing primarily on teaching, and (iii) degree granting colleges primarily focused on undergraduate teaching. All such institutions will gradually move towards full autonomy - academic, administrative, and financial. All HEIs should eventually be transformed into large multidisciplinary universities and colleges with 3,000 or more students. By 2030, there should be one multidisciplinary HEI in, or near every district.

Regulation: The regulatory structure of higher education in India will be overhauled to ensure that the distinct functions of regulation, accreditation, funding and setting academic standards are performed by separate, independent bodies. This will minimise conflict of interest and eliminate concentration of power.

Vocational education: International benchmarking and comparison reveals that India is significantly behind many other countries in terms of the uptake of vocational education courses. The NEP recommends that vocational education should be integrated in all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next ten years.

Online and digital education: This is identified as a key area of focus in the NEP, both in terms of facilitating the continued provision of high-quality education when in person teaching is not possible, as observed during the Covid-19 pandemic, and also as a means by which to expand access to education across the country. Indeed, in the Union Budget 2022/23 PM Modi announced the creation of a National Digital University which he believes can “completely eliminate the problem of shortage of seats” within the Indian higher education system at present. India currently has two digital universities. The first was set up in Kerala by upgrading the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIITM-K), while the second was set up in Jodhpur.

Education sector funding

Education funding: The NEP reaffirms the aspiration to spend 6 per cent of GDP as public investment in education. This has been a long-standing target, originally announced in the first NEP launched in 1968. In 2021/22, actual public expenditure on education (central and state) is estimated at 3.1 per cent of GDP.

Research and development funding: Compared to developed economies around the world, Indian expenditure on research and development is low. The NEP recommends setting up an independent National Research Foundation (NRF) for funding and facilitating quality research in India, with GBP 5bn made available for the NRF over a five-year period from 2021.

4 Domestic Education Environment

4.1 Overview

Given the sheer scale of its population, India has one of the largest education systems in the world. According to UNESCO, in 2020 there were more than 290m enrolments in its education system, across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels combined.[16] Public education is free for all children aged 6-14 and significant progress has been made over recent decades in raising enrolment rates. In the primary education sector, the gross enrolment ratio has increased from 94.3 per cent in 2000 up to 99.9 per cent by 2020. Meanwhile, in the secondary education sector, the gross enrolment ratio has increased from 44.9 per cent in 2000 up to 75.5 per cent by 2020.

However, while strong progress has been made in raising enrolment rates over the past decades, high dropout rates in the secondary education sector remain a significant issue for the government to address. According to the 2019/20 UDISE+ report, the secondary education dropout rate was around 16 per cent, with about 30 per cent of students not making the transition from secondary to senior secondary level.[17] Linked to this and to the legacy of much lower enrolment ratios in previous decades, according to the OECD, 67 per cent of 25-34 year-olds in India have not attained upper secondary education, which is much higher than the OECD average (15 per cent) and also higher than in comparable emerging economies including Indonesia (44 per cent), Mexico (46 per cent) and China (64 per cent).[18]

Alongside the low education attainment rates, another key issue within the Indian education system is a shortage of teachers. According to the World Bank, in primary education, the pupil-teacher ratio in India in 2017 was 33, which was significantly above the global average of 23 and was also above the average for other lower-middle income countries, at 29. Similarly, in secondary education, the pupil-teacher ratio in 2018 was 29, compared to a global average of 17 and an average of 22 for lower-middle income countries.[19]

Partly explaining the low education attainment rates within the Indian population and shortage of teachers is the issue of historic underfunding of the education system. Since the country's first NEP was published in 1968, the country has stated the aim of spending 6 per cent of the country's GDP on the education system. However, according to India Budget Economic Survey 2021-22the recently published, public (central and state) expenditure on education in India is estimated to have ranged between 2.8 and 3.1 per cent of GDP in recent years, which is well below target and lower than in most other developing and developed economies.[20]

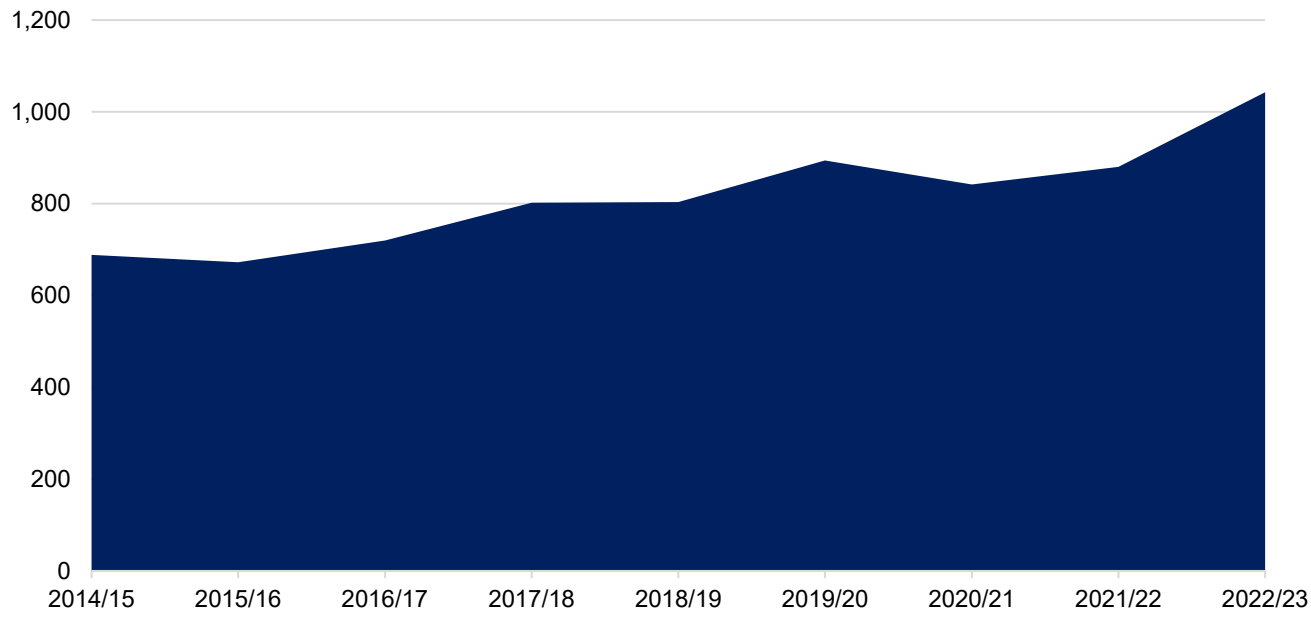
In February 2022, the Central government's education budget for 2022/23 was announced, rising above the INR 1 trillion threshold for the first time, equivalent to just over GBP 10bn. This

[16] UIS Statistics, *UNESCO*
[17] Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), *Ministry of Education*
[18] Education at a Glance 2021, *OECD*
[19] World Bank Open Data, *World Bank*
[20] Economic Survey 2021-22, India Budget, Chapter 10, page 352

represents an increase of 18 per cent compared to the 2021/22 budget allocation.[21] While this does not include state spending on education – which accounts for most of the spending at school level – overall public expenditure on education is still expected to fall well short of the 6 per cent of GDP target.

The 2022/23 Central government's education budget is broken down by GBP 6 bn for school education and GBP 4 bn for higher education.

Figure 4: India's central government education budget (INR billion)



Source: India Budget 2022/23

4.2 Early years, primary, secondary

In 2019/20, according to the UDISE+ report, there were around 1.5 million schools in India. Around two-thirds are run by the union Government and state Governments. Meanwhile, 84,000 are government-aided, 337,000 are unaided private schools while 53,000 are run by other organisations and institutions.[22]

The Right to Education Act of 2009 mandated that compulsory education in India begins at the age of six at primary school, which typically uses the regional language for instruction. It also recommended that government made appropriate arrangements for free pre-schooling for children above age three to prepare them for elementary schooling, however that was not made a legal requirement. As discussed earlier, NEP 2020 makes pre-schooling an integral part of the formal schooling system by modifying the basic 10+2 structure of school education to a new

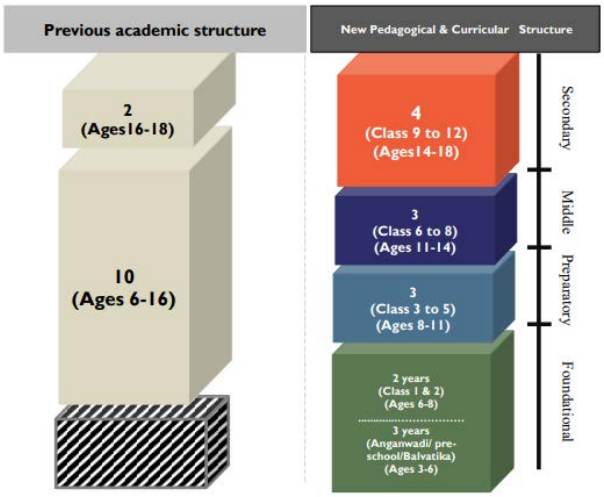
[21] Union Budget 2022/23, *IndiaBudget.gov.in*

[22] Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), *Ministry of Education*

pedagogical and curricular format of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18. It envisages that through universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education, all students entering grade 1 will be school ready by 2030.

Regarding the restructuring of the school system proposed in NEP 2020, the foundational stage will consist of five years in two parts, that is, three years of pre-school plus two years in primary school in grades 1-2 covering ages 3-8. This will be followed by the preparatory stage of three years (grades 3-5 covering ages 8-11) and then the middle stage comprising three years of education (grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14) and finally the secondary stage comprising four years in two phases (grades 9-10 in the first which is currently called lower/general secondary and upper/senior secondary for grades 11-12 in the second phase) covering ages 14-18.

Figure 5: Restructured school system



Source: NEP 2020

There are two tracks in upper secondary schools: vocational/technical and general academic. The latter is further divided into humanities, commerce, and science streams. The exact subjects on which students can focus on is dependent on the school and examination board. According to UNESCO, 3.2 per cent of secondary school students were enrolled in vocational programmes in 2020, up from 1.3 per cent in 2019.

At the end of upper secondary, students sit a board exam to gain admission to university. Schools are either affiliated to national level or state level assessment bodies. The most common national board exam, called the All-India Senior School Certificate Examination, is administered by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The exam is in English and requires testing in five subjects: one mandatory language and four electives. The second national exam board - Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) tests English as a mandatory subject in addition to three to five electives. Additionally, each state government has their own exam board which they administer as per Ministry of Education rules. More than 500 schools across India also offer Cambridge programmes and qualifications to their students. The Cambridge Pathway curriculum offers flexibility and choice to students and schools, with over 70 subjects

available at Cambridge IGCSE and over 55 subjects offered at Cambridge International AS & A Level, and a choice of three exam series each year.[23]

In March 2022, the UGC announced the introduction of the Central University Entrance Test (CUET), which is now mandatory for undergraduate admission at any of the 45 central universities in India. Thus, Class 12 Board Exam marks will no longer be considered for entrance to these institutions, commencing from the 2022/23 academic year. This follows the NEP 2020 roadmap which envisages the use of entrance exams for university admissions and is meant to level the playing field, as different examination boards may mark students differently.[24]

At school level, vocational programmes are offered in grades nine and ten (lower secondary school), and vocational stream programmes are offered in upper secondary schools. There are also advanced diploma programmes offered at the post-secondary non-tertiary level.

4.3 Technical & vocational education and training

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a concurrent subject in India, meaning that responsibility is shared by the central government and state governments. Along with public institutions, private sector participation is encouraged. According to the National Skills Development Corporation, the challenges in the Indian TVET are twofold – making vocational education aspirational, and integration of the informal sector (which accounts for around 85 per cent of the total Indian workforce) in the skill development ecosystem.[25]

In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 8,997 vocational colleges in India under the remit of the Ministry of Education with an intake of just under 3m. The number of vocational colleges peaked in 2019/20 at 10,990 but has declined in each of the last two years, with the 2021/22 intake at the lowest level seen over the last decade.[26] In addition, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Industrial Training Centres (ITCs) are post-secondary schools providing training in various trades (e.g., mechanics, plumbers, electricians, etc.) under the remit of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and affiliated with the National Council of Vocation Training (NCVT). To enhance employability of trainees graduating from the ITIs (of which there were 15,697 such institutions in 2019) the duration of the first-year curricula was increased from 110 to 160 hours from the 2019/20 academic year.[27] For the size of the country, the number of vocational students in India is small. China, the country with the most comparable population to India, has developed the world's largest vocational education system, with over 28m students by the end of 2019, according to the Ministry of Education. Vocational schools in China offer courses in 1,200 professions and train about 10m professionals each year.[28]

In order to transform the TVET landscape in India, NEP 2020 aims to integrate vocational education into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next

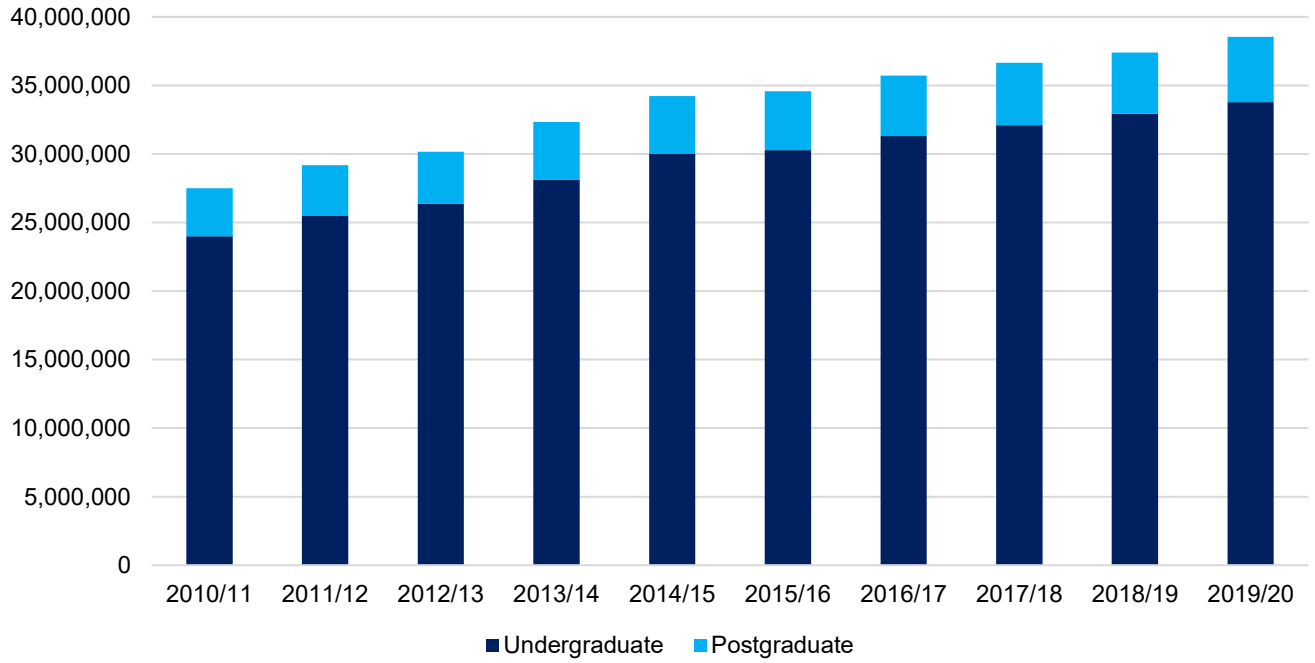
[23] Thousands of students in India receive their March series results, *Cambridge Assessment International Education*
[24] What we know about UGCs common entrance test for undergrad admissions, *The Wire*, March 2022
[25] An Overview of Technical Vocational Education and Training Ecosystem in India, *National Skill Development Corporation*
[26] Statistics, *All India Council for Technical Education*
[27] India has 15,697 ITIs, Uttar Pradesh has the most, *The Economic Times*, Nov 2019
[28] Bright future for vocational education, *China Daily*

decade. By 2025, the aim is that at least 50 per cent of students from school and higher education will have exposure to vocational education. To help facilitate this transition, secondary schools are encouraged to collaborate with industrial training institutes, polytechnics and private sector employers. A National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE) will be constituted by the Ministry of Education which will comprise of experts in vocational education and representatives from across Ministries, in collaboration with industry to oversee this plan. The curriculum for vocational programme will be aligned to the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) to facilitate vertical mobility from school to higher level institutions.

4.4 Higher education

India has one of the world's largest higher education systems, with 1,043 universities, 42,343 colleges and 11,779 standalone institutions at the tertiary level in 2019/20. Total enrolment in higher education was estimated to be in excess of 35 million, with a roughly equal split between males and females. Almost 80 per cent of the students are enrolled in undergraduate level programmes. Meanwhile, around 11 per cent were enrolled in postgraduate programmes and 7 per cent were enrolled in diploma programmes for teacher training, nursing, and technical streams. Only around 0.5 per cent of students were enrolled in Ph.D. programmes.[29]

Figure 6: India's higher education students



Source: AISHE Report 2019-20

The most popular programmes for undergraduates were arts/humanities/social sciences (33 per cent), science (16 per cent), commerce (15 per cent), and engineering and technology (13 per

[29] All India Survey on Higher Education 2019/20, *Ministry of Education*

cent). At postgraduate level, most enrolments are in social sciences (which includes economics) followed by science and at Ph.D. level, engineering and technology is most popular, followed by science. Enrolment ratios, quality of institution infrastructure, and teacher-to-pupil ratios vary widely by state. In 2019, the gross tertiary enrolment ratio ranged from 17 per cent in Assam state in the Northeast to 51 per cent in Tamil Nadu state in the South.

According to the QS Higher Education System Strength rankings, India ranks 26th out of 50 countries analysed. Within the scoring framework, India records the second lowest score of all countries analysed in terms of the "Access" indicator, which measures the chances of gaining a place at a world-class university for residents of the country in question. Indeed, India currently has just eight universities ranked in the global top 500 compared to China which has 26, including six in the top 100.

Distance learning is becoming increasingly popular within the Indian higher education system. In addition to one Central Open University, 14 State Open Universities and one State Private Open University, there are 110 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through both regular and distance mode also. Distance enrolments constituted around 11 per cent of the total enrolment in higher education in 2019/20. The government provides funding support to a number of e-learning platforms (such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, mooKIT and IITBX) which offer massive open online courses (MOOCs) and small private online courses (SPOCS). In February 2020, the Indian government announced that the top 100 Indian institutions will be allowed to offer fully online degrees, lifting regulations that previously limited HEIs to offering only up to 20 per cent of a degree online.

A key constraint to the penetration and future growth of online education in India is the currently limited internet access across the country. Indeed, although there were an estimated 622m internet users in India in 2020, making it the second largest online market in the world after China, still more than half of the Indian population were not active internet users. There is a significant urban-rural divide, with around 67 per cent of the urban population having access to the internet, compared to only 31 per cent of the rural population.[30] The Digital India initiative launched by the government aims to improve online infrastructure across the country and it is projected that by 2025, the number of active internet users in India will have increase to more than 900m.

Aided by the fast-paced expansion of digital infrastructure across the country, online education is experiencing exponential growth in India. The online higher education market alone is expected to grow from 90m individuals in 2020 to 133m individuals by 2025 according to the Bengaluru-based market research firm, RedSeer, with paid users expected to increase from 1.2 per cent to 8.1 per cent of total users over the next five years.[31]

In India, the majority of higher education provision is by the private sector, with almost 80 per cent of education colleges being privately managed. Significant levels of private sector involvement in education provision is welcomed within the sector, because enrolment in public universities is largely concentrated in conventional disciplines (arts and sciences) whereas in private institutions, more students are enrolled in market-driven disciplines (engineering, management, etc.) which may lead to enhanced employment prospects for students. Private providers are typically driven

[30] Internet Adoption in India, *KANTAR*
[31] Online Higher Education Market In India To Grow By 10 Times In Next 5 years, *KalingaTV.com*

by a profit motive, but over the years, the Supreme Court of India has interpreted the nature of educational institutions to be charitable and not for profit. Therefore, supernormal or illegal profits cannot be made by providing education. If a revenue surplus is generated it is to be used by the educational institution for the purpose of its expansion and education development.

Based on the result of a pan Indian student survey commissioned by the British Council during March 2021, higher education tuition fees in India are low by international standards with median annual tuition fees falling within the INR 50,001 to 80,000 (GBP 500 to 800) band, and less than 2 per cent of students paying fees above GBP 2,000 (rising to 3 per cent at private for-profit institutions)[32].

O.P. Jindal Global University is a non-profit global university, established as a philanthropic initiative of its Founding Chancellor. The university was ranked in the top 750 universities in the world in the QS World University Rankings 2022 Edition, making it India's top private university and India's top university dedicated to the social sciences, arts and humanities. Contributing to its success, it is one of the few universities in Asia that maintains a 1:9 faculty-student ratio and appoints faculty members from India and different parts of the world with outstanding academic qualifications and experience.

Another example of a ground-breaking new university in India is Ashoka University. It is a private, non-profit university, and an example of collective public philanthropy in India. Ashoka offers its students a multidisciplinary liberal education, usually defined as one that transcends the boundaries between the arts and sciences and carries a strong emphasis on learning across subjects. Students are admitted purely on merit with scholarships provided based on need. As such, the university has a diverse student population from various backgrounds, and around 50 per cent of the entire student body receive some form of scholarship to fund their studies.

NEP 2020 identifies India’s research capacity as a relative weakness compared to other economies around the world and aims to transform India’s performance in this area through the formation of a National Research Foundation (NRF). The overarching goal of the NRF will be to enable a culture of research to permeate through Indian universities. In particular, the NRF will provide a reliable base of merit-based but equitable peer-reviewed research funding, helping to develop a culture of research in the country through suitable incentives for and recognition of outstanding research, and by undertaking major initiatives to seed and grow research at State Universities and other public institutions where research capability is currently limited. The NRF will competitively fund research in all disciplines. Successful research will be recognized, and where relevant, implemented through close linkages with governmental agencies as well as with industry and private/philanthropic organizations.

[32] Impact of financial resources on higher education choices in India, The British Council, Oct 2021

5 International Education

5.1 Student mobility

According to estimates from UNESCO, India is the world's second largest sender of internationally mobile tertiary students, sending a total of around 460,000 students in 2019, which represented around 7.6 per cent of total global internationally mobile students. China is the long-established leader in terms of the volume of outbound students globally, sending in excess of 1m students for the first time in 2019. However, looking ahead over the next decade, India is expected to close the gap to China and see continued strong growth in outbound student numbers. Indeed, the volume of outbound students from India more than doubled in the five-year period between 2014 and 2019 and this fast-paced growth is likely to continue in the years ahead as the impact of the pandemic subsides. Specifically, favourable demographic projections show that the Indian population will continue to boom, with India expected to overtake China by 2027 and become the most populous country in the world. Further, continued strong economic growth and urbanisation in India is expected in the years ahead, which will underpin sustained expansion of middle-income households, thus increasing the affordability of international education to Indian households.[33] Finally, with access to world class domestic universities expected to remain restricted, growing numbers of Indian students are likely to travel overseas for access to high calibre foreign universities.

India replaced its government-backed education loans system in the 1990's with the current system of commercial bank-driven loans. Public sector banks account for about 90 per cent of all education loans in India and charge a lower, subsidised, rate of interest to students. Banks typically only require collateral for loans above INR 750,000 (GBP 7,500). Loans for study abroad are high-value and secured by a sizeable collateral, usually real estate property.

Because of India's robust school system and English-medium learning, the country is not a major market for UK schools or boarding schools. Thus, for the UK, India remains as nearly exclusively a market for higher education.

Indian students have historically been a leading source of international students for UK universities. However, after surpassing the 40,000 mark in 2009/10 and 2010/11, there was a significant downturn for several years thereafter with consistent year-on-year declines recorded up until 2016/17, when the number of inbound Indian students had declined to 17,715, less than half the peak inflow seen in 2010/11.[34] The sharp decline in Indian students after 2010/11 can be attributed to a tightening of visa rules for international students in 2010 and the withdrawal of the Graduate Route in 2012, according to a report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group.[35]

After showing some signs of recovery in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years, there was a significant jump in Indian students in higher education programmes in the UK in 2019/20, owing

[33] Natural partners: Building a comprehensive UK-India knowledge partnership, Kings College London, Dec 2021
[34] Higher Education Statistics Agency
[35] A Sustainable Future for International Students in the UK, *All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Students*

to the announcement that the Graduate Route would be reintroduced in summer 2021. The number of both undergraduate and postgraduate students almost doubled, with the total reaching 54,415 which far surpassed the previous peak levels seen a decade earlier. Indeed, in 2019/20, India overtook China as the largest net contributor to the UK's growth in recruitment of international students.

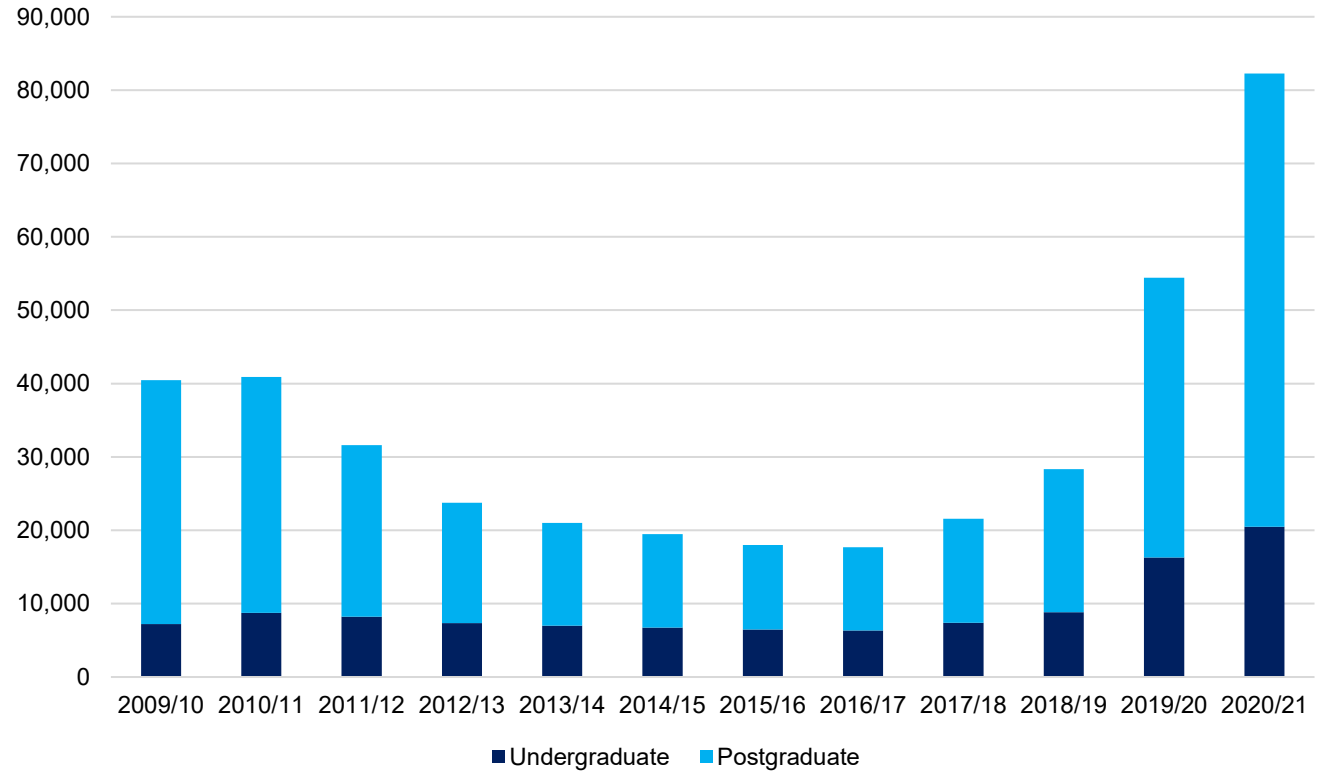
In 2020/21, despite the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic, total Indian inbound international students enrolled in the UK increased remarkably again, by 51 per cent to 82,260, with strong increases seen both in terms of first year students (i.e. new entrants to the UK) and overall enrolments. The sharp uptick and resurgence of Indian students coming to the UK is largely being attributed to the Graduate Route programme, which gives students the freedom to stay in the UK to work or look for work without being sponsored by a company. Undergraduate and postgraduate students can work or look for work after their studies for a period of two years, while doctoral students will be granted three years.

According to the UK Home Office, 80,768 sponsored study visas were issued to main applicants from India in 2021, an increase of +46,507 (+136%) over the total in 2019 before the pandemic, which suggests that the strong growth in Indian students in the UK is set to continue in the years ahead.[36]

Roughly two-thirds of Indian students coming to the UK to study are on postgraduate courses, a ratio that has remained stable over the last decade. Indian postgraduate students may prefer the UK to other destinations due to the shorter duration of master's programmes (one year compared with at least two years in the United States and Canada), reducing overall tuition costs. India and the UK do not have a framework for mutual recognition of qualifications between the two countries. Students who undertake a master's programme in the UK will not be able to apply for Ph.D. programmes in India or work in the Indian public sector, though such degrees are often still recognised by the private sector. However, in December 2020, the UK's Foreign Secretary met the then Union Education Minister of India and initiated the setting up of a joint task force for mutual recognition of qualifications. Subsequently, this was also a part of the Roadmap signed off by the two Prime Ministers in May 2021. The joint taskforce led by the British Council and India's Ministry of Education is making progress on this issue.

[36] Why do people come to the UK? To study. *www.gov.uk*

Figure 7: Indian students in HE programmes in the UK

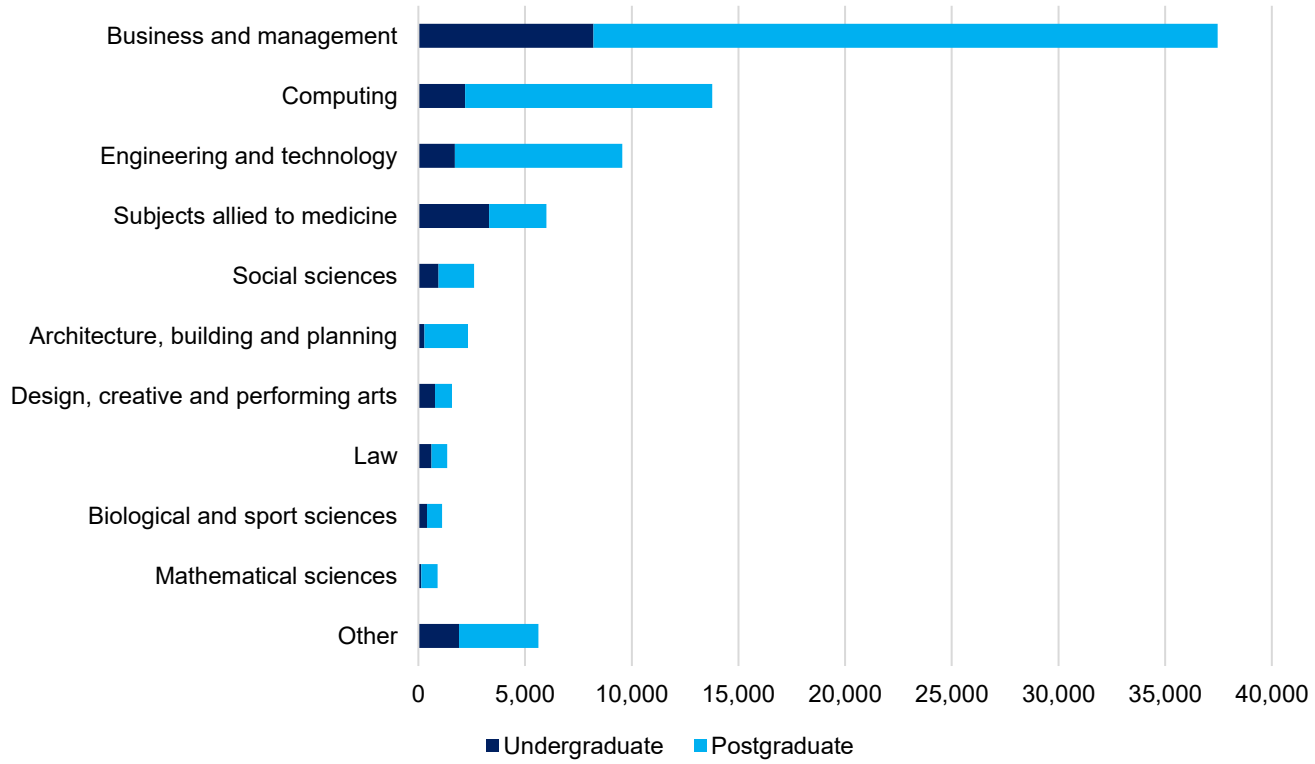


Source: HESA

In terms of subject areas, business and management was by some distance the most popular broad subject area with Indian students, both at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Overall, 37,455 students studied business and management in 2020/21, which represents just over 45 per cent of the overall total. The next most popular subject choices with Indian students were computing (17 per cent of the overall total), engineering and technology (12 per cent) and medicine (7 per cent). Architecture, building and planning is a popular choice at postgraduate level and is the fifth most popular broad subject area but is less popular at undergraduate level, ranking only 11th.

Compared to five years earlier, there has been a large degree of stability in terms of the subject area breakdown of Indian students studying in the UK, with the top five most popular subjects in 2020/21 the same as those identified in 2015/16. However, there have been some interesting shifts within the top five subjects, with the elevenfold increase in Indian students studying computing enabling it to leapfrog engineering and technology and become the second most popular subject by 2020/21. Similarly, the number of Indian students studying subjects allied to medicine increased sixfold between 2015/16 and 2020/21, enabling it to overtake social sciences as the fourth most popular subject.

Figure 8: Subjects studied by Indian HE students in the UK, 2020/21



Source: HESA

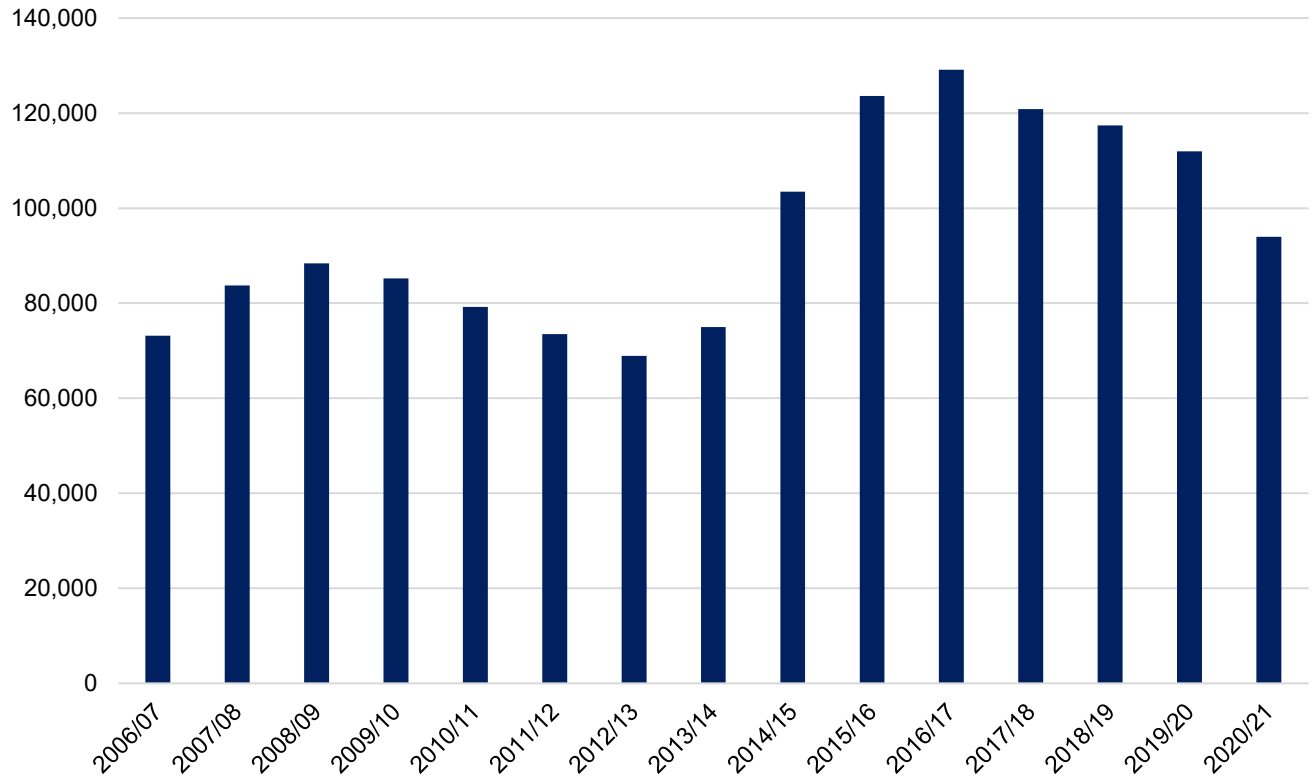
Despite the volatility in the overall number of Indian students enrolled in UK HEIs over the last decade, the number of students studying at Russell Group institutions has been more stable, remaining above 6,000 throughout. After 2010/11, Russell Group enrolments as a share of total enrolments grew consistently year-on-year, reaching a peak of 36 per cent in 2016/17. However, since then, the majority of the growth in Indian students has come from institutions outside the Russell Group, with an increase in enrolments to Russell Group institutions of less than 4,000 between 2016/17 and 2020/21, compared to an increase in total Indian enrolments of almost 65,000 over the same period.

The United States has historically been the top destination market for Indian higher education students, reaching a peak of 129,135 in 2016/17. However, since then, there has been a consistent downward trajectory in Indian enrolments in the US, with the number of enrolments falling to 93,981 in 2020/21, the lowest level seen since 2013/14. Much of the decline has been attributed to the “Trump effect”, an anti-immigration climate, unfavourable political rhetoric and tightened restrictions on H1-B visas. Accentuating the impact from these issues has been the reintroduction of the Graduate Route in the UK, which has played a central role in the strong growth in Indian enrolments in the UK over the same time period.

The decline in Indian enrolments in the US over recent years accelerated significantly in 2020/21 with a contraction of 16 per cent recorded, with the Covid-19 pandemic having a negative impact on student mobility. The decline in Indian enrolments in the US in 2020/21 was closely aligned to

the decline in total international students enrolments in the US and data on Indian student visas indicate that the particularly weak performance in 2020/21 was a 'Covid blip' which is likely to be quickly reversed, according to the US embassy.[37]

Figure 9: Indian HE enrolments in the US



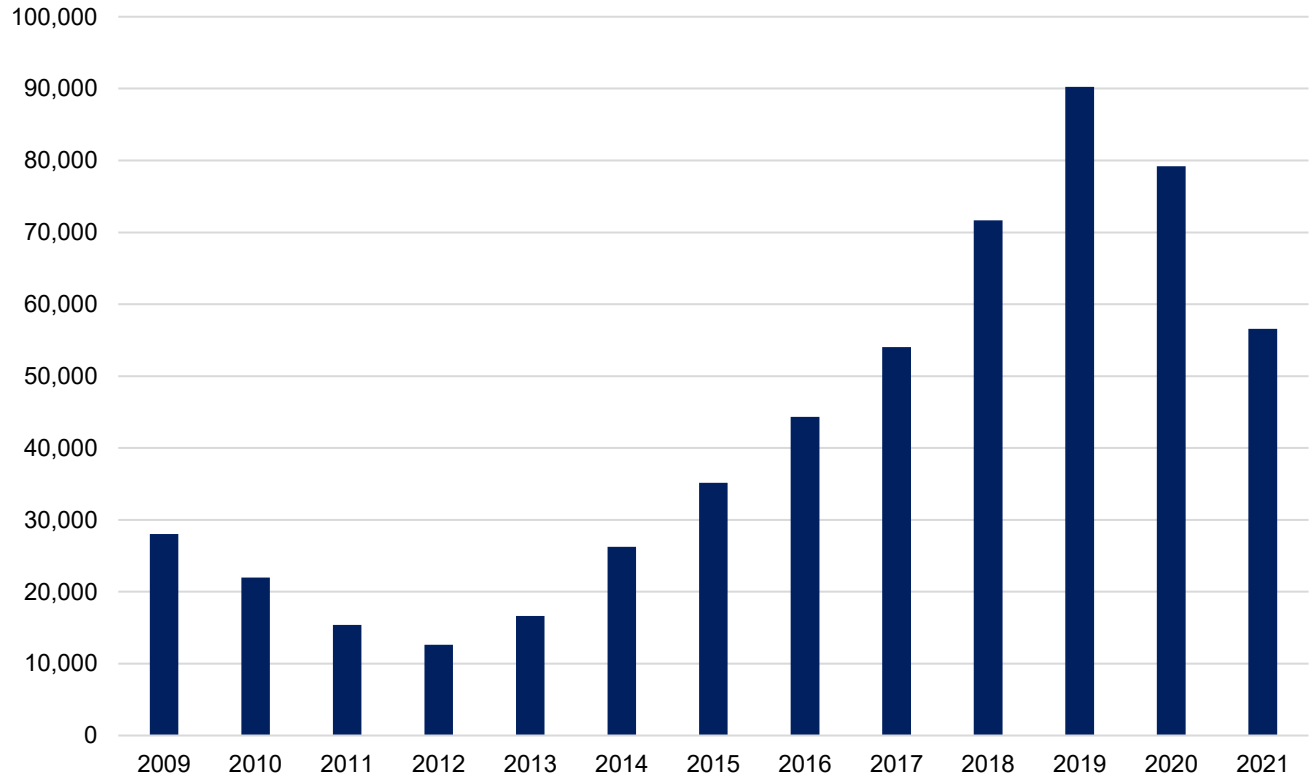
Source: IIE (Note: OPT students excluded)

Indian enrolment in Australian institutions grew significantly between 2012 and 2019, from 12,635 to 90,247. The sharp increase since 2012 came after a period of decline since 2009, primarily as a result of anti-Indian sentiment in Australia. In 2009, a number of hate crimes against Indians – including assaults, robberies, and the stabbing of a taxi driver – led to 4,000 Indian students protesting in Melbourne. It is unclear what motivated the increase in crime, but its impact on student enrolment was dramatic and swift. From 2009 to 2012, Indian student enrolment decreased by approximately 55 per cent. However, after 2012, Indian enrolment in Australia bounced back very strongly, with significant year-on-year increases recorded each year to 2019 due to a concerted effort from Australia to attract more international HE students and take advantage of the large Indian market. Australia's success in the Indian market has been attributed to its consistent post study work policy, alongside a newly introduced set of very attractive scholarships for international students who choose destinations outside of Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney.[38]

[37] Number of Indians studying in US dropped by nearly 13 per cent in 2020-21, *The Economic Times*
[38] 'Post study work policy' attracting more Indian students, says Australian education minister, *The Economic Times*

After peaking at above 90,000 students in 2019, significant declines in students from India were recorded in 2020 and 2021, with the volume of student enrolments down to 56,587 by 2021, a decline of around 37 per cent compared to the 2019 level. This was primarily due to the highly restrictive border control and international travel policies employed by the Australian government after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, new incentives have recently been announced to help reattract international students, including visa fee rebates and relaxed restrictions on allowable working hours, which could help facilitate a return to the pre-pandemic upward trajectory of student flows from India to Australia.[39]

Figure 10: Indian HE enrolments in Australia



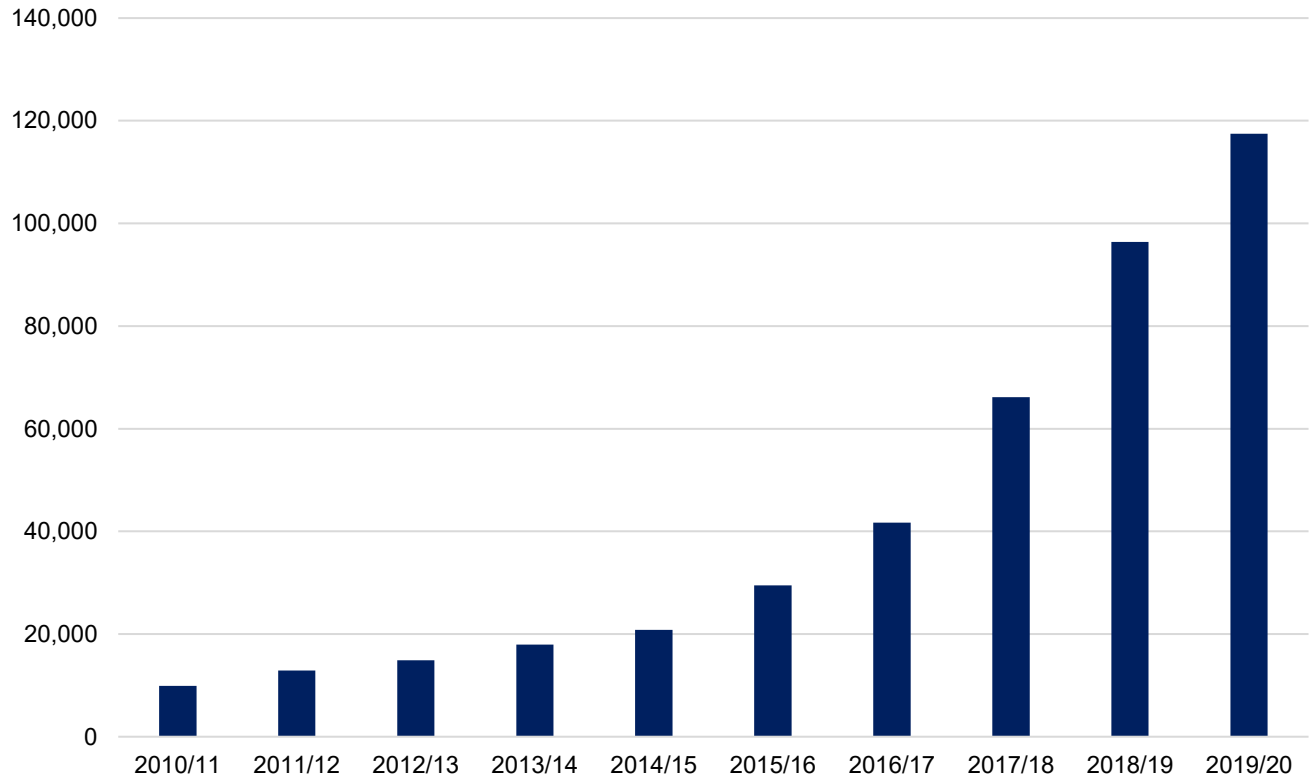
Source: AusTrade

Over the last decade, Indian student enrolment in Canada has grown rapidly. In 2010/11, enrolments stood at just under 10,000, but after consistent year-on-year growth every year since, enrolments reached 117,477 in the 2019/20 academic year, which represents an extremely large increase of almost twelve times compared to 2010/11. Canada's exceptionally strong performance in attracting Indian students over recent years reflects the negative "Trump effect" and anti-immigration rhetoric in the US, and the tightening of visa rules for international students in the UK several years ago. These factors reduced the attractiveness of the US and the UK to prospective Indian students, and allowed Canada, which has simultaneously increased options for students seeking post study work or citizenship, to gain market share at their expense,

[39] COVID halved international student numbers in Australia. The risk now is we lose future skilled workers and citizens, *TheConversation.com*

overtaking the US in 2019/20 as the most popular study abroad destination for Indian students. Data reflecting the impact of the Covid-19 on inbound international students from India to Canada has not been published at the time of writing.

Figure 11: Indian HE enrolments in Canada



Source: StatCan

Apart from the major English-speaking destination countries, UAE is also a popular choice for Indian students. Dubai International Academic City – the free zone in which most of Dubai's international branch campuses are located – reported having a total of 27,500 students registered for the 2018-19 academic year, of which 11,400 had Indian nationality.[40] China is also rising in popularity and Indian medical students are characterised as relatively intrepid with a significant number studying in countries such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine where entrance barriers are low and courses are relatively low cost. In March 2022, thousands of Indian students in Ukraine fled the war there, raising concerns as to if, and when, they might complete their medical courses, given that competition for such courses at public universities in India is fierce.[41]

At present, India is not seen as a major destination for international study, with the total number of foreign students enrolled in higher education at 49,348 in 2019/20. According to AISHE 2019/20, the majority of these students came from neighbouring South Asian countries, namely

[40] Indian student enrolment figures rise across DIAC universities, *Dubai International Academic City*, Feb 2019
[41] India faces medical education crises after Ukraine exodus, *Times Higher Education*, March 2022

Nepal, Afghanistan, and Bhutan, as well as African countries such as Sudan and Nigeria. Almost three-quarters of foreign students in India are enrolled in undergraduate courses, with around 17 per cent enrolled in postgraduate courses. The Indian government are aiming to increase the number of inbound international students and launched the Study in India initiative in 2018, with the aim of attracting 200,000 students by 2023, aided by a generous scholarship scheme.

5.2 Transnational education and distance learning

There are two main central bodies in India that govern the rules and regulations for TNE; the University Grants Commission (UGC), and the All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). Their regulatory frameworks can overlap; in some instances, TNE partnerships between Indian and foreign HEIs may be subject to both bodies, depending on mode of delivery, length of programme, subject area and the status of the Indian institution. Since the release of the NEP, new rules have been drafted by these bodies that could impact TNE.

In May 20202, the UGC released notification guidelines covering the establishment of joint degrees, dual degrees and twinning programmes in partnership with foreign HEIs.[42] The guidelines signal a decisive shift towards lighter touch regulation including a broadening of eligibly criteria for both foreign and Indian institutions. Key changes on the previous guidelines published in 2016 include:

- TNE partnerships in the approved modes of delivery are open to all foreign and Indian HEIs ranked in the top 1,000 in either the QS or THE World University Rankings, with no separate approval required and a minimal supervisory role for the UGC.
- Indian institutions ranked in the top 100 in the university category of NIRF or with a minimum NAAC accreditation score of 3.01 are also eligible under the revised guidelines.
- For Indian HEI's, the earlier requirement to be operational for at least six years or have had at least two batches of students graduating in India at the degree level has been dropped. However, Indian HEIs will need to set up an Office for International Affairs which will function as a nodal point for collaborative activities.
- Dual degree has been added as a new form of collaboration.
- There will be no requirement to seek equivalence for the TNE degrees awarded under these regulations, as they shall be deemed as equivalent to degrees awarded by recognised Indian HEIs.

As per the previous guidelines for joint degrees, students must earn at least 30 per cent of the total credits from each of the Indian and foreign HEIs. For dual degrees, at least 30 per cent of the total credits must be earned from the Indian HEI. The UGC guidelines do not address franchised or validated degrees where a foreign degree is delivered in India through an Indian

[42] Academic collaboration regulations, UGC, May 2022

HEI in its entirety, nor do they address foreign degrees studied in India via distance or online learning.

New AICTE guidelines covering the regulations governing collaborations with foreign HEIs were updated in the Approval process handbook 2021-22.[43] The following subject categories are covered by the AICTE: Engineering and Technology; Pharmacy; Architecture; Design; Hotel Management and Catering Technology; MCA; Management (MBA); Applied Arts and Crafts; Town Planning. Participating Indian institutions must have valid accreditation from the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) and be ranked within the NIRF top 100 and participating foreign institutions should be authorized by the designated agency in their parent country or be ranked in the Top 500 of QS or THE global rankings. For approved academic collaborations between Indian and foreign institutions, the programme must entail students spending at least one semester (for a 2-year programme) or two semesters (for a 4-year programmes) at the foreign institution. There is a pre-approved nomenclature for courses at diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate level across all the AICTE subject categories that must be maintained for foreign collaborations.[44]

Separately, the Indian government recently announced that the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar could act as a base for foreign universities in India, with autonomy from regulatory authorities such as UGC and AICTE.[45]

A detailed review and analysis of the above TNE regulatory developments is covered in a forthcoming report from the British Council 'Exploring the outlook for UK-India transnational partnerships'.

India's system for verifying overseas degrees is handled by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), which does not recognise foreign degrees under "distance/open/online/virtual/home public/private" modes.[46] TNE and offshore campus models of learning must also meet requirements to be verified by AIU, which means that graduates of some UK TNE programmes may not be eligible to work in the public or education sectors in India. However, the private sector is generally willing to accept UK qualifications for employment purposes.

According to HESA, in the 2020/21 academic year, enrolments on UK TNE programmes in India totaled 8,465, which represents an increase of around 7 per cent compared to the previous year. Most UK TNE progammes in India are delivered entirely at a private Indian partner institution, though some programmes offer students the option of studying in the UK for a portion of the course. India is the UK's 15th largest TNE market, similar in size to neighbouring South Asian countries including Nepal and Pakistan, but well behind other Asian markets including China (61,495), Malaysia (48,460), Sri Lanka (37,175) and Singapore (27,875) which are the UK's largest TNE markets at present.

As such, within India at present there is the foundation of a market for TNE and a greater role for foreign institutions is envisaged in future. Previously, under the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill 2010, international campuses could only set up in India through a partnership with an Indian

[43] AICTE Approval Process Handbook, 2021-22
[44] AICTE Approval Process Handbook, 2022-21, Appendix 2, page 122
[45] Foreign campuses may boost 'Study in India' *Times of India*, Feb 2022
[46] Advisory to students, *Association of Indian Universities*

college. However, according to NEP 2020 selected foreign universities from around the world will be enabled to operate in India, and UCG has established a committee to draft regulations for this purpose, which will likely not require parliamentary approval. According to a survey published in July 2021 by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), at least eight universities from the US, UK, Australia and Canada are seriously considering India as a destination for establishing an international branch campus. But many foreign universities are still adopting a 'wait and see' approach as domestic rules and regulations that govern the setting up of international branch campuses in India are yet to be framed by the government.[47] However, significant progress is hoped for over the next couple of years, with the general election in 2024 a key milestone by which the government will be aiming to be able to demonstrate significant progress in terms of the implementation of NEP 2020.

From the UK perspective, of the 8,465 total enrolments on UK TNE programmes, HESA reported that 3,390 students were engaged in distance learning as of the 2020/21 academic year (not including students on traditional programmes forced online by the pandemic). Although UK degrees delivered in India through distance learning are not officially recognised by Indian authorities, they are valued by many employers which means that graduates can find work in the private sector.

[47] Eight foreign universities considering a branch campus, *University World News*

6 UK - India Cooperation

In May 2021, the UK and India governments announced the '2030 Roadmap for India-UK future relations', which provides a framework for UK-India relations across several key areas including health, climate, trade, education, science and technology and defence.[48] With relation to education specifically, both governments have agreed a plan to increase cooperation on research, along with an array of initiatives aiming to facilitate the movement of students and professional skilled workers between the two countries. Indeed, as part of the Roadmap, a Migration and Mobility Partnership will facilitate the legal movement of students and professionals between the two countries. As part of this aspect of the agreement, expanded promotion of education and exchange opportunities in each country can be expected, with the Memorandum of Understanding on mobility stating that, "Participants will promote the take-up of higher education opportunities by nationals of each other's countries through initiatives such as student fairs, university missions and education expos to raise awareness and understanding of the educational opportunities including scholarship schemes, assistance for internships and the relevant immigration laws and regulations".

Additionally, the Roadmap indicates that India and the UK will seek to agree mutual recognition of higher education qualifications and "support and promote the two-way mobility of a greater number of students, teachers and researchers". A UK-India joint statement issued in April 2022 following the visit of the British Prime Minister to India mentioned that both countries "looked forward to finalising the mutual recognition of qualifications".[49] When the mutual recognition of qualifications is established between the two countries, mobility in both directions should become more attractive to students given the fact that the qualifications gained will be recognised in their home country. However, UK degrees are already highly respected by private sector employers in India. In addition to physical student mobility, TNE provision also stands to make significant gains from mutual recognition of qualifications, especially in light of the new regulations on foreign collaboration within the higher education sector which are expected over the coming years, as discussed earlier.

Ensuring ongoing access to the labour market for Indian graduates of UK universities is another central part of the comprehensive Roadmap agreement. Under the plan, the UK will promote opportunities for Indian nationals studying in the UK to remain in the country to undertake skilled work via the Graduate Route. Following the two-year period for undergraduate and masters graduates and the three-years for PhD holders, those already in employment or with a promise of employment (and meet the requirements in the UK Immigration Rules) may continue to reside in the UK to carry out their professional activity. In addition, a new Young Professionals Scheme will authorise 18 to 30 year-olds to join two-year professional exchanges. Higher education students will also have the option to carry out work placements or internships lasting up to 12 months in the partner country.

[48] 2030 Roadmap for India-UK future relations, *www.gov.uk*
[49] UK-India joint statement: Towards shared security and prosperity through national resilience, *Gov.UK*, April 2022

The mobility partnership also lays a pathway for mobility of researchers, doctoral students and expert scientists, with the commitment from the two countries to facilitate the issuance of visas or residence permits for those wishing to carry out research or university level teaching.

As part of the agreement, both countries have also agreed to continue collaboration on the UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), which was initiated in 2006 with the aim of strengthening education and research collaboration between the UK and India. Currently in phase three of its implementation, UKIERI has contributed immensely by generating 822 partnerships, 2,423 research and knowledge products and trained 25,651 learners, researchers and academics. Complementing it is another bilateral programme – the Newton Fund - which establishes researcher links and international mobility opportunities to early career researchers through PhD placements. Additionally, UKRI India is actively engaged with all the key government departments and agencies that fund research and innovation in India; and the UK's Science and Innovation Network (SIN) has bases in New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai.

Other ongoing initiatives such as GREAT Campaign and Study UK add to these efforts. Through GREAT and Study UK campaigns, the British Council carries out on-the-ground activities at the local level, through face-to-face to virtual engagement events like fairs, roadshows, webinars etc. for prospective students, capacity building for school counsellors and agents, alumni engagement and GREAT Talks (a lecture series by UK professionals). And part of the British Council 'Going Global Partnerships' grant programme is targeted specifically at supporting co-creation of joint programmes of study between UK and Indian HEIs in thematic areas such as 'disaster resilient infrastructure', increasing the exchange of ideas and knowledge. Further, the UK's Turing scheme has recently been rolled out, with significant engagement by Indian universities anticipated.

In addition, there is a generous portfolio of scholarships available for Indian students wishing to study in the UK, funded by the UK government, universities and various other public and private sector organisations. For example, through the GREAT and Study UK campaigns discussed prior, scholarships worth a minimum of £10,000 are available to Indian students, jointly funded by the UK government and the British Council. Also, the Commonwealth Scholarship is available to Indian students applying for a master's degree or a PhD in the UK, with the funding covering airfares, tuition fees and some maintenance expenses. Strengthening the role of women in STEM is another key area of cooperation between India and the UK. To this end, in 2018/19 the British Council launched the Women in STEM scholarships programme, which is a post graduate scholarship programme for Indian women who want to access UK's renowned STEM courses but lack financial resources. Other examples include the Scotland Saltire Scholarships for study in postgraduate master's programmes at any of Scotland's HEIs and the Chevening Scholarship for professionals, as well as many other scholarship opportunities offered by individual universities.[50]

[50] Scholarships to study in the UK, *IDP India*