

# REPORT ON CHINESE STUDENTS' OVERSEAS STUDY

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斯芬克

VISA 心驰所向

KANTAR

**REPORT ON  
CHINESE STUDENTS'  
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# What Do You Need to Do to Become an International Talent?

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Frankly speaking, I am not an international talent, as I have never studied abroad. I do have traveled to 40 or 50 countries around the world, yet I have not worked, lived, or studied there. In my opinion, I am far from being an international talent.

However, I am qualified to speak on this topic for two reasons. The first reason is that the total number of Chinese students studying abroad trained by New Oriental has now reached 1 to 2 million. Among those who went abroad 20 or 30 years ago, some of them have truly become international talents now, while others have not. Today, I would like to talk about why they end up on different life paths. The second reason is that my children grew up in two different cultures and languages. They learned both English and Chinese, because I hope they can switch seamlessly between the two languages. From my point of view, in the future world, children must look for the entire world as their platform instead of just choosing one of them: China or a foreign country. In 2020, COVID-19 spread over the world, and all countries are facing common challenges. This once again highlight the fact that the world is more connected than ever before. Global communication and interaction make the best platform for one to achieve success.

So, how to become an international talent? I think there are four essential factors: language, culture, rules and mindset.

**The first essential factor: language.** Firstly, English should be the first priority while learning a foreign language. Many people prefer French, German and Japanese. These languages can be your tools of communication with other cultures. However, from the perspective of global scenario, you can give up learning any other language but English. For example, if you only speak Japanese but cannot speak English, then you can only deal with matters relevant to Japan and China. And thus, this is a limitation for development. If you major in fashion or art, then learning French should be very important for you. If you are engaged in industrial manufacturing and intelligent manufacturing, then it is very important to master German. But no matter which language you choose, the essential point is that you need to speak English.

Secondly, there is a wrong approach about English teaching in China. Until today, except for a very few schools and teachers, English teaching in China is still mainly based on vocabulary, grammar



**Yu Minhong**  
**Chairman of New Oriental Education & Technology Group**

and texts. When Chinese children take exams, they can get quite high scores in grammar, vocabulary, translation and texts, but they score low in listening, speaking and writing. However, putting priority on listening, speaking and writing should be the right thing to do. When your children are young, you should not focus on their score of English examination at school, but on the ability of English listening, speaking and writing. For instance, you can help children learn English through making them watch and listen to foreign news media, read articles, watch movies and TV plays, TED speeches, etc. Children can also learn New Concept English and textbooks recommended by our Ministry of Education. Besides, it is also an option to start learning English by listening. Today, all textbooks have good listening teaching systems. While learning a language, it is always better to start by listening rather than reading or grammar.

Thirdly, it is important to prepare yourself for language tests. Children at a foreign school or language school, might be able to speak better English to some extent, but their comprehensive English level might not be so high. The TOEFL and IELTS scores of children are directly correlated to their comprehensive English level. If you study abroad with IELTS scores above 6 and TOEFL scores above 90, you can basically keep up with the teacher and won't be dropped out of school for failure to follow up with the classes, poor exam results and loss of confidence. Those who have passed the TOEFL test with a score above 100 and IELTS test with a score above 7 are very unlikely to discontinue the study in foreign countries. After going abroad for study, children should understand at least 2/3 of the course content, which is the baseline for them to begin overseas study. This is why preparing yourself for language test is important.

Finally, the true master of language skills requires at least three to four years of formal school training abroad. Some parents complain that their children still are not able to communicate well in English even after four years of undergraduate study abroad. That's because they didn't really blend in the English learning system. In the four years of study abroad, they only communicated with Chinese students. If you want to graduate and master good English skills, you really have to work hard in the four years, and write every paper by yourself. Some students don't study hard and even hire a ghostwriter to complete their graduation theses. With improved English writing skills, you can partly integrate into



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Western society, because written communication is very common in the West. Children should always keep it in mind that when they go abroad, they should first try their best to enter the Western learning circle. Then, they should do everything on their own. Furthermore, they must make sure that by the time they graduate, they have to be able to communicate with English speakers all over the world fluently.

**The second essential factor: cultural preparation.** Firstly, the basic knowledge of Chinese language and culture must be acquired. Children should study in a public school in China before going abroad. For the young generation, most of the opportunities in the future will come from the exchange between two cultures and two economies. Keeping this in mind, you'll see that traditional Chinese culture is something you cannot discard. I don't suggest parents send their children to English-only kindergartens or international schools from the very beginning. Both of my children grew up abroad and have good English skills. However, I didn't expect that their Chinese language skills lag behind when they grow up. Public schools are the best places to learn Chinese. If you study in public schools for three years, even if from grade one to grade three in primary school, your foundation of Chinese language will be strong enough for your entire life. It is not too late to enter an all-English environment after junior high school. Because it takes only four years for Chinese children to adapt themselves to an all-English environment, during which their English skill becomes good, so that they don't face any problem in speaking.

Secondly, if possible, children should travel around the world at an early age through study tours. Nowadays, many children travel everywhere with their parents since childhood. Of course, parents don't have to choose very expensive study tours. Some study tours just cost several thousand yuan. Children may visit the United States to study for two or three weeks, or visit Africa to participate in some public welfare activities.

Thirdly, when children grow up, they should immerse themselves in a complete Western education system in order to upgrade their thinking models. This is the reason why children must pursue their education at foreign universities for at least four years, or go for a master degree for at least three years. Our oriental thinking model is completely different from the Western one. In future, if one wants to work and live around the world without any difficulty, it is necessary to adopt the western thinking model.

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Finally, if possible, one should work in Western innovation companies and large companies for a brief period. Studying in university is still different from leading the actual life in the society. If you get a chance to work in a Western company, then you should know more about their life. Big companies like GE and Disney, innovation companies like Google, Facebook and Apple are all connected to the future of the world, to business models and hence the survival or extinction of business development.

**The third essential factor: rules**, which are also divided into four points. The first point is the understanding of religious customs around the world. Why do some Chinese people always face problems abroad? In fact, we are not deliberately speak loudly in an impolite manner, but because we do not know the foreign customs.

The second point is the understanding of the political systems and operating modes of important countries. We already know China very well, but do we really know the United States? Have you ever read the laws and regulations of the United States? What is the government system of the United States? What are the relations between the county Congress, State Council and the National Congress in the United States? What is the relation between the federal government and the state government in the United States? We must know important national political systems and their functioning. Then we need to understand the behaviors of people based on these systems and their functioning.

The third point is the understanding of economic laws, commercial laws, and technology development. One of the main reasons why Chinese always encounter setbacks in connecting with the world is that we do not understand the world's trade and business rules. At times we are not aware of these rules, and sometimes we don't fight for our interests. Knowledge of science and technology is also very important, because the development of science and technology defines the development direction of any industry in the future.

The fourth point is the understanding of the local laws and regulations and the adherence to them. Applying the thinking model of China to issues in a foreign country is obviously not going to help. In foreign countries, especially in Western countries, the best way to survive is knowing their laws and regulations and behaving accordingly complying with their laws and regulations. We can survive only

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after knowing the rules of the world.

**The fourth essential factor: mindset.** While studying abroad, one should know how to do it psychologically and pay attention to the following points. First, there is more potential when you look into a favorite subject in depth than adopt a pan-disciplinary approach. A real ability is obtained by focusing on one field for four years and studying it thoroughly. In fact, after graduation, one may not use the professional knowledge learned in the rest of his/her life. Even in the United States, around 50% of people are engaged in jobs that have nothing to do with their majors in universities. So, why do we study after all? When studying on a discipline, one can get training on thinking mode, which I have just mentioned. Critical thinking, logical thinking, and the training on the ability to go deep into the discipline helps reach the core. Therefore, it is necessary to find a major that you like and are willing to study further.

Second, one should consider problems and the future based on the relationship between the United States and China. Any trend in the communication between these two countries means the trend of human development. Ordinary people are only a drop of water in the current of the trend. Therefore, it is very important for one to develop along this future and trend. From this point of view, studying abroad in the United States is still the best choice. As far as Americans have still kept opening their door for us, we should go there and learn technologies and humanities from them.

Third, one should stop only adopting the Chinese thinking model and see himself/herself psychologically as a member of global community. Many Chinese students have studied abroad for four or five years but only stayed in the Chinese circles. Language and thinking are closely related to each other. Without language communication, there is no thinking, so if you always communicate in Chinese, your think mode is limited to only Chinese. On the contrary, if you speak in English frequently, you can think in English. With such a good opportunity to study abroad, it is really a pity not to integrate yourself into the world.



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Fourth, one should establish his/her career foundation in the most secured place. We all know that there should be three guarantees to achieve a goal: fairness guarantee, property guarantee and personal safety guarantee. In future, when these three guarantees become better and better in China, the best choice would be establishing career foundation in China, because China is, after all, a big market. However, many Chinese companies have gone public in Hong Kong or the United States. On one hand, capital market outside Mainland of China is large and funding can be raised faster there. On the other hand, market rules are more transparent in these places. More transparency means better fairness and property guarantee.

**In the end, I would give three advices to our students.** The first is that we must see the world based from China. This is what we've learned in primary school. Now, we really must adhere to this principle. If you can't, you will run into troubles.

The second is that only when we stand at a higher place we can see further and thus, enter a broader world. What does it mean to stand high? That means to receive the most advanced education in the world. The best education gives you an opportunity to stand at a higher place. When you stand high, you will certainly see far away. You should set up your thinking model and reach the world's most advanced technology. In this way, you will have a broader path in life. Standing high, seeing further and having a broader path in life, these three points are inseparably interconnected and can lead you to a higher place step by step.

The third point is that not everyone can succeed, but for that one must go to the places with opportunities for success. No matter how hard you try and how you are doing on the stage of world, not everyone can succeed. But if you take a chance and go there, you'll have a higher chance of success. The chance of success lies in China, the United States and all over the world. You are the one to make the choice. China is a great power that is opening up. Under this premise, the greatest opportunities must lie in China. I hope that children can choose right opportunities all the time and lead to success.

# Be Part of the Larger World and Embrace the Future

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China has a long history of exchanges with the rest of the world. For instance, Zhang Qian's diplomatic mission to the Western Regions in the Han Dynasty, Xuan Zang's journey to India on a quest for the Buddhist scriptures in the Tang Dynasty, Jian Zhen crossed the Ocean to Japan, Zheng He's seven voyages to the Western Ocean in the Ming Dynasty... These great cultural emissaries have made great contributions to the cultural exchange between China and foreign countries. However, the first real international student in Chinese was during the Qing Dynasty. His name was Rong Hong. Rong Hong arrived in the United States in 1847 and took pathway courses in Massachusetts before finishing his undergraduate studies at Yale University. He felt that the West had many things worth learning, so he did a wise thing to go back to China and persuade the Qing government to send more students to study in the United States. Driven by Rong Hong, China's first group of young students from Shanghai went for studies to the United States in 1872. A total of 120 young students were sent in the following years. These young students planned to study abroad for 15 years and had to sign a disclaimer letter before leaving China, because studying abroad was a long and hard journey during those times. In face of uncertain fate, they became the forerunners of China's overseas study. Later, there was a political reform plan to arrange intellectuals to study in Japan and then a work-study program in France, followed by a movement to study in the Soviet Union after the founding of new China. After the reforms and opening up, the government began to sponsor students to study in United States. Next came the trend of general public overseas study, which we see today.

I went to Australia for studies at my own expense in the 1990s. At that time, there were few self-funded international students. However, we got the opportunity to notice the gap between China and the outside world and were eager to study in developed countries and strove for various opportunities of going out. When it comes to my children's generation, the concept of studying abroad has spread into more Chinese families. Everyone hopes to improve himself/herself and fulfil his/her dreams through international education.

## **Why choose international education?**

Nowadays, the fever of studying abroad in China is on the rise. More and more students choose to study abroad. You may ask why. I think it is mainly due to the following reasons.



**Zhou Chenggang**  
CEO of New Oriental Education & Technology Group



First of all, there are lots of things worth learning in the major destination countries. The destination countries for studying abroad mainly refer to the Western developed countries, including some developed countries in Asia. These countries are ahead of us in education, science and technology, economy and culture, they represent advanced productive forces. In the past 40 years of reform and opening up, without exchanges and cooperation with these countries, China could not have made such great achievements and progress today.

Secondly, studying abroad is in fact an extension of traditional Chinese educational concept. Chinese people have been having a firm belief for thousands of years that "excellent learners rise to officialdom", "education can change one's fate", and education can give one better career development and help one to lead a better life. However, in the context of globalization, the place to study has changed. We have gone from home to abroad to study in different languages, cultures, concepts and educational systems and started to accept new challenges on the world stage.

Third, international students meet the market demand under the global competition pattern. Studying abroad can make our children compound crossover talents: they understand both Chinese culture and Western concepts and speak both Chinese and foreign languages. They've grown up in China and worked abroad. They pursue a bachelor's degree at home and a master degree abroad. This kind of exposure provides them with wider space for career development and has also got them more opportunities to enter the world stage.

Finally, the achievements of 40 years of reforms and opening up have proved that the choice we made was correct. Our country is also constantly emphasizing that it is necessary to persist in reform and opening up and further strengthen our exchanges with the world. Reform and opening up give an opportunity to our country to communicate with the world and learn from other countries. It is also an important means for us to rediscover ourselves and move towards scientific development. For individuals, studying abroad is an important way to acquire knowledge, broaden their horizons, enhance their abilities and enrich their lives. It is also an important way for us to be part of the larger world and embrace the future.

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### **Where are we? What is the future direction of education?**

Today, we are facing a more different circumstance than ever before.

First of all, with the deepening of globalization, the world is getting smaller and smaller, and young people are all competing on the same stage. With the rapid development of information and network technology in the 21st century, the world has become much flatter, and knowledge no longer has national boundaries. In the past, the competition was among our own people. We had the final say over who wins and who loses. Today, the situation is different. We have to compete with young people all over the world. Therefore, we must understand the world's standards for talents and rules of the game so that we can win a place for ourselves. This is the reality we are facing today, so we must keep pace with the world.

Secondly, artificial intelligence is redefining traditional knowledge and changing the way of knowledge transmission. Language is an important tool for us to communicate with the world. New Oriental built its business up by offering English training courses. Although acquiring language skills remains a difficult task for many people, the future language learning mode may be quite different from today. With the advent of the era of artificial intelligence, only a small number of people need to specialize in English in the future. The daily communication can be done with the help of artificial intelligence. For instance, if you are going to work in the UK, you may happen to know the language there, but what if you are going to France, Spain or Russia? You have no time to learn a new language. But with a software in your mobile phone, you can communicate with people from all over the world in dozens of languages. Most of us only need to possess the capacity to continuously learn in this rapidly changing world. In other words, traditional knowledge has changed. In this backdrop, the spoon-feed method and the one-way input education mode that we have been following would be of no use. Our education mode urgently needs to be changed according to changing times.

Finally, the education reform - which is inevitable, has been quietly taking place around us. No one can avoid it. Today, not only China, but the United States, Japan and northern Europe are also discussing about education. Everyone is asking: which education mode is the most successful? How to reform our education? Many people regard American-style elite education as a standard mode and try their best to

cater to it. However, some people still ask: Which is better? The basic education in the United States or that in China? Some people say that the merit of American education lies in its emphasis on innovation, while that of Chinese education lies in its solid foundation. There is also another opinion: from a global perspective, education in northern Europe is probably the most successful. It is beneficial to the general public and also keeps on innovating. In fact, all the education modes, in order to cope with future development, are undergoing different levels of change.

During an interview with a principal of a reputed high school in California, the principal told me that a large number of students in the United States are studying AP courses in order to get into a good university, and their school is going to cancel AP courses. Because they believe that with these tests, they will try to find the rules of the tests and score good marks by mastering the rules, eventually losing their real ability of learning. Another news is that the University of Chicago in the United States took the lead in announcing that domestic students are no longer required to submit the US college entrance examination results while applying for undergraduate studies. Similar educational reforms are taking place all over the world.

#### **What else do we need to do in education?**

In the face of global competition, we must first realize that passion and curiosity are more important than intelligence quotient. The former will enable children to grow in a sustainable manner. I have been to Finland, Norway, Sweden and other Nordic countries. Their education has already taken the lead in the world both in concept and practice. Some renowned high schools in these countries have stopped running their standard courses. Students can choose the courses based on their abilities and interests. They can graduate after completing the credits. This kind of education mode of teaching students in accordance with their aptitude enables them to give full play to their different potentials and interests.

Universal education in northern Europe is the most respected because it does not give up on any child. As a principal said in an interview, every child has his own special skills, and the development of the country also requires different talents. Some are suitable for research and development, some for basic works, some for university doctoral studies, and some for craftsmen training in technical schools. Schools



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should really teach students according to their aptitude, progress of mental development and ability and interest of each student in different aspects, instead of making it compulsory for every student to study from reputed universities. I think this is what we have to think about.

The first thing we need to do is to abandon some overly utilitarian ideas. Completely disregarding the children's own feelings, imposing our own wishes on children and expecting them to follow our own designed paths are against the laws of education. Many of our children have passed level 10 in playing piano, rarely out of their own interest, just for a certificate, which would enable them to enter a better middle school and university in the future, or fetch a better job. This educational concept, which is too utilitarian and ignores the stimulation of internal motivation, will lead to a subsequent development lack of potential.

Secondly, life-long learning ability is the right way of survival. I'm already over 50 years old. As the CEO of New Oriental, I have made some achievements with my own efforts. However, in the face of such a rapidly changing world, I study every day, and I am still afraid that my efforts of learning are not enough. I'm worried that I will lose my job for my short vision or wrong decision. Nowadays, the industry is changing rapidly, the needs of customers are also constantly upgrading, and the learning pattern is also changing. If we do not continue to learn and adapt to the new requirements, we would inevitably lag behind and would not be able to keep up with the pace of social development.

Meanwhile, we should shift from pragmatism to global vision and from passive acceptance to active innovation. Our children need to have critical thinking ability and independent personality. Some people may ask: China has so many children studying Olympiad mathematics, then why are there so few knowledgeable mathematicians? To some extent, it is because pragmatism has blocked children's broader horizon and long-term vision. How can we become world leaders in absence of a global vision, a sense of global responsibility and an open mind to embrace the world? If we acquire knowledge passively, how can we have our own innovation and critical thinking?

What is innovation? Innovation means that we can achieve the same goal following different paths. What is critical thinking? Critical thinking refers to the ability to know which path is the best and

most reasonable among all the different paths towards the same goal. Through passive acceptance of knowledge, we can survive; through learning from other people's experience, we can shorten the gap with others. However, without innovation and critical thinking, we will always have to follow others, and never have the chance to supersede them.

At last, we should keep up with the international community, which not only refers to studying abroad or going on study tours in foreign countries, but also refer to the self-adjustment and change. We need to understand the rules of the world and respect the laws of development. Our thoughts, our approaches and our way of doing things need to be changed. Only this way we can make real innovation and keep pace with the world. Otherwise, even if you have studied in the best universities and acquired the most advanced knowledge, you will not be accepted and recognized by others and will not get due respect on the world stage.

International education is an inevitable result of globalization, an educational practice shared by the world, a new form of education that children need to go through, and also an important way for them to be part of the larger world and embrace the future.

I believe that the ultimate goal of our education is to cultivate children who are self-reliant in finance and personality, open minded, and brave enough to take on responsibilities. Only these qualities will make them lead a happy life in the future.

This is the sixth consecutive year that New Oriental has released the Report on Chinese Students' Overseas Study. We have been doing this with the aim to objectively present all aspects of studying abroad for the Chinese students and parents through scientific data analysis. The report is based on a large number of surveys and data analysis on studying abroad, which fully demonstrates a number of characteristics of contemporary Chinese population studying abroad, and also indicates the development trends and direction of China's international education to a certain extent.

I hope this report will provide reference to more Chinese students and parents and will be helpful to the children on their way to the larger world.



# The Choice of Education from a Global Perspective

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With the COVID-19 pandemic spreading its arms around the world, international students are facing great challenges in 2020. The pandemic has put the students in great trouble who are currently studying abroad or are about to enter and apply for universities abroad. The pandemic has caused chaos in the entire world, completely disrupted our plans and left us at a loss. As a result, people will now be more cautious in choosing overseas education, while some will postpone or even give up the idea of sending their children abroad.

However, this caution stems more from worries about the international political environment and students' health risks than from the non-recognition of the value of studying abroad. I believe that when the external environment becomes relatively stable, we will see a stable momentum of our students pursuing higher studies at foreign countries. In fact, during the past 40 years, we have experienced a number of challenges like reform and opening up and international historic events. No matter what era we live in, the trend of studying abroad has always been upward.

In 2018, the number of Chinese students studying abroad reached 660,000. During the last 41 years, around 6 million people from all over China have gone abroad for higher studies. In recent years, there are two obvious changes in the trend. On the one hand, more and more students choose to study abroad, on the other hand, people go abroad for studies or plan for overseas study at an earlier age. However, seeking education abroad is not the only choice. Vision Overseas is a business organization engaged in overseas education consulting. However, we have never stressed that it is a must for the children to study abroad. Whether to study abroad or not depends on the students' own choice.

But why do so many people choose to study abroad?

**Firstly, there is a demand-supply imbalance in high-quality educational resources in China:**

In the past 20 years, education at all stages in China has developed very fast. The fairness and quality of compulsory education has been significantly improved and international schools are



**Sun Tao**  
**Assistant Vice President at New Oriental Education & Technology Group and**  
**President of Vision Overseas**

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mushrooming up in the country. The ranking of domestic universities in the world continues to be on the rise. Among the top 500 Academic Ranking of World Universities released by Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 2019, China ranks second in the world with 58 universities. Therefore, there are abundant education resources with presence of both local and international institutions in China. However, from the perspective of demand and supply, every year 10 million students participate in the national college entrance examination, but the enrollment rate of key universities is less than 15%, where 985 project universities admit less than 200,000 students, a figure too low compared with the aspiring students. What about the remaining 8 or 9 million students, who wish to get better educational resources? Let's turn to the post-graduate entrance examination. With the expansion in the enrollment of students this year, around 1 million students were admitted against 3.4 million, who signed up. The question arises: what about the other 2.4 million students who really want to pursue their studies?

Moreover, students who have access to high-quality educational resources in their home country have greater preference for high-quality educational resources in the world. Among the students seeking advanced studies, graduates from 985 project universities account for 70% to 80%, of which about 30% go abroad. This indicates the popularity of studying abroad among the graduates from prestigious universities. From the perspective of disciplines, domestic universities have made remarkable progress where several academic disciplines in Peking University and Tsinghua University rank among the top 20 in the world. However, it's undeniably true that the forefront knowledge is still commanded by the institutions of higher education and enterprises in the countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Germany. This gap cannot be filled with subjective will alone or to be caught up in 10 to 20 years. Studying abroad will continue to serve as the useful supplement to domestic educational resources for a long time.

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**Secondly, studying abroad can bring unique values that are difficult to obtain without going abroad.** In the first place, we must admit that studying abroad is not the only way for a child to become elite. Some lifelong abilities, such as ability of learning, innovation and problem-solving, can be acquired in any environment. However, some abilities can be acquired easily or only when the student goes abroad. I think there are at least three abilities that fit this description:

The first is a comprehensive and real cross-culture living experience. With this, we can deeply understand and accept the different cultures and beliefs in the world, which would make us more comfortable while dealing with people from the rest of the world in future. Cultural difference exists even within in China. It is difficult for a northerner who has never lived in Guangdong to truly understand the local customs and code of conduct of that area through books or imagination alone. However, if someone from Shandong Province goes to a university in Guangzhou, he is more likely to get opportunities in business or cultural exchanges between the south and the north.

The second is the reach and experience of cutting-edge knowledge, management and technology. Better study and research on technologies like modern manufacturing, artificial intelligence, un-manned driving technology can be found in foreign universities and leading enterprises. A few years ago, Miao Wei, Minister of Industry and Information Technology, also pointed out that China was in the third tier among the four-tier global manufacturing industry. It would take at least another 30 years for China to become a manufacturing power, which not only relies on hard work but also on learning from other countries.

The third is the ability to solve problems and adapt to uncertainties, which can be improved significantly if the students studies abroad. Taking the outbreak of COVID-19 as an example, during this disaster period, the challenges faced by international students are far greater than those of domestic



students. Therefore, international students gain more experience. The survey results released in our Report on Chinese Students' Overseas Study in the past two years also show that overseas returnees, as a whole, have been widely recognized by employers for their vision, professional skills and innovative ability. We cannot guarantee that every returnee possesses these abilities, but when considered as a group, they possess quite prominent characteristics.

**A better environment boosts great promotion for individuals.**

Every year, PricewaterhouseCoopers conducts research about global CEOs. The CEO Survey in 2017 shows that as many as 60% of respondents said that technology has "completely" or "significantly" changed their industry in the past 20 years. However, apart from technology, the shortage of talents, especially those with the under-mentioned abilities, have a greater impact on enterprises (77% of bosses think so). According to the difficulties in recruitment reflected by the CEOs, these abilities are listed as follows: 1. creativity and innovation; 2. leadership; 3. emotional intelligence; 4. adaptability; 5. problem solving ability. These abilities are all soft skills that cannot be replaced by machines. It is very rare to find leaders with both creativity and emotional intelligence. I wonder if you are familiar with the abilities listed above. These are also the soft qualities that a number of world-renowned universities and high schools' value while enrolling students.

Studying abroad is a choice made by many excellent domestic students. At present, a lot of graduates from domestic institutions of higher education choose to study abroad directly after graduation. Among the graduates with bachelor's degree in 2019, 30% of students from Peking University chose to study abroad. Further, 24.6% from Tsinghua University, 29.9% from Fudan University, 24.46% from Shanghai Jiao Tong University and 24.8% from University of Science and Technology of China made the same

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choice.

If a student is qualified and financially capable to get better education, we should not give up on them. Since a better environment and team might boost capabilities and potential of an individual. A better academic environment or working environment is certainly helpful for the growth within one's limits.

On this topic, we can look at the speech entitled "The Pursuit of Truth and the Mission of the University" delivered by President of Harvard University Lawrence S. Bacow during his visit to Peking University last year. In his speech, he mentioned that learning from other universities is one of the most important reasons why Harvard University has achieved its present achievements: "People often ask me the secret of Harvard's success. All our successes are achieved with drawing inspiration from others. If there were no challenges and incentives from other excellent institutions of higher learning in the world, and if we could not learn from our peers and cooperate with others, we would never have been as successful as we are now." Harvard does, it is more important for individuals to work with and learn from those who are competent and strong.

**Over about a hundred years of history of studying abroad, we switch from learning to strengthen the nation to realizing personal values.**

Chinese students studying in foreign institutions in modern history started from Rong Hong, "young children studying in the United States" represented by Zhan Tianyou, Tang Guoan and Tang Shaoyi, intellectuals studying abroad like Hu Shi, Zhao Yuanren, Du Kezhen and Qian Xuesen, then to around 6 million international students after the 40 years of reform and opening up. Most of overseas students return home after their studies and become backbones of our country and leaders in the respective industry. Of course, other than becoming leaders at home, in recent years many international students have also started their own businesses abroad like LinkedIn and Zoom. They have made great achievements,



which showcases the real progress made by Chinese people on the world stage.

Looking back through over 100 years of history of Chinese people studying abroad, studying abroad was never just means to achieve personal success, but to shoulder the historical mission of strengthening the nation by studying hard. Nowadays, people also study abroad to pursue personal values and broaden horizons, which are all very positive. Now that the entire world is in crisis, China also faces more complicated international environment. However, the more differences there are, it is more important for us to be aware of the historical mission of an individual, our country. We should stay modest and pragmatic, and learn from the world. At the same time, we need to do better in publicity and communication with the outside world. As an important form of international learning and cultural exchange, studying abroad will play an increasingly important role. The pandemic is sure to end and the short-term fanaticism will be gone. Social progress and development are the most important things. The pursuit of better life is the eternal goal for everyone.

For the last several years, we have been releasing the Report on Chinese Students' Overseas Study. Our original intention is to show the most authentic status of Chinese students studying abroad based on scientific data analysis, to offer valuable reference to the students planning to study abroad as well as their parents. Meanwhile, we will also refer to the report for current status of international students and strive to provide better services to the students.

The last but not least, I hope parents can remember that the best thing you can do for your children is not to insist them go to a good university and find a good job, but to encourage them to develop skills, like curiosity, exploration spirit, teamwork ability, sense of responsibility, initiative, creativity, anti-frustration ability, leadership, etc. It is important to ensure children can better adapt to society and solve problems in the future.

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW OF

## OVERSEAS CHINESE STUDENTS

Characteristics of study abroad participants

Purpose and planning of studying abroad

Preparation and concerns for studying abroad

The value and significance of studying abroad





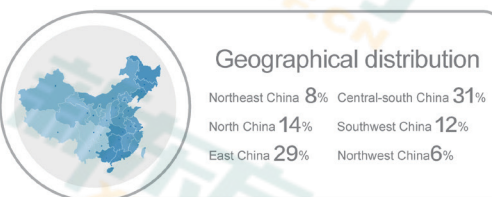
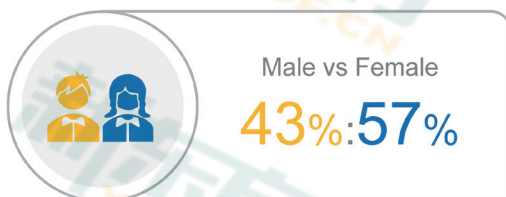
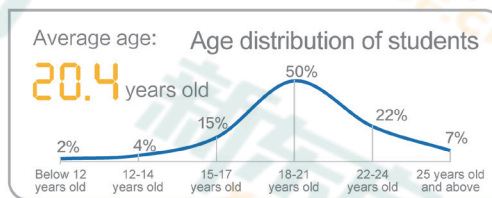
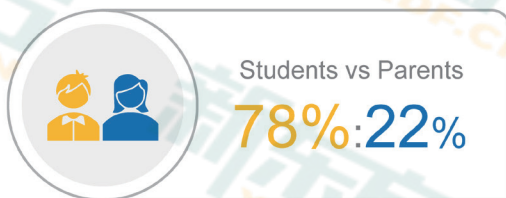
## About this chapter

The chapter is based on an on-line and off-line questionnaire survey from January to March 2020, covering 34 provincial administrative regions in China and some foreign countries and regions, which is organized by New Oriental Vision Overseas Consulting Co. Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as Vision Overseas) together with Kantar, a global leading market research company. A total of 6,673 effective samples have been recovered. The samples are mainly divided in three categories, namely students who intend to study abroad and their parents, people with overseas study experience, and social elites engaged in recruitment.

The survey concentrates on the characteristics and changes of Chinese students studying abroad. The 6-years accumulation and comparative analysis of data enable the researchers to unravel the attitude, choice, planning, confusion and corresponding development and changes of current Chinese students intending to study abroad and their parents. Besides, the experiences of the people who have overseas study experience and the attitude of social elites have been summarized, providing a reference for more students who intend to study abroad.

At the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 has been raging in China and has gradually spread to major destination countries of overseas study in the world from March. The emergence of the epidemic has had a relatively long-term and uncertain impact on the global politics and economy, and has also had various relatively complicated impacts on people involving overseas study. The results of this survey mainly reflect the attitude and cognition of the Chinese people who intend to study abroad (Intentional Groups), people with overseas study experience (Experienced Groups), and social elites before the epidemic. However, since the survey time partially covers the stage of the global spread of the epidemic, it also includes the complex attitude of all kinds of people to a certain extent.

### Sample distribution



# Part 1. Characteristics of study abroad participants

## Characteristics of students intending to study abroad

**It is still dominated by people studying at or above the undergraduate level, and the demand for studying abroad is stable at all stages**

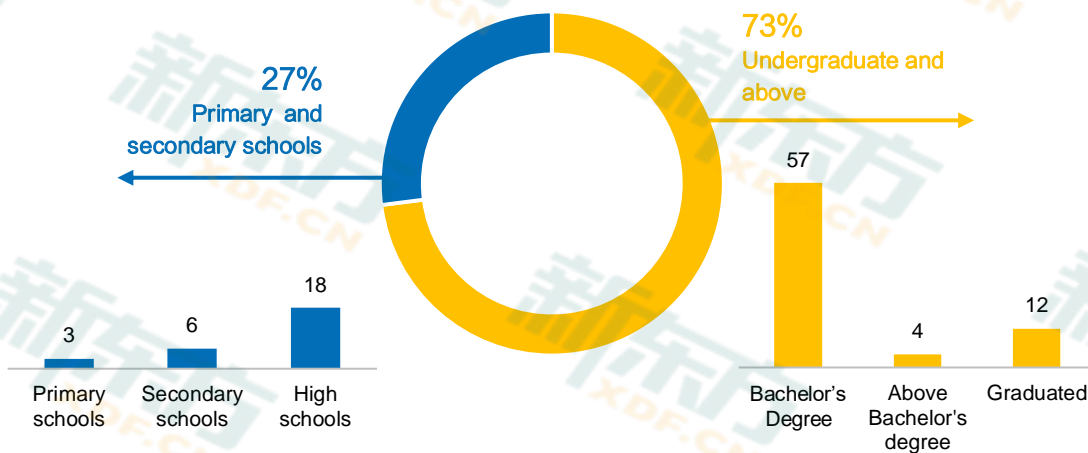
According to the comparative analysis of 6 years of continuous survey data, the current group of prospective students is still mainly composed of undergraduate students and above, accounting for 73%, among which 57% are undergraduates, a decrease from last year. At the same time, the proportion of people studying in primary and secondary schools who intend to study abroad rose slightly, which is an increase of 4% from last year.

Influenced by factors such as the Sino-US trade war and changes in the policies of studying abroad in various countries, the intention of studying abroad among middle school students decreased last year. However, as the general environment stabilized in the second half of 2019 and domestic parents would pay more attention to international education, parents were more proactive in the planning of studying abroad, so the intention among this group to study abroad has rebounded.

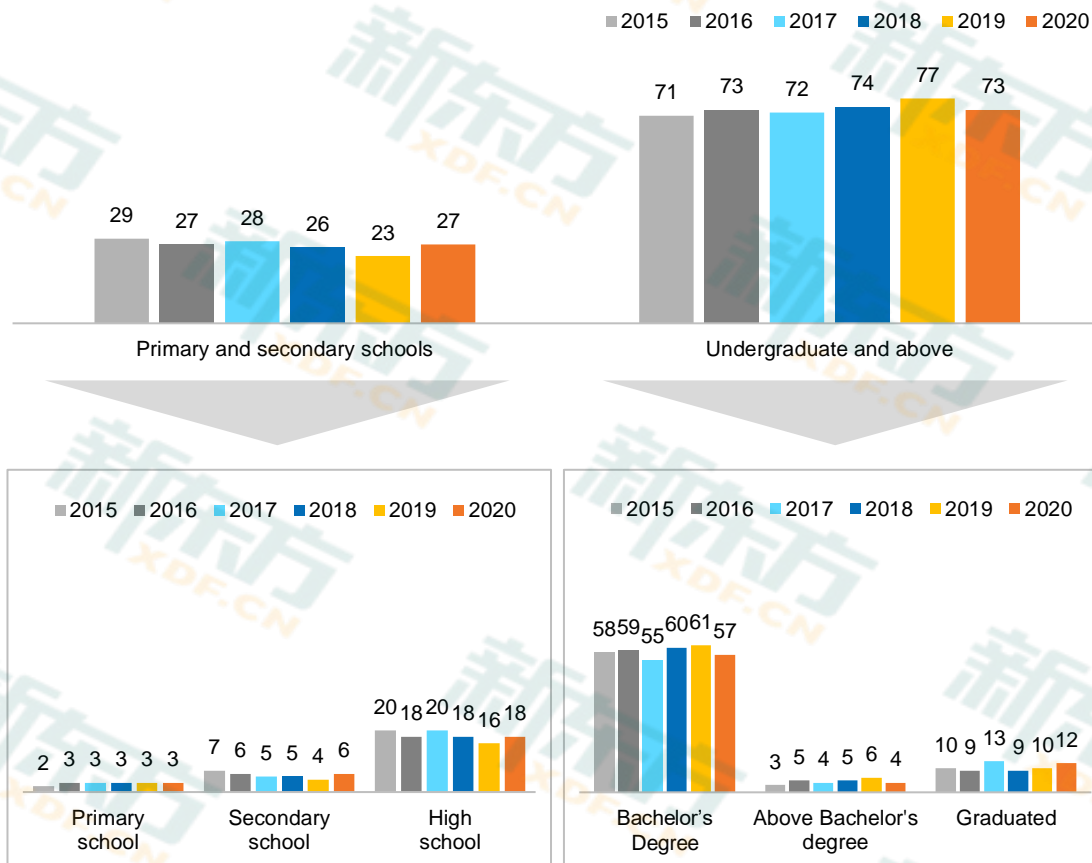
At the same time, it also shows that there is always a relatively stable group who will have a demand for studying abroad when their children are young from the data changes over the past six years. Although some of them may choose international schools or classes at home country, the goal is still to study abroad at the stage of higher education.

In addition, in the past three years, the proportion of graduated people intending to study abroad has shown a steady growth trend, from 9% to 12%, which also proves that there is always a relatively stable working population hoping to improve their employment competitiveness by improving their academic background.

Current educational attainment of the people intending to study abroad (%)





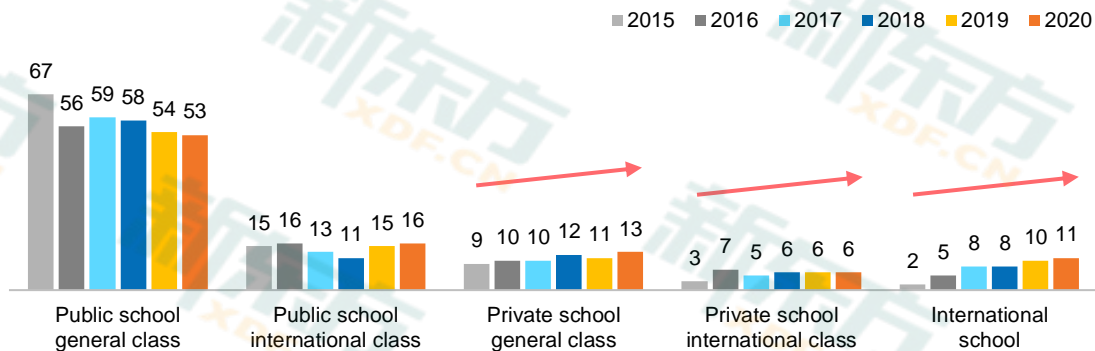


### More young people are preparing for going abroad in advance

Among the students who are studying in primary and middle schools and have the intention to study abroad, through the data over the past six years, it is found that the group studying in ordinary classes in public schools shows a continuous downward trend, while the group studying in private schools and international schools shows an increasing trend.

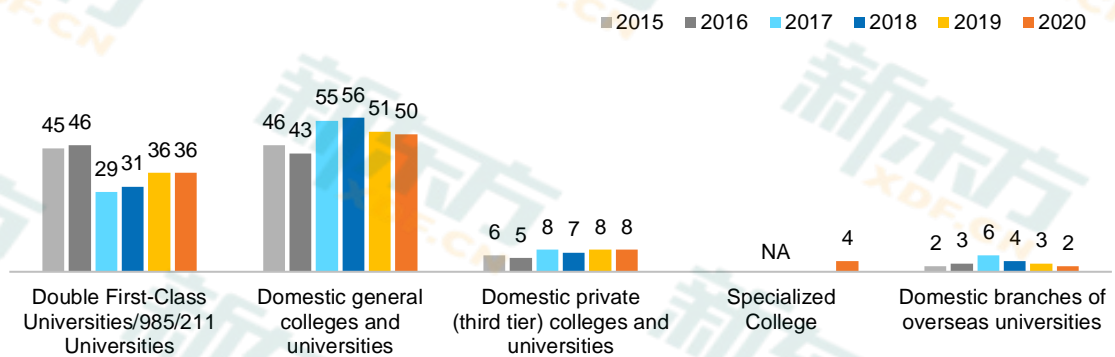
On the one hand, it reflects the diversified development of basic education in China. Private school education has gradually become a powerful supplement to public school education. On the other hand, it also shows that parents are increasingly recognizing the concept of international education and choose to let their children enter an international teaching environment in advance so as to prepare for studying abroad in the future.

Types of primary and secondary schools with students intending to study abroad (%)



### The distribution of people intending to study abroad is stable among various universities

The number of people intending to study abroad at the undergraduate level and above is still dominated by students from non-key universities. The proportion of people from 985/211/Double First-Class universities and the proportion of people from domestic ordinary universities have hardly changed compared with last year. In this year's survey, it is found that 4% of the intentional students are studying in specialized colleges. In terms of academic qualifications improvement, the policy of studying abroad is more favorable and cost-effective to the intentional students studying in specialized colleges.

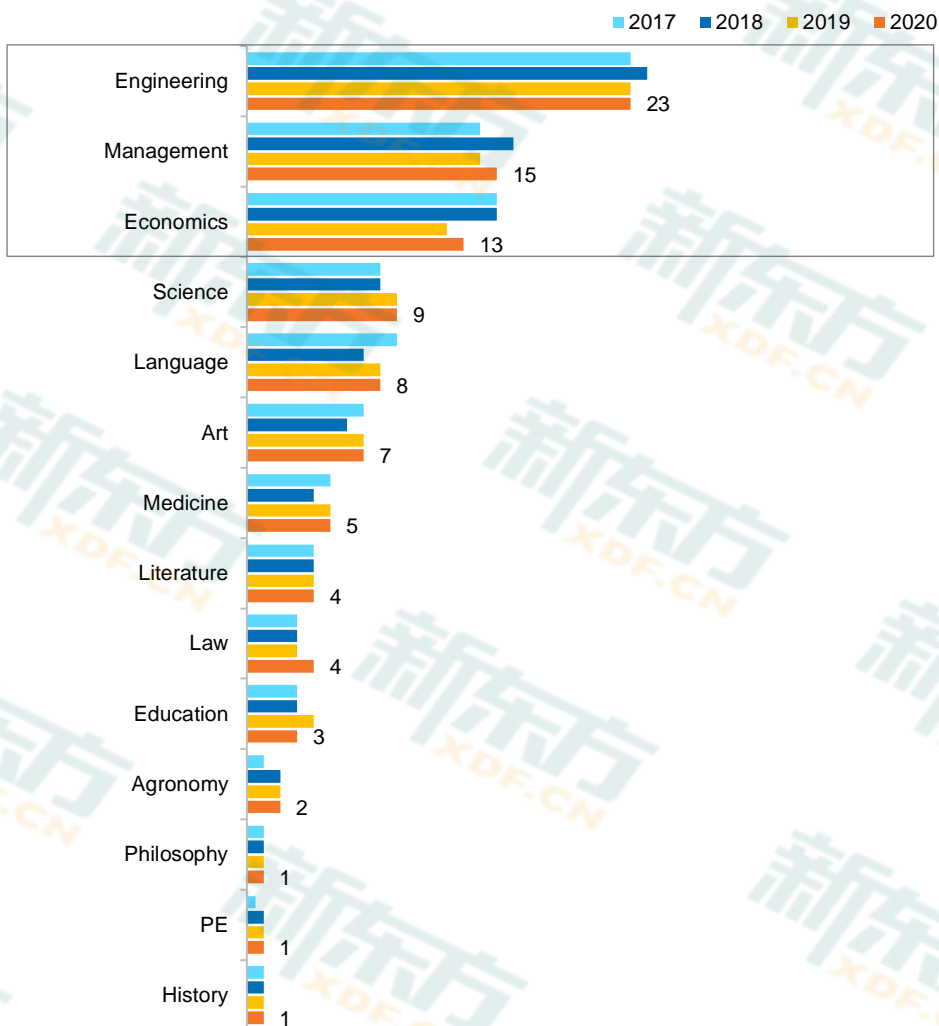
Types of colleges and universities having students with bachelor degree or above who intend to study abroad (%)<sup>1</sup>

### Students with engineering, management and economics backgrounds have strong intention to study abroad

Among the people pursuing bachelor degree or above who intend to study abroad, the 3 years' data shows no obvious difference in the distribution of current majors and the students majored in engineering, management and economics still account for higher proportions, remaining in the top three majors.

1.NA says that there are new options for this year's survey, so there is no historical data in the corresponding data part over the years, which is the same below.

Majors of students with bachelor degree or above who intend to study abroad (%)



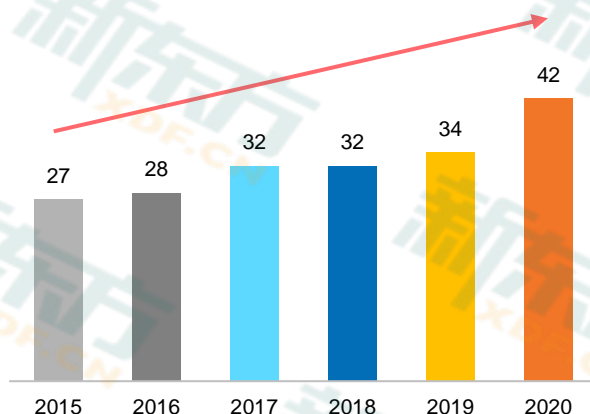
**The group with experience of studying abroad accounts for over 40%, showing an upward trend year after year**

Compared with last year's data, the percentage of people who with the experience of studying abroad and are still intending to study abroad has greatly increased, from 34% to 42%, which is the largest increase in the past six years.

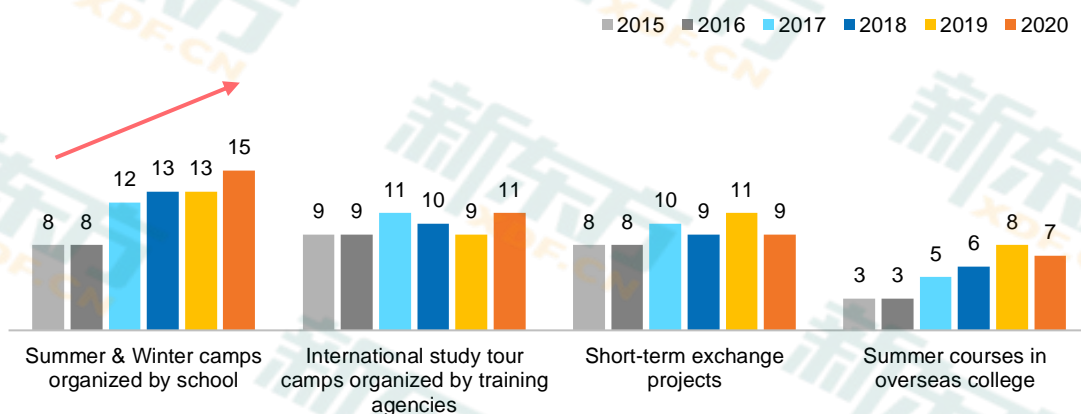
This data has increased by 15% in the past six years, showing a steady upward trend. The number of the groups in the "summer and winter camps organized by schools" and "summer courses in overseas universities" have increased significantly. It can be seen that quite a number of intentional students have chosen to make full use of the time of winter and summer vacations to experience the overseas learning environment in advance. Furthermore, summer courses offered by overseas universities can play a more important role in enhancing competitiveness for future applications of studying abroad.



People who intend to study abroad with overseas study experience (%)



Proportion of Overseas Learning Experience Types (%)



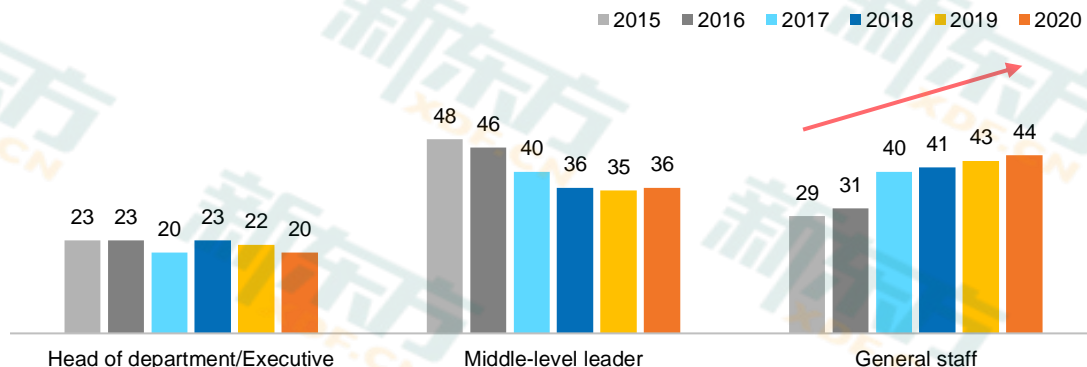
## Characteristics of families with children intending to study abroad

### The popularization of overseas study continues, and the proportion of ordinary families increases year by year

Compared with the job background of parents in the past six years, the proportion of "ordinary employees" has increased year by year, accounting for 44%, far exceeding that of parents in charge of the company, senior executives and middle-level leaders. Also, the popularization of studying abroad continues.

In addition to the improvement of the comprehensive national strength, parents pay more attention to their children's education and the pressure of domestic employment competition and other reasons compel parents to have the intention of sending their children to study abroad. The looser policies about overseas students of different countries in the world, the open international educational resources and the development of domestic education service industry, all of these contribute to the increasingly diversified choices for Chinese students to study abroad and create conditions for more children from ordinary families to go abroad.

Types of parents' job (%)



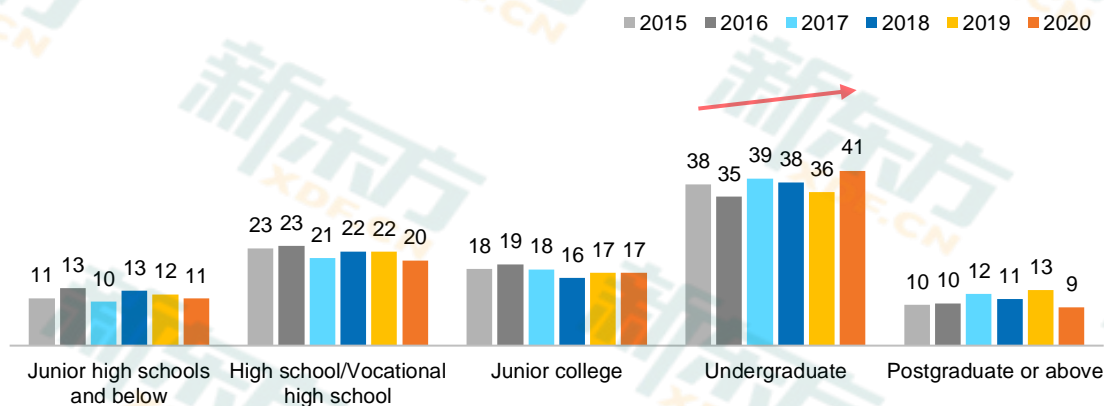
### Parents are mainly with bachelor's degree, and the proportion of overseas returnees is rising

Among the educational backgrounds of the parents, the proportion of bachelor's degree is 41%, and the proportion of returnees is also increasing year by year. The increase rate is particularly obvious compared to last year, from 8.6% to 9.3%.

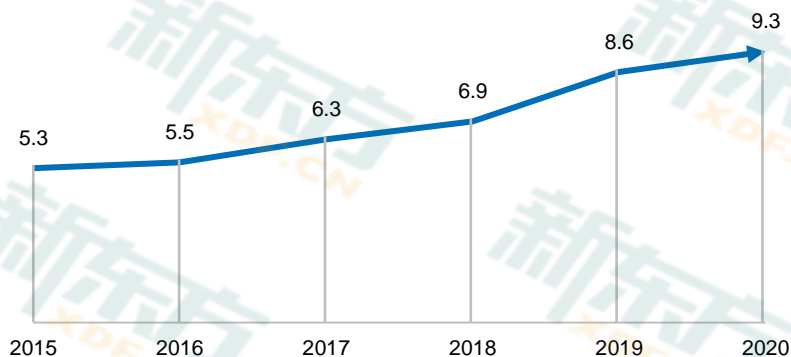
With the generation of the 70s and 80s gradually becoming the main parents of those students intending to study abroad, the education level of parents is getting higher and higher, and the emphasis on children's education is also gradually increasing. However, in the face of the shortage of high-quality educational resources in China, the families with economic strength have begun to expand the scope of children's education to the world.

The 70s and 80s generation had very few opportunities to study abroad during their higher-education period, while in this year's data, nearly 10% of the parents have a background of studying abroad. This also reflects to a certain extent that most of the people who received overseas education before are interested in letting their children continue to go abroad to receive better educational resources or broaden their horizons.

Parent's highest educational attainment (%)



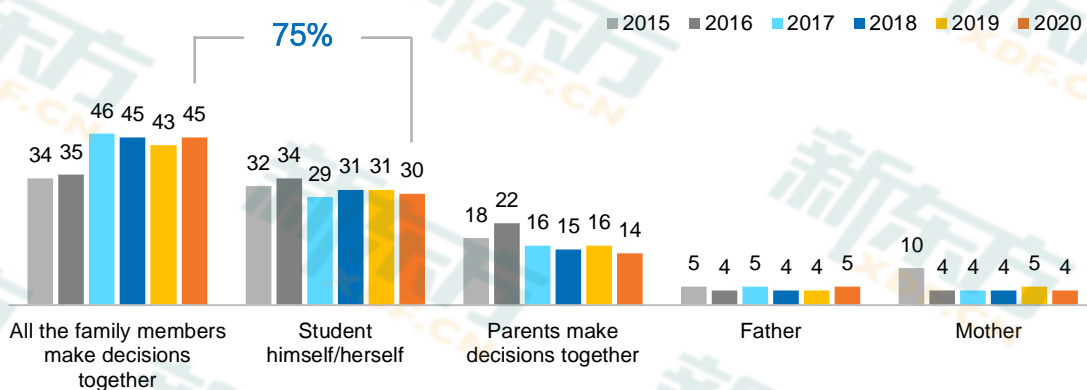
Proportion change of parents with overseas education background (%)



### More than 70% of parents respect their children's opinions, with democratic decision-making for studying abroad

In the past four years, the sum of proportion of "family decision-making" and "students decision-making" among the decision makers of the study abroad program has stabilized at about 75%. Respecting for children's opinions has become a stable and mainstream way of making the decision of studying abroad.

Decision-makers for studying abroad (%)



## Decision point and planning to study abroad for students

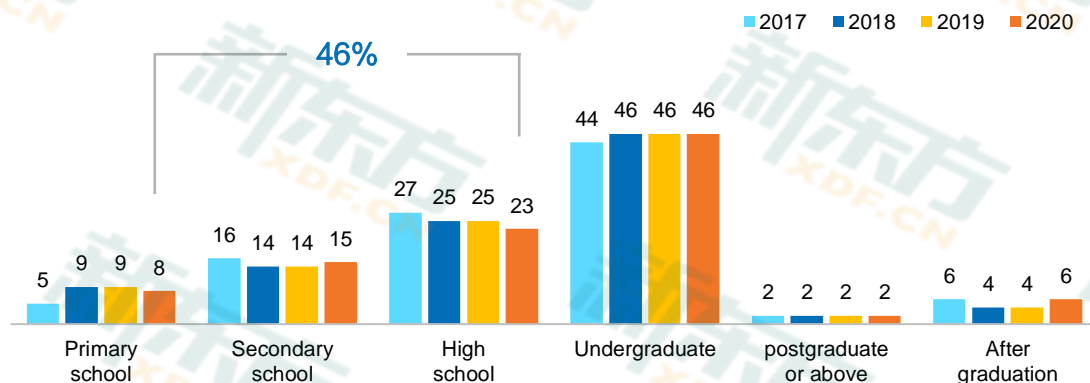
### Nearly half of the people have intention to study abroad before the stage of higher education

From the time when the intention to study abroad has been developed, according to the data of the past 4 years, the situation at each stage is relatively stable. The group that has the intention to study abroad at the undergraduate level and plans to study abroad at the postgraduate level is still the main part, accounting for 46%. However, the sum of proportion of the people intending to study abroad at each stage of primary and secondary schools is also accounting for 46%, while the rest of the groups have the intention to study abroad at the postgraduate stage or even after graduation.



Looking at the data for past 4 years, although the people who intend to study abroad in the secondary school stage shows a slight downward trend, at the same time, the group that has corresponding growth and change is the primary school stage and the post-graduation stage, so the overall situation in each stage is relatively stable.

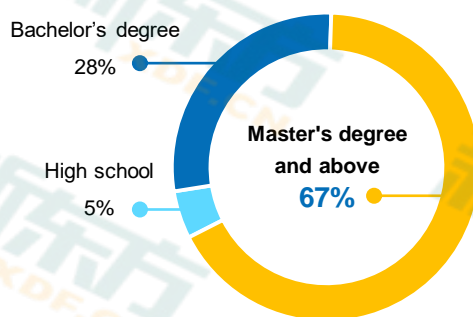
when do students have the intention to study abroad (%)



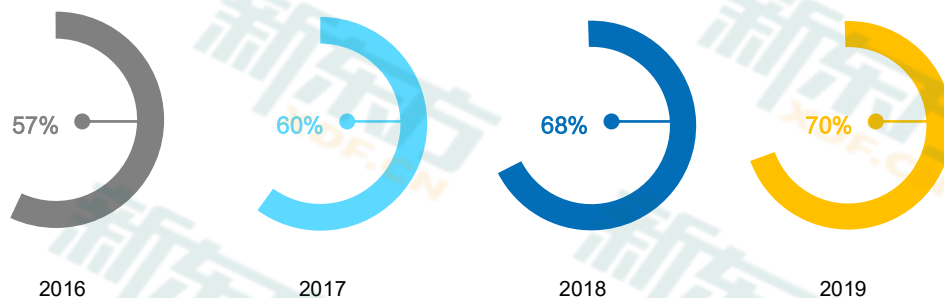
#### Nearly 70% of the population plan to study at the postgraduate level or above

Compared with the data of the past three years, about 70% of the people plan to study at the postgraduate level or above. As far as external factors are concerned, the length of schooling at the postgraduate level or above is relatively short and the cost performance of studying abroad is relatively high. In terms of internal factors, postgraduates or above have relatively mature independent living ability and sense of values. Studying abroad is more for the purpose of "self-improvement" with clearer objectives.

Which academic stage students plan to study abroad in 2020



Changes in the Groups Planning to Study Aboard for Master's Degree or above

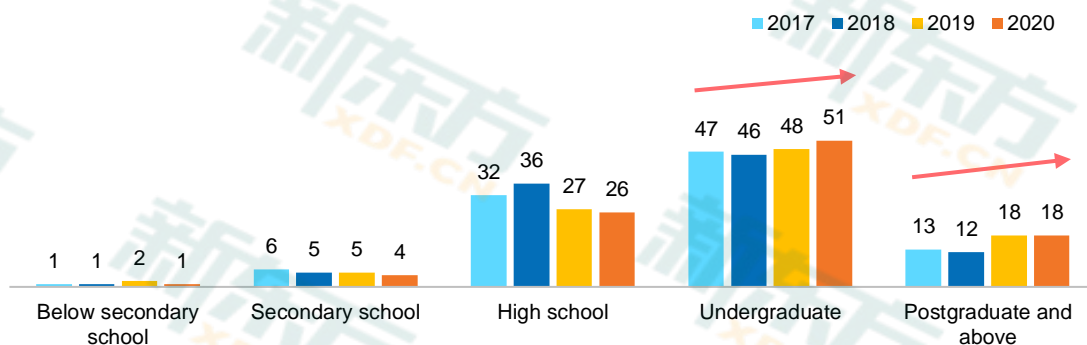


### 50% of parents believe that students can start studying abroad at the undergraduate level

Influenced by international school-running craze in recent years in China, many international schools have emerged as the times require. To a certain extent, they have diverted the needs of some young students studying abroad, but they have not weakened or even given birth to more needs for undergraduate. Compared with the data of the past 4 years, parents think that the undergraduate stage is suitable for studying abroad, and the proportion is increasing year by year.

In addition, the proportion of groups who believe that the postgraduate stage is suitable for studying abroad is also on the rise. According to the data disclosed by the Ministry of Education in recent years, the number of applicants for the postgraduate entrance examination is also rising sharply every year, with the 20% growth rate in the past two years. More and more people recognize the actual benefits brought by higher education, and the proportion of such people is also increasing with the rising employment pressure.

The minimum age level at which children are considered suitable for studying abroad (%)



### Planning for the country/region and college major

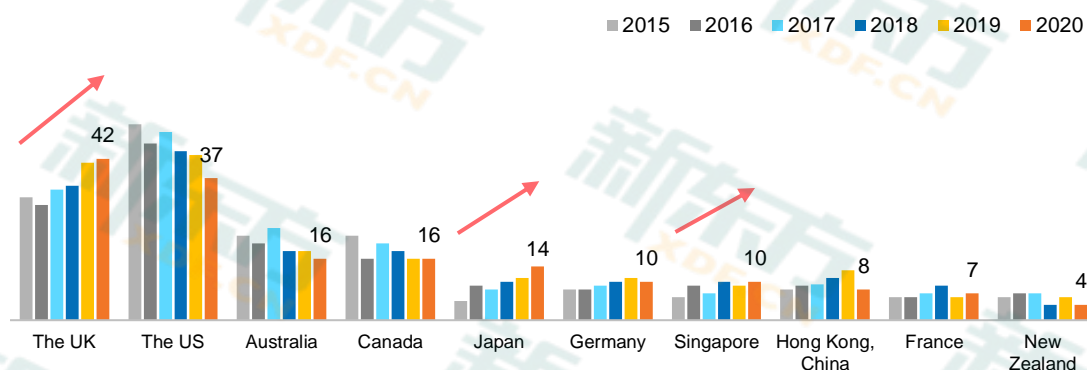
**Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada are still popular destinations for studying abroad, while Asian countries are on the rise**

There are four popular destinations in the choice tendency of studying abroad, which are Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada. However, the obvious change this year is that it is the first time that Britain has surpassed the United States and become the "most preferred destination" for Chinese students. The relatively tense Sino-US

relations in the past two years, as well as Britain's strong advantages such as reopening PSW visas and short academic system, have all led to an increase in the proportion of groups inclined to study in Britain.

At the same time, looking at the past six years' data, there is an obvious rise in intentions to study in Japan and Singapore, which has also diverted some groups of students studying in the above countries. With the continuous deepening of the popularization of studying abroad, Asian countries are increasingly attractive to students studying abroad due to their similar cultural environment, low cost, high-value diplomas and other factors.

TOP 10 interested countries/regions (%)



### Britain is more popular with female, while the United States is more popular with male

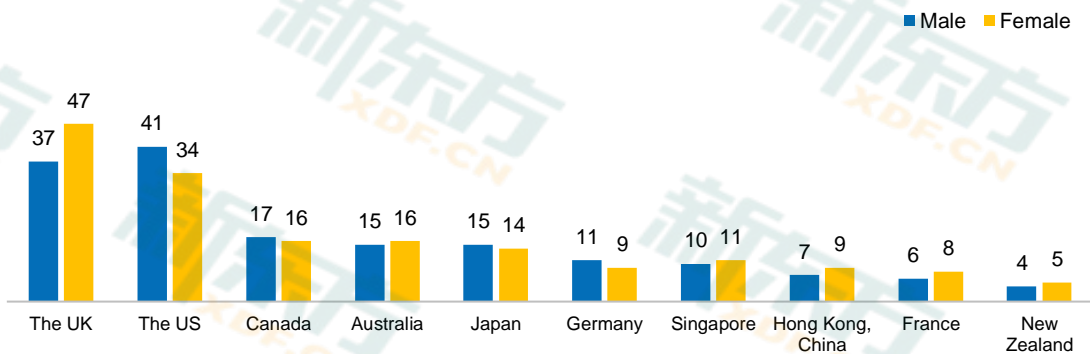
From a gender point of view, studying abroad in Britain is more preferred by women. Among the people who prefer Britain, the proportion of women is as high as 47%, compared with 37% for men, while among the people who prefer the United States, the proportion of men is 41%, compared with 34% for women.

To figure out the reason, on the one hand, the proportion of students studying business and media shows that they are more likely to choose to study in Britain compared with the United States, while the number of female students studying in such majors is more than that of male students. Correspondingly, among the groups who choose to study in the United States, the proportion of students studying in science and engineering is higher than that in Britain, and the majority of students in such majors are male.

On the other hand, in the higher education stage in Britain, the undergraduate program is 3-year and the master's degree program is 1-year, which can greatly shorten the time for women to study, thus reserving more time for career development before giving birth, and to a certain extent, it also gives birth to women's love for studying in Britain.

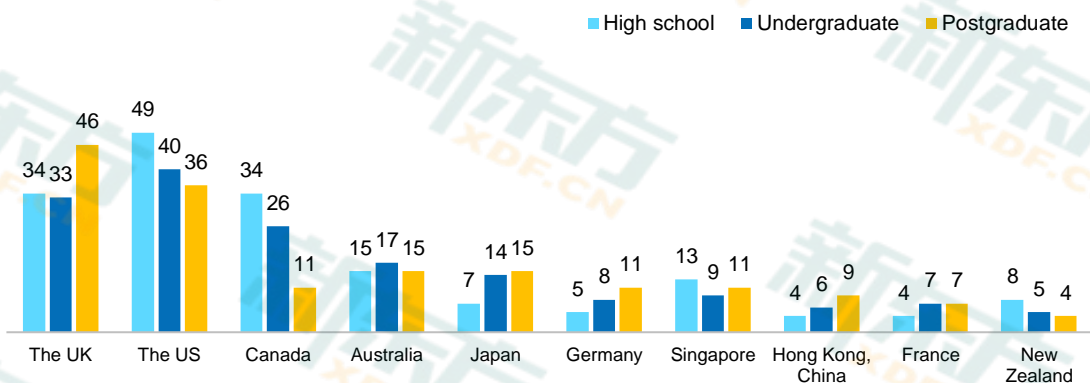


Top 10 Intentional Destinations-Proportion of Different Genders (%)



From the application stage, Britain has a short academic system, and people who apply for postgraduate stage prefer to choose Britain. However, as a popular destination, America is more favored by people at undergraduate stage and below.

Top 10 Intentional Destinations-Proportion of Different Stages(%)

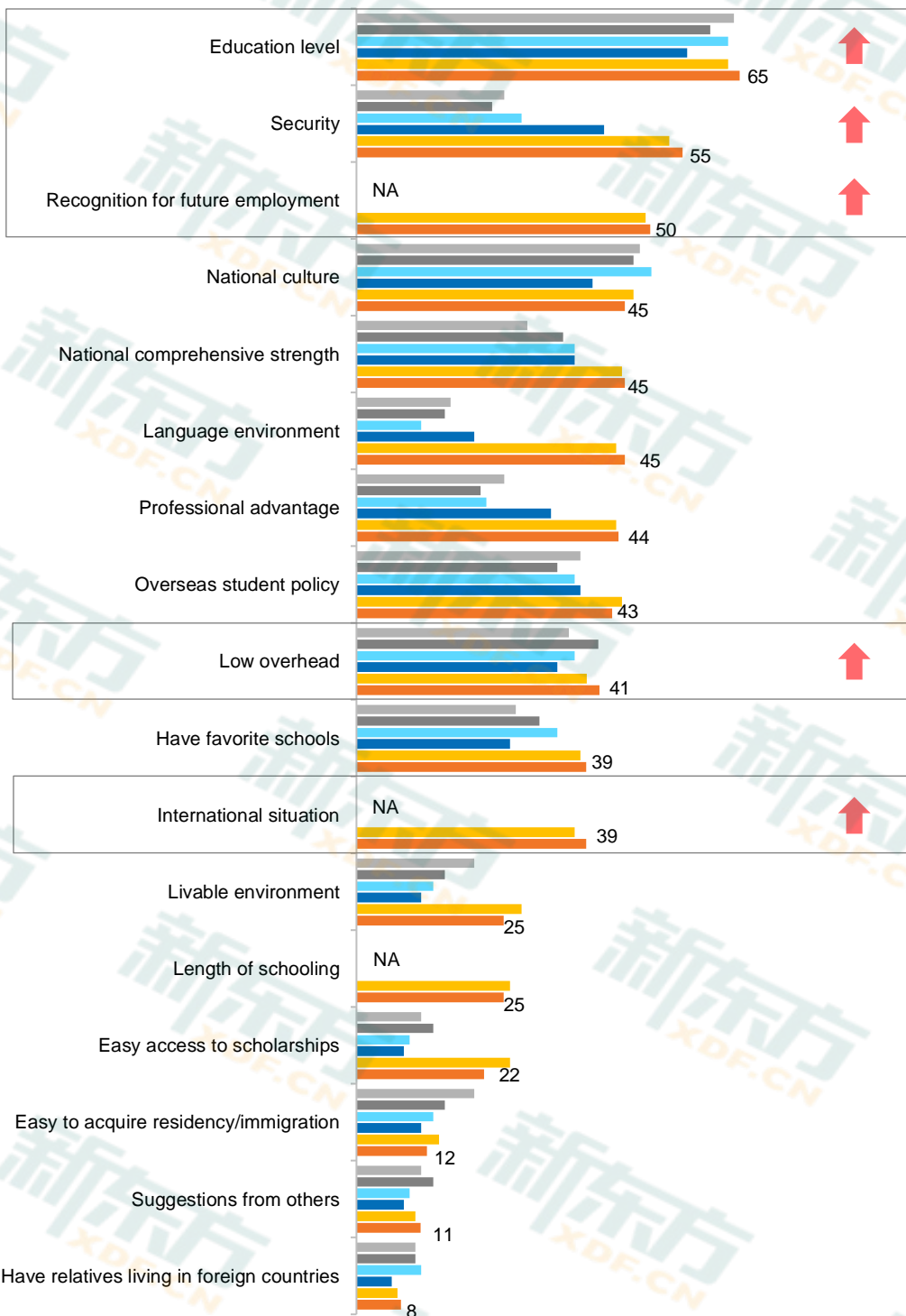


### Education level is always the primary factor in choosing the destination for studying abroad

In the past six years, the "education level" has ranked first in the consideration factors of people intending to study abroad when choosing a country. The top three considerations include education level, safety issue, and recognition of future employment. Compared with previous years, the attention to these factors has increased and the attention to international situation has also increased slightly.

### Considerations for selecting countries/regions for studying abroad (%)

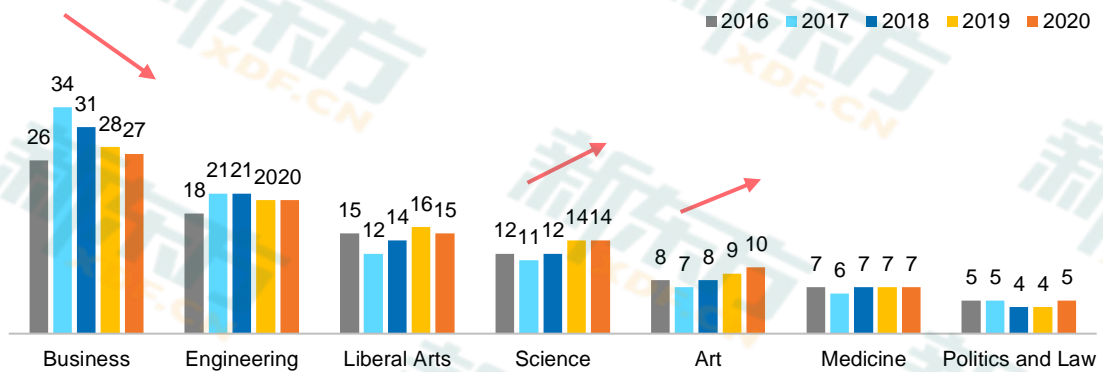
■ 2015 ■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020



### The heat of business programs continues to decline, while the heat of science and art majors rises

Business is still the most popular major among intentional students, but its popularity has shown a downward trend year after year, while the popularity of science and art majors has shown an upward trend. This is related to the improvement of national living standards, and students are paying more attention to the pursuit of interests and hobbies, as well as the changes in the demand for such professional posts in the development of relevant national industries.

Types of majors students are interested in (%)





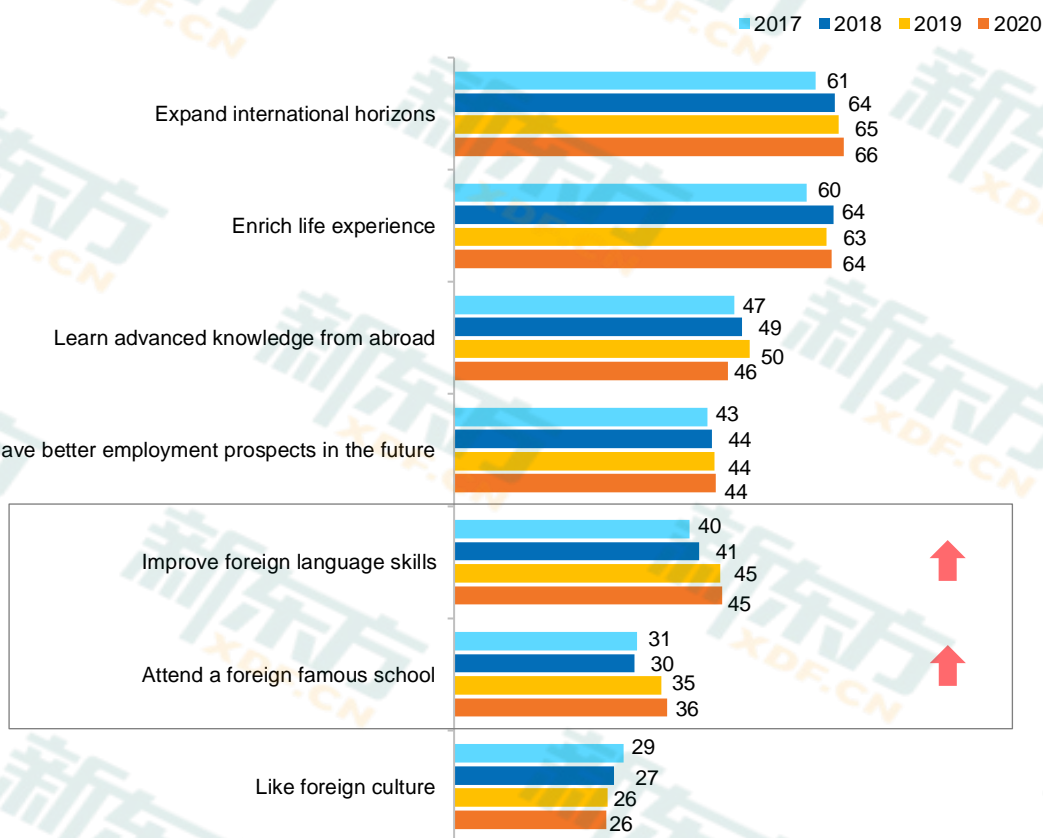
## Part 2. Purpose and planning of studying abroad

### Expectations of studying abroad

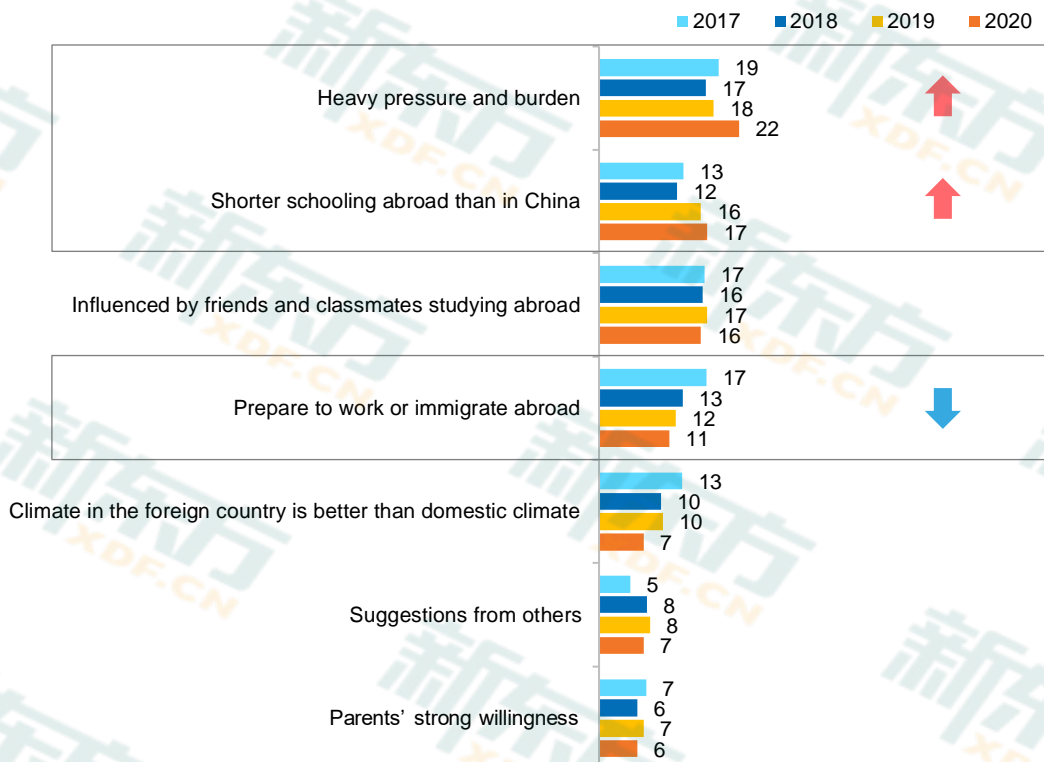
#### "Self-improvement" is still the main purpose of people intending to study abroad

In the survey of the purpose of studying abroad, comparing with the data of previous years, it can be found that "expanding the international vision" and "enriching the life experience" are still the main purposes of the people intending to study abroad. In addition, more people pay attention to the improvement of foreign language ability and attending prestigious schools. However, due to the heavy educational burden in home country and short length of schooling abroad, the number of people planning to study abroad has also increased. The number of people who plan to study abroad for the purpose of working abroad and emigrating shows a continuous downward trend.

The intentions of studying abroad (%)

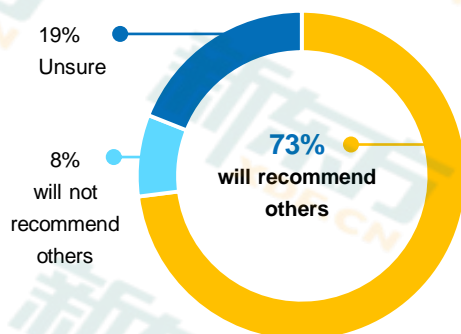


### More than 70% of experienced people are willing to recommend others to study abroad

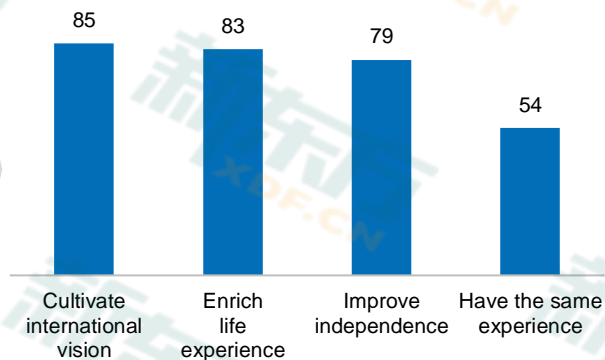


With the increasing number of people studying abroad, more and more people recognize the positive impact. More than 70% of experienced people expressed their willingness to recommend people around them or their children to study abroad, so as to cultivate their international vision, enrich their life experience and improve their ability to be independent through studying abroad.

### Recommendation of Experienced Overseas Students (%)



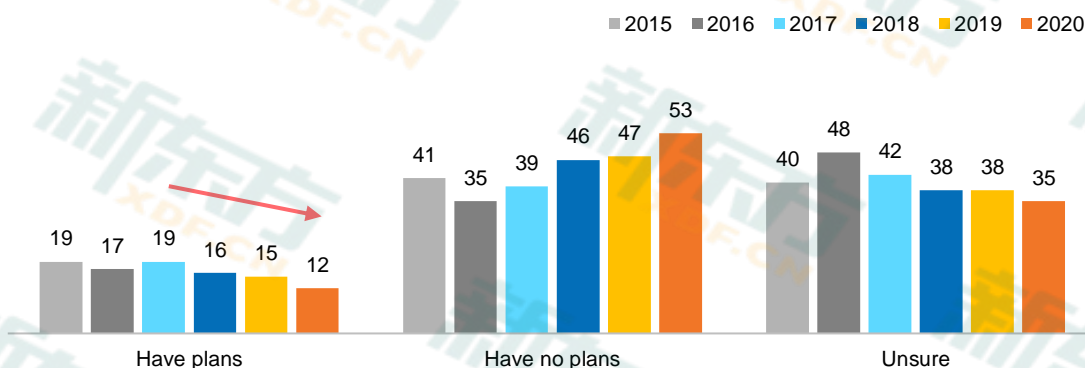
### Reasons for Recommending Others to Study Abroad (%)



### Returning the home country for development is the first choice, and immigration intention is declining year by year

With the steady development of the domestic economy, the idea of students emigrating through studying abroad has gradually weakened. The comprehensive strength of the home country has increased, and the living standards of people have improved, both of which have made students have a clear plan to return. In recent years, the proportion of people with immigration plans has declined significantly, down to 12%. The proportion of people without immigration plans has risen significantly, up to 53%, compared with 47% of last year. However, the proportion of uncertain groups has also dropped again, and students' goals before studying abroad are becoming clearer.

Intention of immigration of people intending to study abroad (%)



### Deciding universities and majors

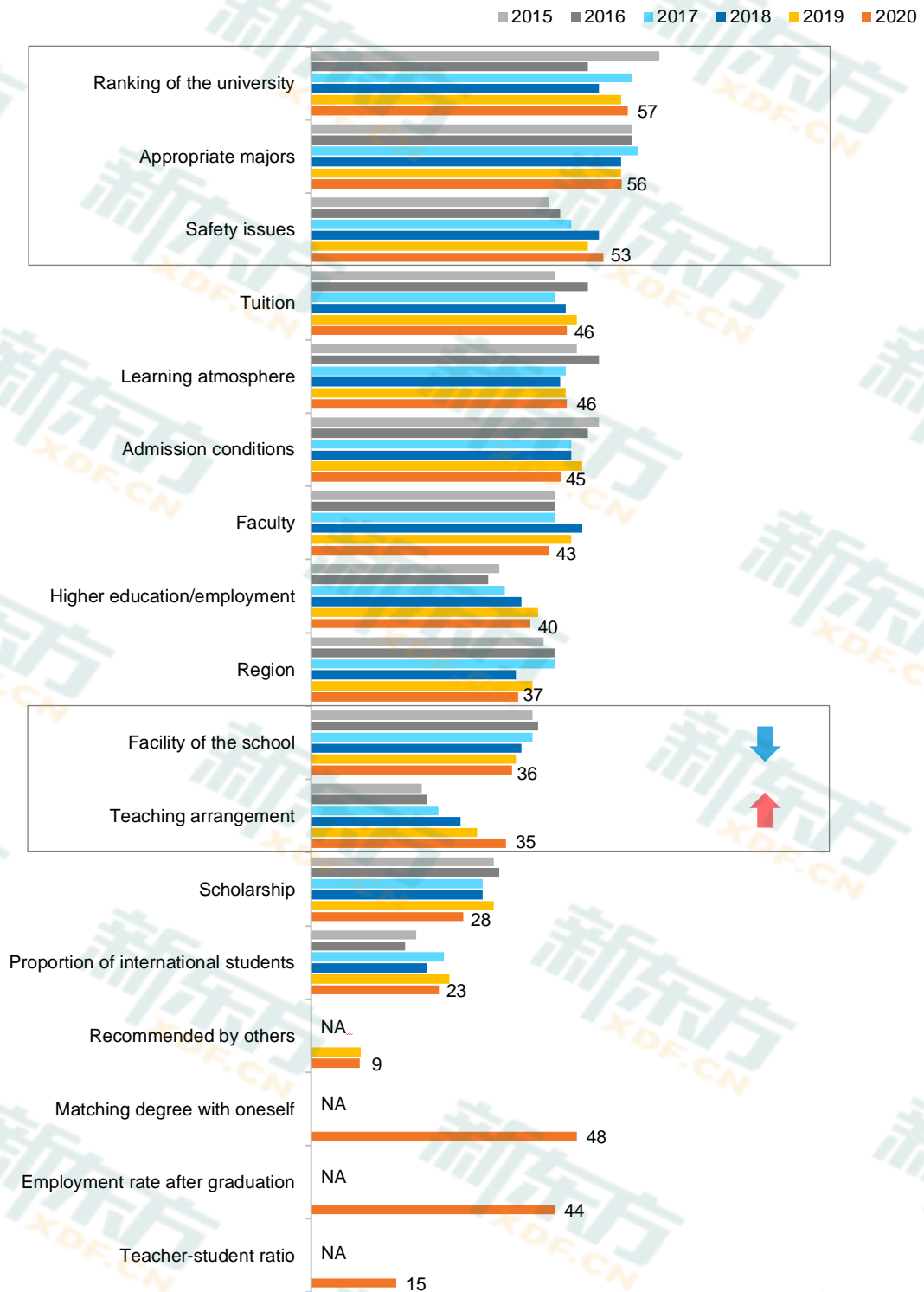
#### When choosing universities, the attention to teaching arrangements has increased significantly

University ranking, appropriate majors and safety issues are still important considerations when choosing universities for people intending to study abroad. At the same time, the proportion of emphasis on teaching arrangements is rising year by year.

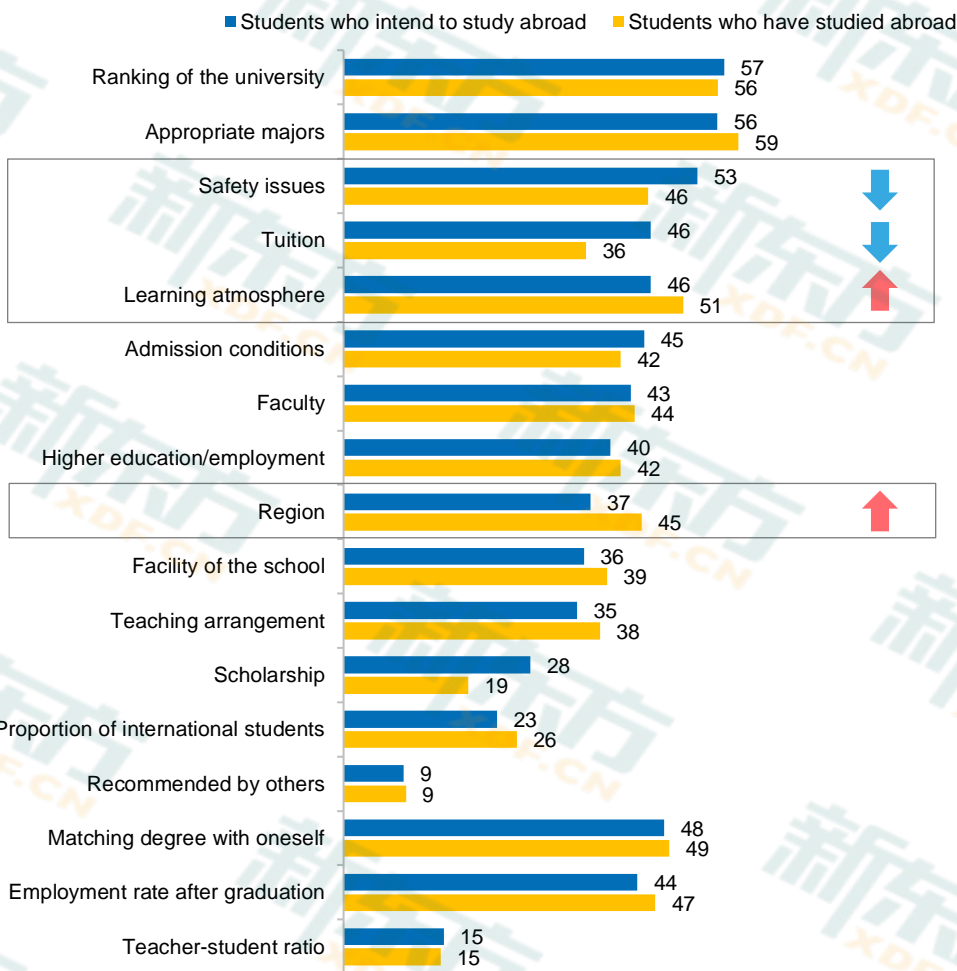
Compared with the people intending to study abroad, the factors chosen by people who have already studied abroad are more focused on study itself. They think that when choosing universities, they should pay more attention to the factors of the study atmosphere and region. They are more at ease in terms of safety, while the tuition is a secondary important factor.



### Considerations of people intending to study abroad when choosing a school (%)



### Considerations when choosing universities - People intending to study abroad vs people who have already studied abroad (%)



#### When choosing universities, the attention of comprehensive ranking increases while the major ranking decreases

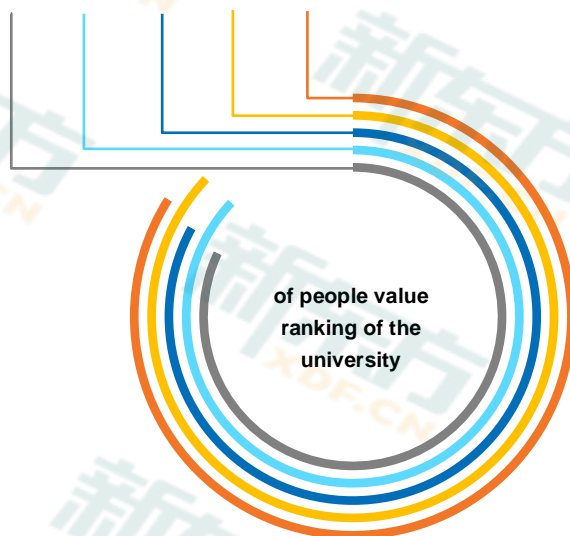
Compared with the data of the past five years, people intending to study abroad have always paid close attention to the school ranking when choosing universities. As more overseas students tend to return the home country to work, the competition for employment in the domestic market is increasing. More than 80% of the people intending to study abroad value university ranking, high-quality teaching and the popularity of universities, which has become a stepping stone for them to enter famous enterprises.

However, through the comparison of data in the past four years, it can be seen that people intending to study abroad attach great importance to the comprehensive ranking of universities and the major ranking, but the importance to the comprehensive ranking of universities increases year by year, while the attention to the major ranking shows a downward trend, which may also be affected by the competitive pressure in domestic employment. Compared with the comprehensive ranking, the major ranking can better reflect the real teaching level of the university in a certain professional field, and the teaching in the professional field is crucial to the postgraduate study.

Domestic enterprises have a high awareness of the comprehensive ranking in the initial resume selecting stage. Sometimes it is possible to ignore universities with higher major ranking, which also leads to the people intending to study abroad paying more attention to the comprehensive ranking of universities to a certain extent. Students are also reminded that overseas education is indeed a good stepping stone at the beginning of employment. However, long-term career development still depends on the ability and foundation of skill learning in professional fields. Therefore, when applying for universities, it is suggested to start from the intended major and long-term career development plan, and comprehensively weigh various factors such as comprehensive ranking, major ranking and the matching degree between universities and students.

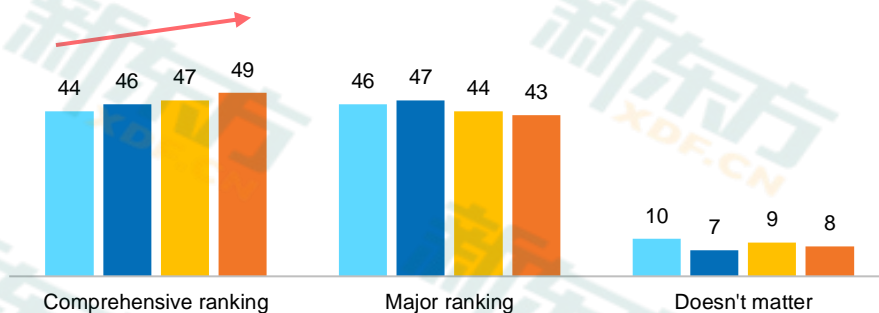
The Attention to School Ranking of Intentional Groups

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020  
82% 87% 83% 87% 83%



Ranking Types of Schools Valued by Intentional Groups (%)

2017 2018 2019 2020



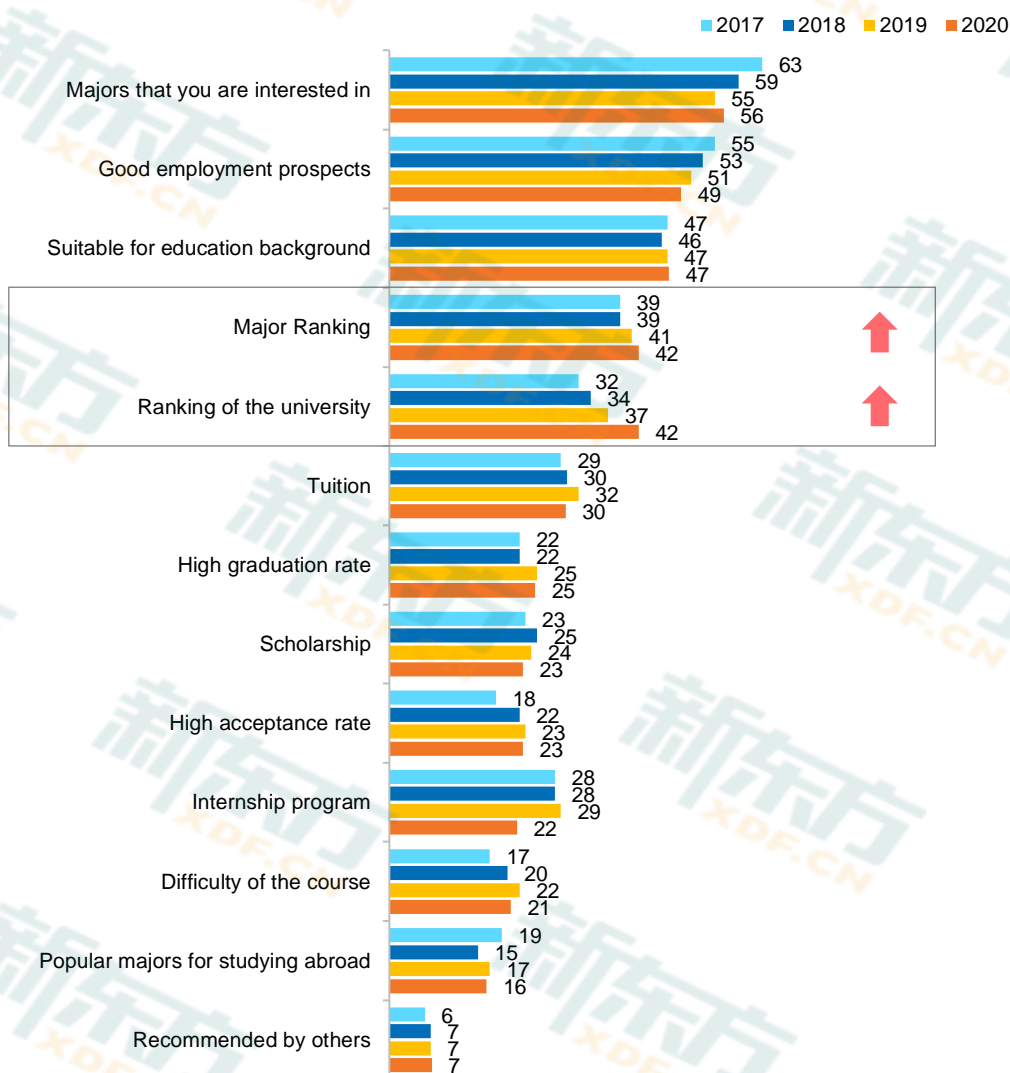


### When choosing a major, the attention to ranking continues to rise

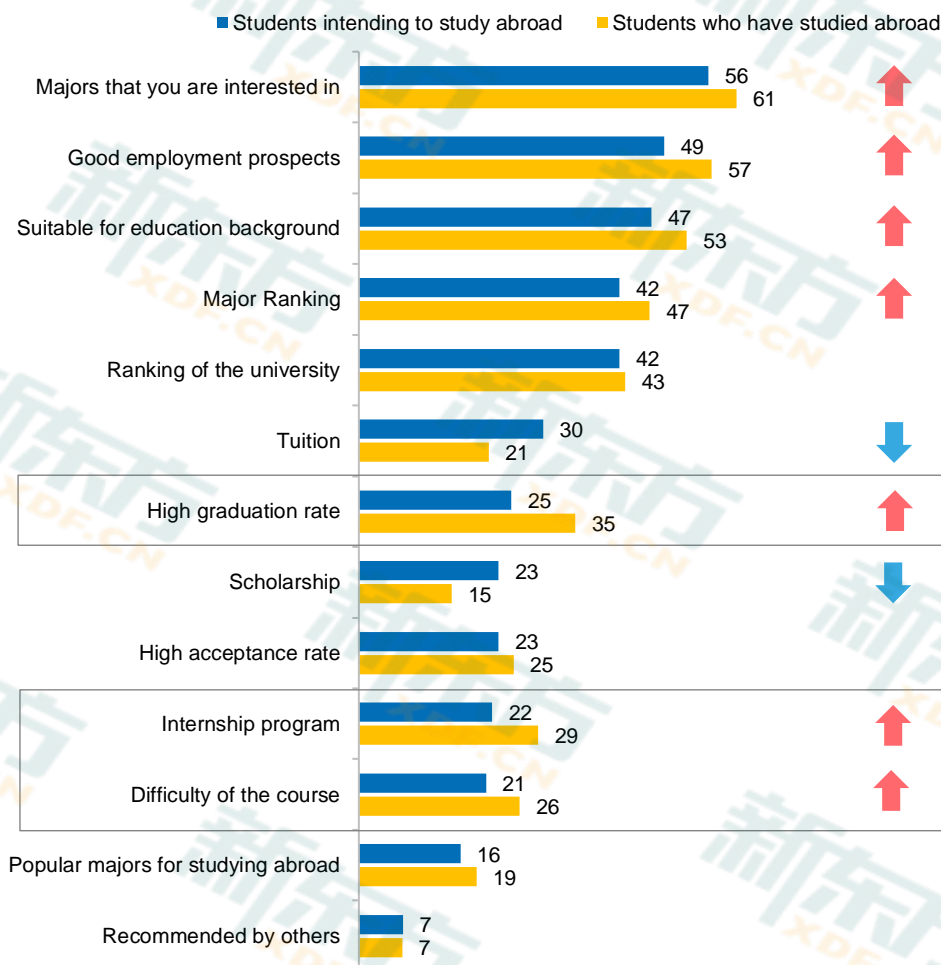
The top three considerations for people intending to study abroad when choosing their majors are still interest, employment prospects and suitability for themselves, but there is a downward trend. However, the attention to major ranking and university ranking has increased year by year. It can be seen that when students choose their majors, they not only start from suitability and career development, but also begin to pay attention to the stepping stone attribute of diploma in job hunting.

However, compared with the people intending to study abroad, the experienced groups think that graduation rate, internship program and difficulty of courses are equally important when choosing a major, and they do not attach great importance to economic factors such as tuition fees and scholarships.

Considerations of people intending to study abroad when selecting majors (%)



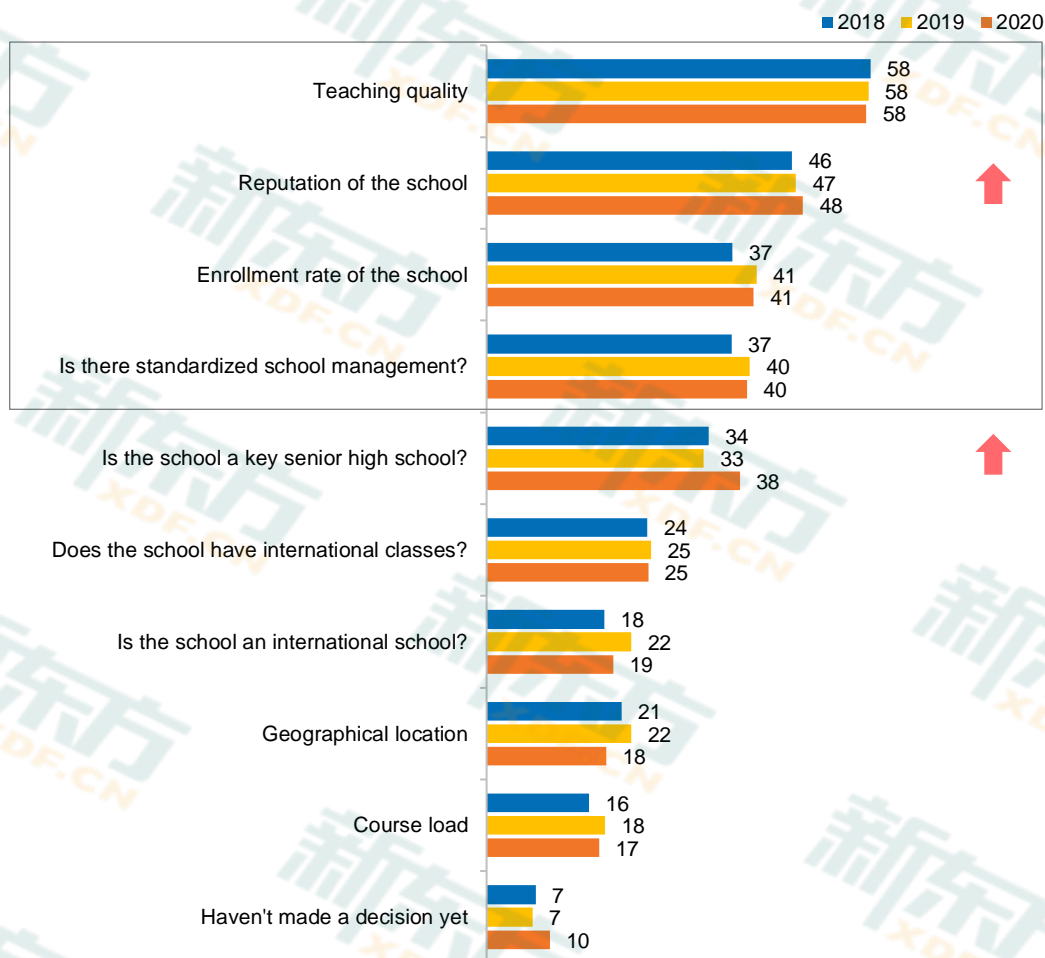
### Considerations when choosing a major - people intending to study abroad/ people who have already studied abroad (%)



#### The group planning to study abroad for undergraduate studies is paying more attention to the influence of domestic high schools

Among the people who plan to study abroad for undergraduate courses, they pay more attention to the factors of school influence when choosing domestic high schools. The teaching quality, school reputation, school promotion rate and whether school management is standardized are the key items of concern to this group. The considerations on the reputation of schools and whether domestic high schools are key schools have increased significantly. Due to the increasing number of overseas students and the increasing hard strength of applicants, it is even more important to optimize the application background so as to improve the admission rate.

**Considerations when choosing a domestic high school - students intending to study abroad for a bachelor degree (%)**



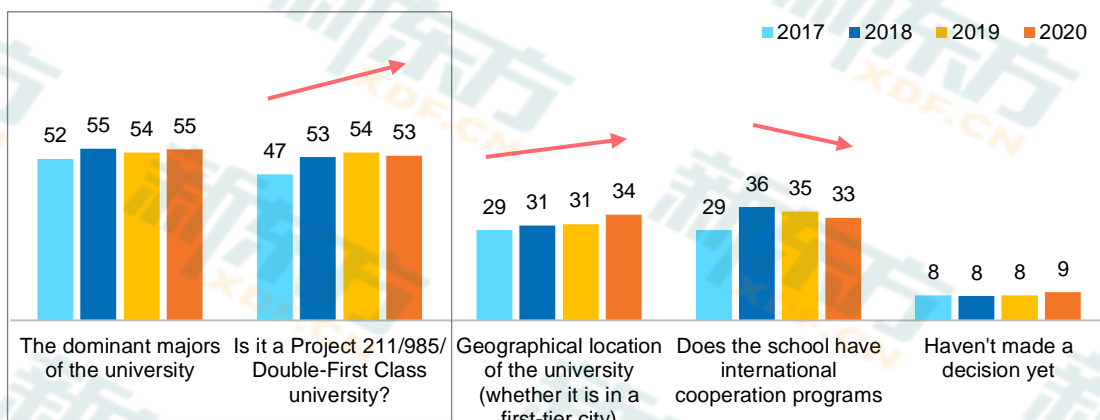
### **Students who plan to study abroad for master's degree are paying more attention to the background and geographical location of domestic universities**

When people who plan to study as postgraduate students choose universities in China, they still pay high attention to the advantageous majors and university backgrounds. At the same time, this year, this group's attention to whether domestic universities are located in first-tier cities has increased significantly, while its attention to whether universities have international cooperation projects has decreased.

With the increasing number of students studying abroad, the competition for applying for studying abroad is also more intense. In addition to standardized examination results and GPA in school, rich personal practical experience has also become a necessary factor for students to apply for studying abroad. First-tier cities are economically developed, which can provide more practical opportunities for students to improve their comprehensive background strength. However, with the improvement of people's overall living standards, the increase in the proportion of people studying abroad at their own expense, and the rapid development of the study abroad service industry in recent years, students' dependence on the university's international cooperation projects is gradually decreasing.



### Considerations when choosing a domestic university/college - students intending to study abroad for a master's degree (%)



### Budget and cost for studying abroad

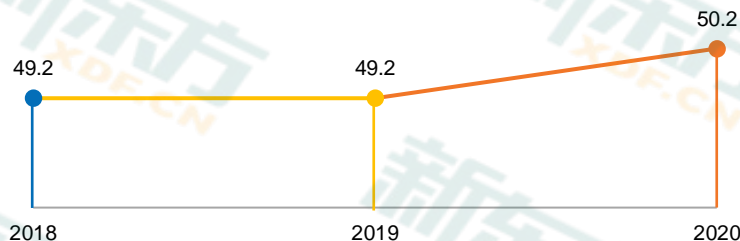
#### More than 60% of the people spent in line with the budget during the time studying abroad

According to survey data, the overseas education budget expenditure of people intending to study abroad is about 500,000 yuan, basically the same as last year, mainly involving tuition fees, living and housing expenses.

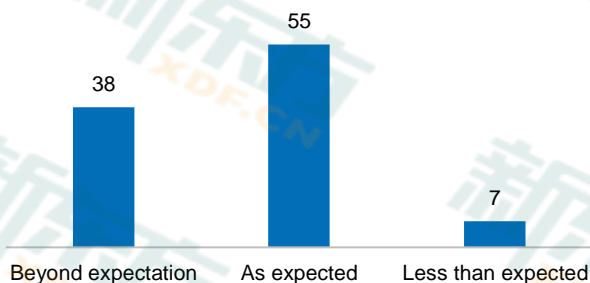
In terms of actual expenses, nearly 40% of the experienced people think that they exceed the budget, mainly including basic living expenses, housing expenses and entertainment expenses. More than 60% of the people think it is in line with the budget. In fact, through reasonable planning, the budget and actual expenses can be perfectly balanced. It is suggested that overseas students can take part in some pre-trip guidance courses or consult with predecessors with relevant experience, so as to reduce unnecessary expenses.

#### Average Study Budget of Intentional Groups

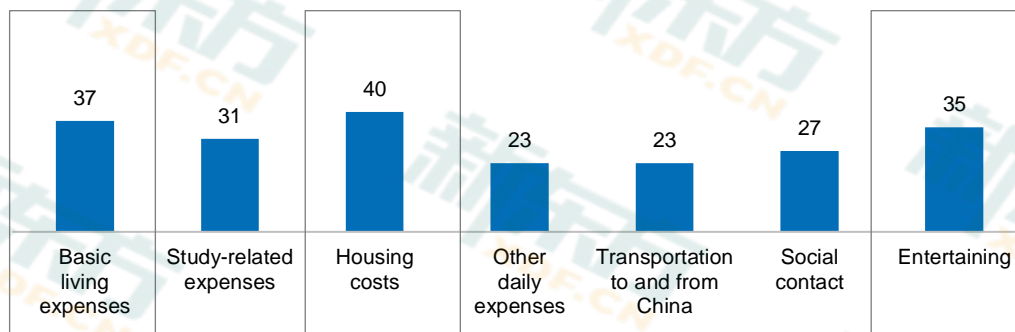
RMB 22,000 Consulting service | RMB 500,200 Cost spent during studying abroad



Actual Expenses of Experienced Groups (%)



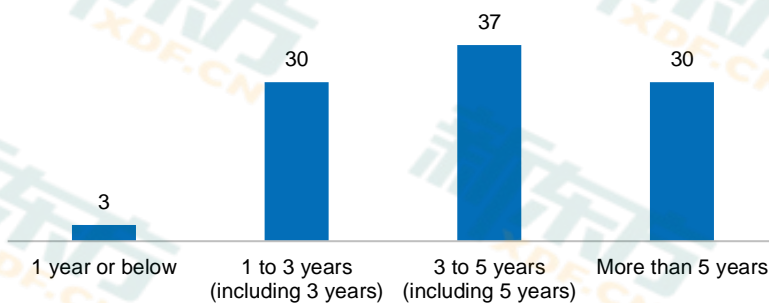
Actual expense items exceeding the budget of people with overseas study experience (%)



**70% of the group think that they can recover their expenses for studying abroad within five years of work**

According to the survey data of experienced people, 30% of them think that the working income in 1-3 years can be equal to the cost of studying abroad, 37% think that it will take 3-5 years, and the other 30% think that it will take more than 5 years. The proportion of all kinds of people is relatively balanced, which shows that the expenditure and income of overseas students are already diversified and cannot be generalized.

Time When Income Can be Equal to Cost-Experienced Groups (%)



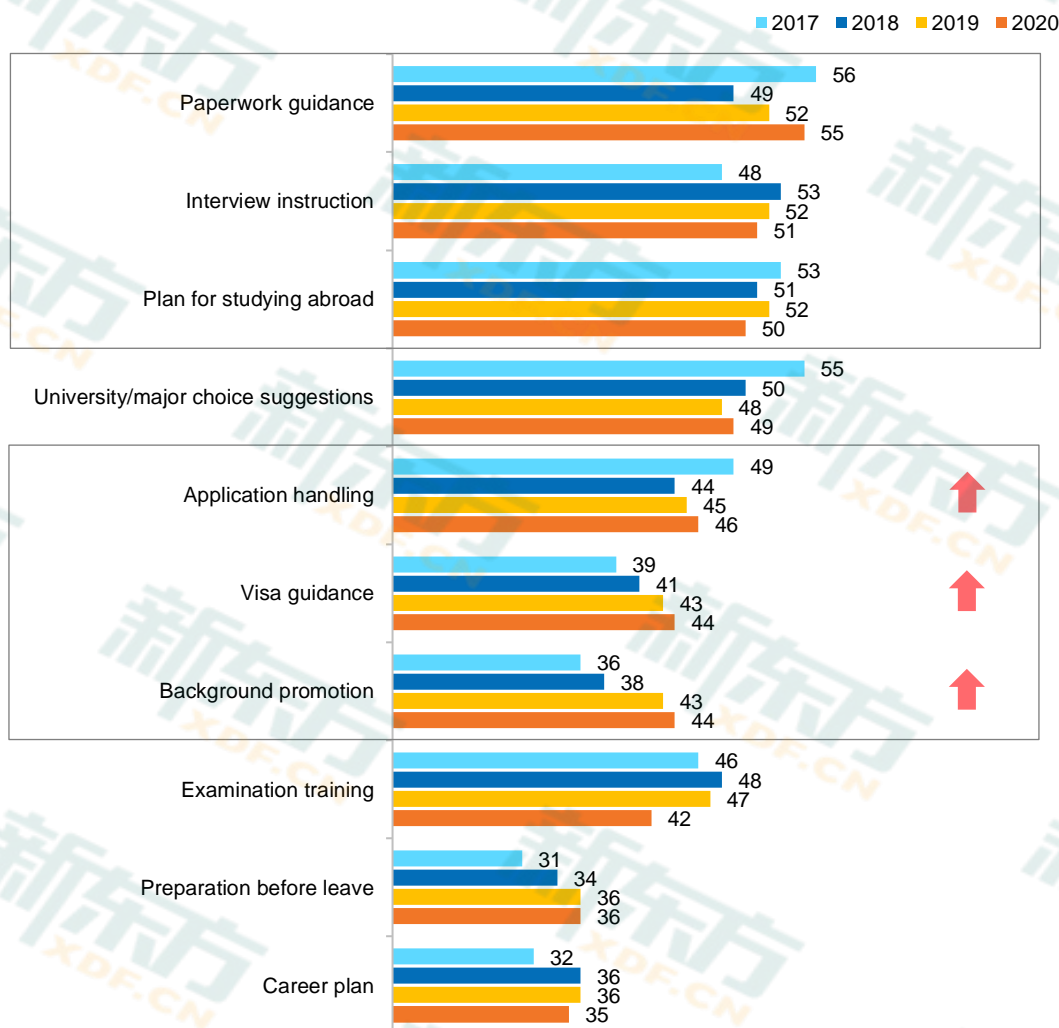
## Part 3. Preparation and concerns for studying abroad

### Difficulties during the application period

#### The demand for background improvement and visa guidance increases year by year

The demands of people intending to study abroad cover all aspects during the application process and are relatively evenly distributed. However, the demand for "document guidance", "interview guidance" and "study abroad planning" is still in the forefront. In addition, compared with the 4-year data, the demand for visa guidance and background improvement is increasing year by year.

The link that needs help in the process of applying for studying abroad (%)



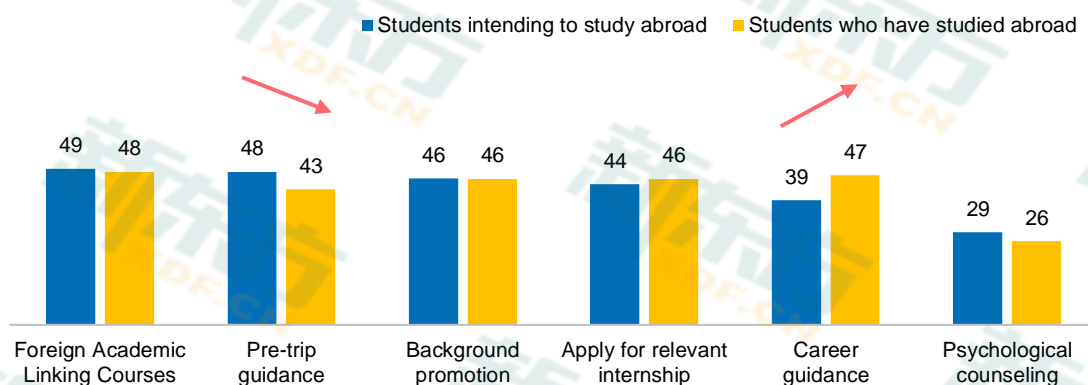


### Before studying abroad, people underestimate the importance of career guidance

In the view of people intending to study abroad, foreign academic convergence courses and pre-trip guidance are key demand items, while experienced groups attach more importance to career guidance before going abroad.

Students often care more about whether they can integrate into the life overseas faster before studying abroad, but from the purpose of studying abroad itself, long-term personal career development planning may be more important.

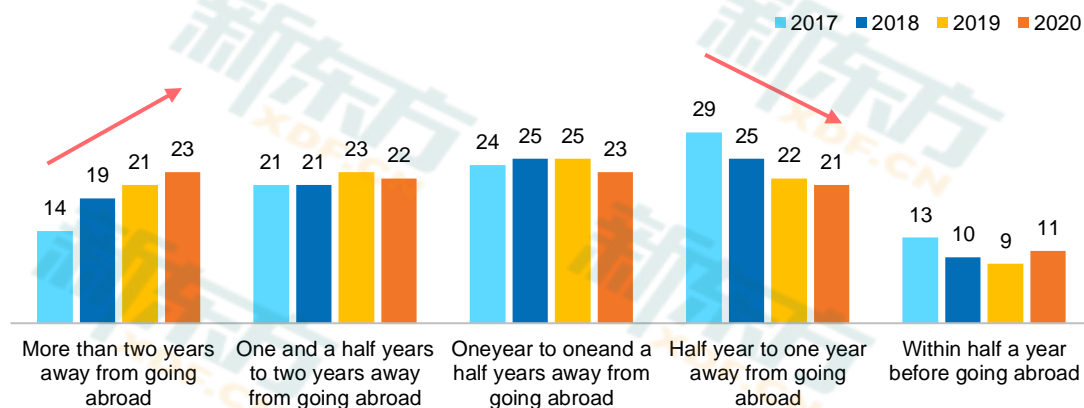
#### Overseas education services that are interested - people intending to study abroad VS people who have already studied abroad (%)



### The time to choose an overseas study consulting agency is continually shifted to an earlier date

The increase in the number of people studying abroad year by year has made the concept of "early planning and early admission" deeply rooted in people's mind. The time for people intending to study abroad to choose consult institutions is getting earlier and earlier, from six months to one year before going abroad to more than two years. Early planning can enable students to have more sufficient time to prepare relevant materials, improve various abilities required when applying for colleges, and optimize their backgrounds, thus applying to higher-quality universities.

#### When do people intending to study abroad choose overseas study consulting agencies (%)



## Concerns while studying abroad

### Cultural differences, language skills and social problems are the main problems perplexing overseas students

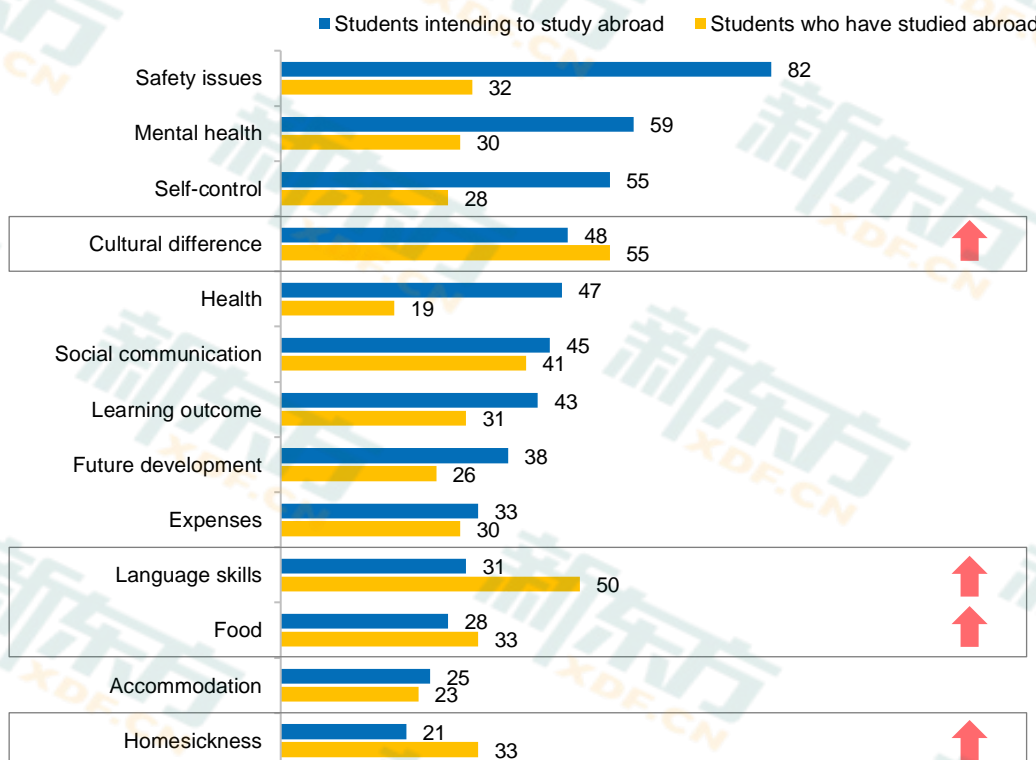
As for the problems encountered during studying abroad, the feelings of people intending to study abroad, and experienced groups are quite different.

More than 70% of intentional people put safety issues first, but according to the actual feedback from experienced people, the safety issues are not as serious as they are worried about.

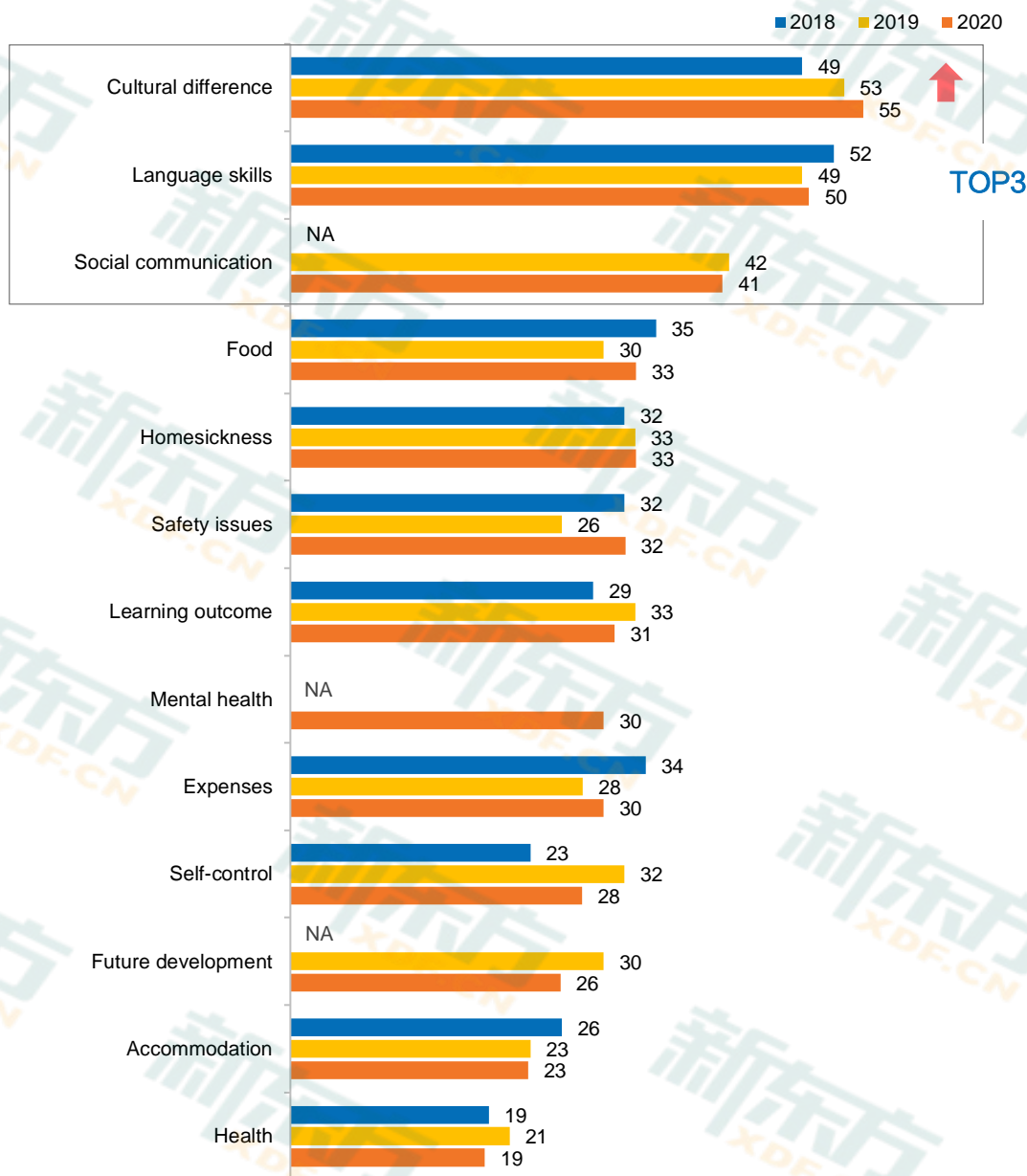
According to the feedback from experienced people, the top three problems actually encountered in overseas life are "cultural differences", "language ability" and "social problems". It is not difficult to find that the relationship between these three problems complements each other, especially that the problem of cultural differences has shown an upward trend in the past three years. With the number of Chinese students increasing in different countries, and the national pride brought about by the enhancement of China's comprehensive strength, both external conditions and internal psychology have created conditions for overseas students to "complete the process of studying abroad smoothly even if they do not integrate into the social circle of the local people". This also makes some students unwilling to break through their "comfort circle" easily in the process of studying abroad, thus preventing them from solving the problem of cultural differences.

In addition, diet and homesickness are also real problems in the process of studying abroad, but they were ignored by the intended people before studying abroad.

Problems Actually Encountered in Abroad Life-Intentional Groups VS Experienced Groups (%)



Problems Actually Encountered in Abroad Life-Experienced Groups (%)



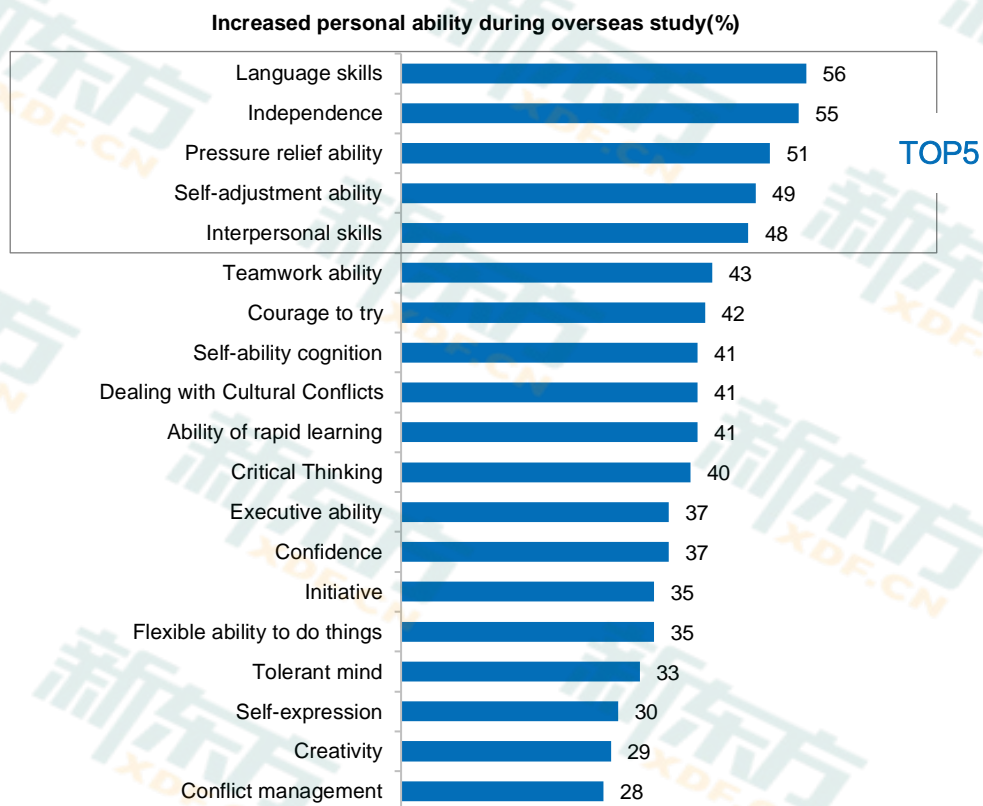


## Part 4. The value and significance of studying abroad

### Development of skills and abilities

#### Enhancement of personal ability contributed by overseas study experience

Looking back on studying abroad, experienced people generally believe that their language ability, independence, pressure resistance, self-adjustment ability and interpersonal communication ability have been significantly improved during studying abroad. Studying abroad is still a high-quality channel to improve one's comprehensive ability and achieve rapid growth.



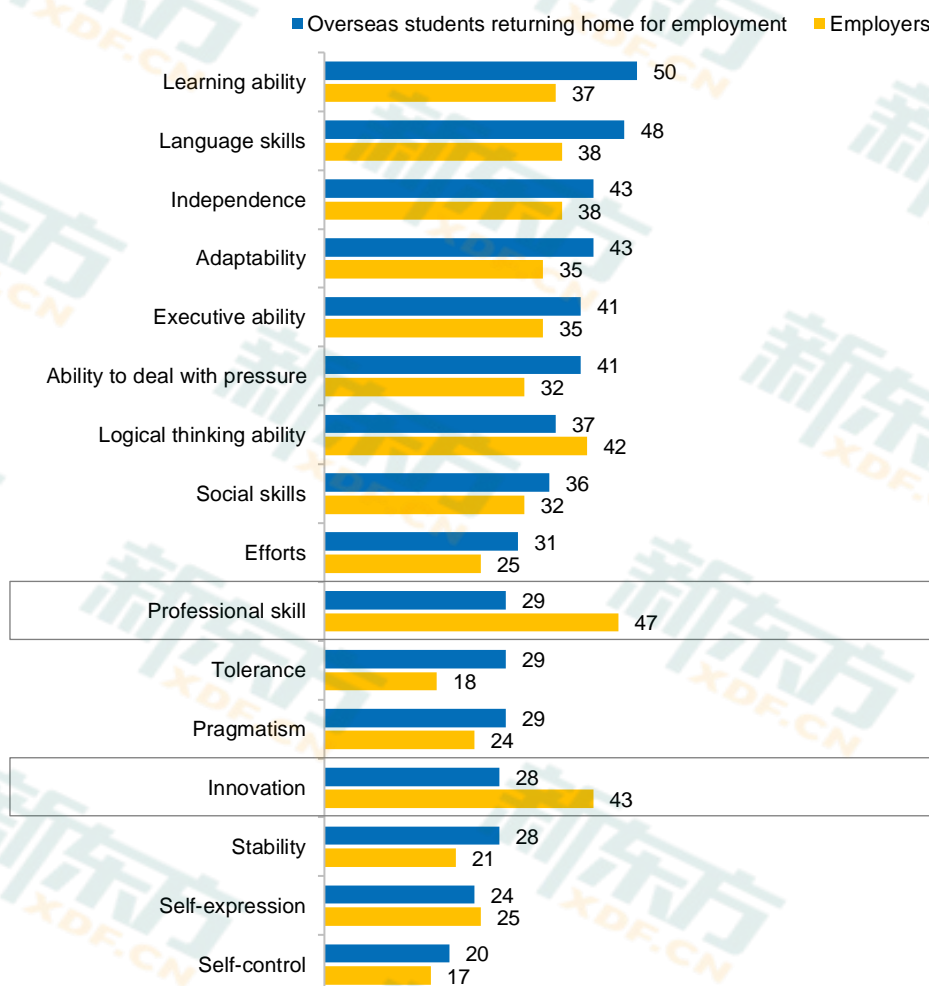
#### There are differences between the views of overseas students and employers toward the advantages and disadvantages of studying abroad

Comparing the cognition of employers and overseas students returning to work on the advantages of studying abroad, there is still a certain difference between the two groups. Overseas students' evaluation of their innovation ability and professional skills is conservative, but it is an obvious advantage in the eyes of employers. It can be seen from this that some more advanced professional skill courses and open teaching methods in foreign countries have given overseas students the advantages to surpass domestic graduates in the eyes of employers.

However, the advantages that overseas students advocate, such as learning ability and language ability, are lower than the employment expectations of enterprises. With the increase of overseas students, the graduates studying abroad in the job market also show a mixed phenomenon. Some students who do not make full use of the time when they are studying abroad to study and improve themselves may find it difficult to meet the expectations of employers for overseas returnees.

Today, when globalization has penetrated all walks of life, employers may have a higher demand for the language ability of talents with overseas background. Although overseas students generally believe that they have improved their language ability through studying abroad, this degree of improvement may not catch up with the fierce competition in the job market. In some cutting-edge science and technology industries, the change of technology is very fast, and practitioners need strong English literature learning and research ability to stand out. However, some other industries' demand for overseas returnees in some industries lies in their fluent daily spoken English. Therefore, during studying abroad, they should be more open-minded and not only focus on the mother tongue circle. Having excellent English communication skills can help overseas students to add value to themselves better.

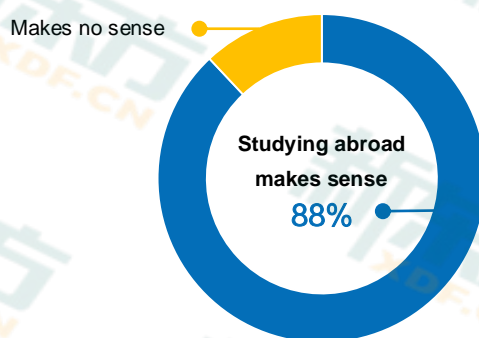
**Advantages of returnees in work according to returnees VS employers (%)**



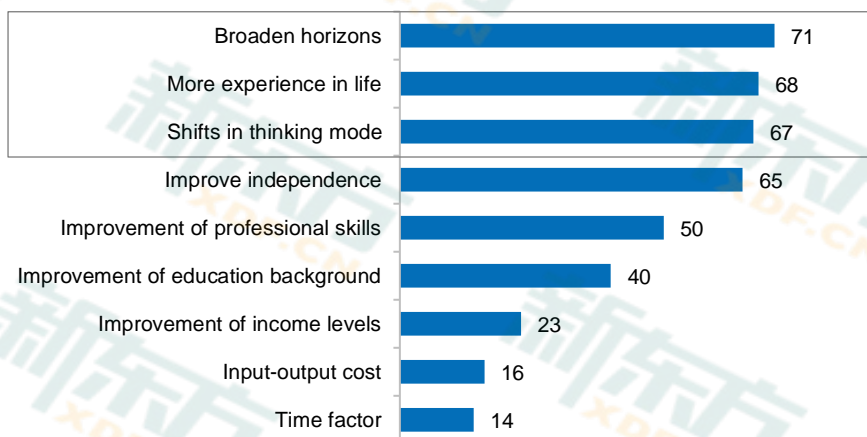
### Employers recognize the significance of studying abroad to life

Among the interviewees from enterprises, nearly 90% still recognize the significance of studying abroad, especially the impact of studying abroad on broadening one's horizon, life experience and the way of thinking. Studying abroad, as a useful supplement to domestic educational resources, is also a life experience. Overseas students could immerse themselves in a cross-cultural environment, absorb advanced knowledge and technology, and then understand the wider world, which is of great benefit to growth. These values are far from measurable by money.

Employers' Views on the Significance of Studying Abroad



Factors that think studying abroad is meaningful (%)



### Planning and direction of career path

#### More and more students choose to pursue advanced studies after graduation

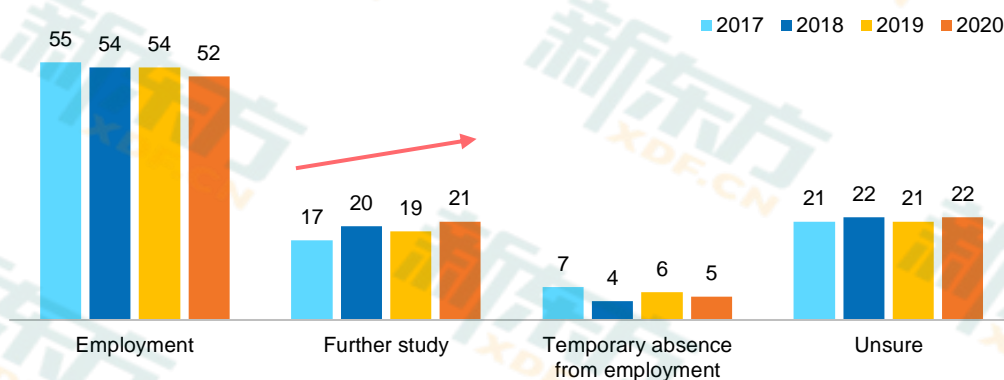
Since most of the people intending to study abroad are studying at the undergraduate level and plan to study abroad for a master's degree, more than half of the people intending to study abroad plan to put employment first after graduation.



However, what is worth paying attention to is that with the comparison of the four-year data, the proportion of people who choose further study has slightly increased. On the one hand, it may be related to the bad employment environment. More students hope to get stronger competitiveness in the workplace through higher educational level. At the same time, there is also another factor, that is, driven by both the trend of studying abroad at an early age and the popularity of running international schools at home country, the number of undergraduate students studying abroad is also increasing year by year, and many of these groups will choose to further their studies after completing their bachelor's degree.

At the same time, over 20% of the groups says that they are still "unclear" about their plans after graduation in the past four years, which shows that there is still a considerable proportion of the people intending to study abroad who lack long-term plans.

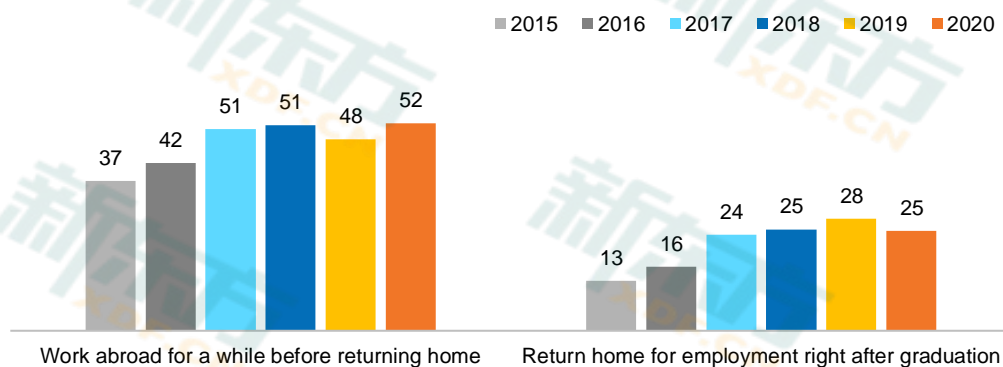
Plans after Graduation of Intentional Groups (%)



### More people begin to attach importance to overseas work experience

According to this year's survey data, more intentional students tend to work abroad for a period to accumulate more overseas practical experience before returning to home country, which is 4% upper than from last year. On the one hand, the reason behind this may be that overseas work experience can greatly enhance the competitiveness of domestic employment due to the increasing competitive pressure in the domestic job market. On the other hand, it may also be affected by the reopening of PSW work visas in Britain.

Employment intention after studying abroad (%)

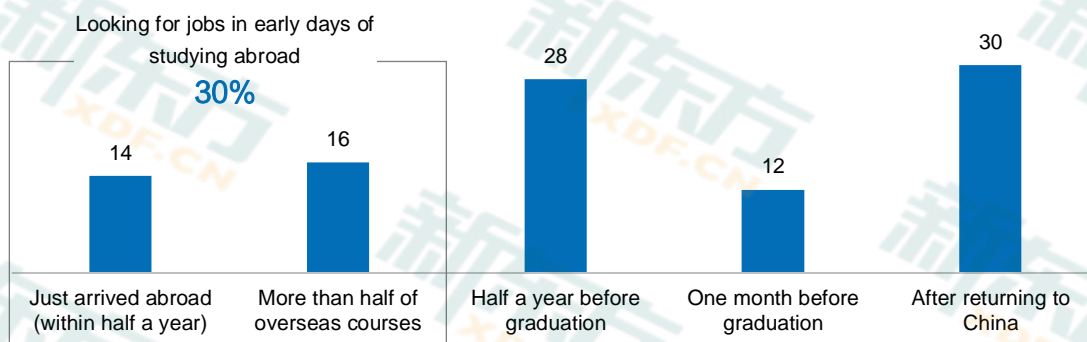


### 30% of the people have job-hunting plans at the beginning of studying abroad

According to the survey of experienced people that have started to look for jobs, 40% of the people will start looking for jobs half a year before graduation until they graduate, and 30% will choose to return to home country before starting looking for jobs.

In addition, about 30% of the people will start to look for jobs in the early stage of studying abroad. Although they are still studying at that time, many overseas students will use summer vacation to strive for internship opportunities. Even some foreign universities' programs contain internship courses. In many cases, an internship experience also means an opportunity of a formal job after graduation. Therefore, many overseas students with clear career plans and goals, or those who pay special attention to practical experience, will pay attention to work or internship opportunities at the beginning of their studies.

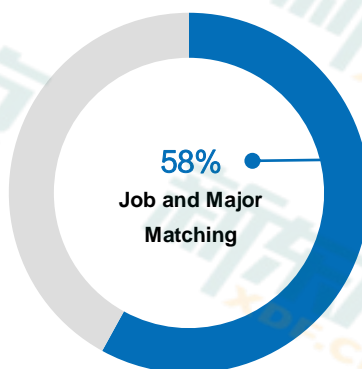
Time when Experienced Students Begin to Look for Jobs (%)



### Half of the overseas students' jobs are related to their majors

According to a survey of overseas students who have returned home country to work, nearly 60% of the graduates have chosen industries related to their majors, but the overall proportion is not high, that shows a large number of overseas students still give up their majors and join in new fields of work. It can be seen from this that overseas students do not have a clear concept of what they may do in the future when choosing their majors. These blind spots also prevent the value of studying abroad from being maximized.

Matching Degree between Work and Major of Experienced Groups

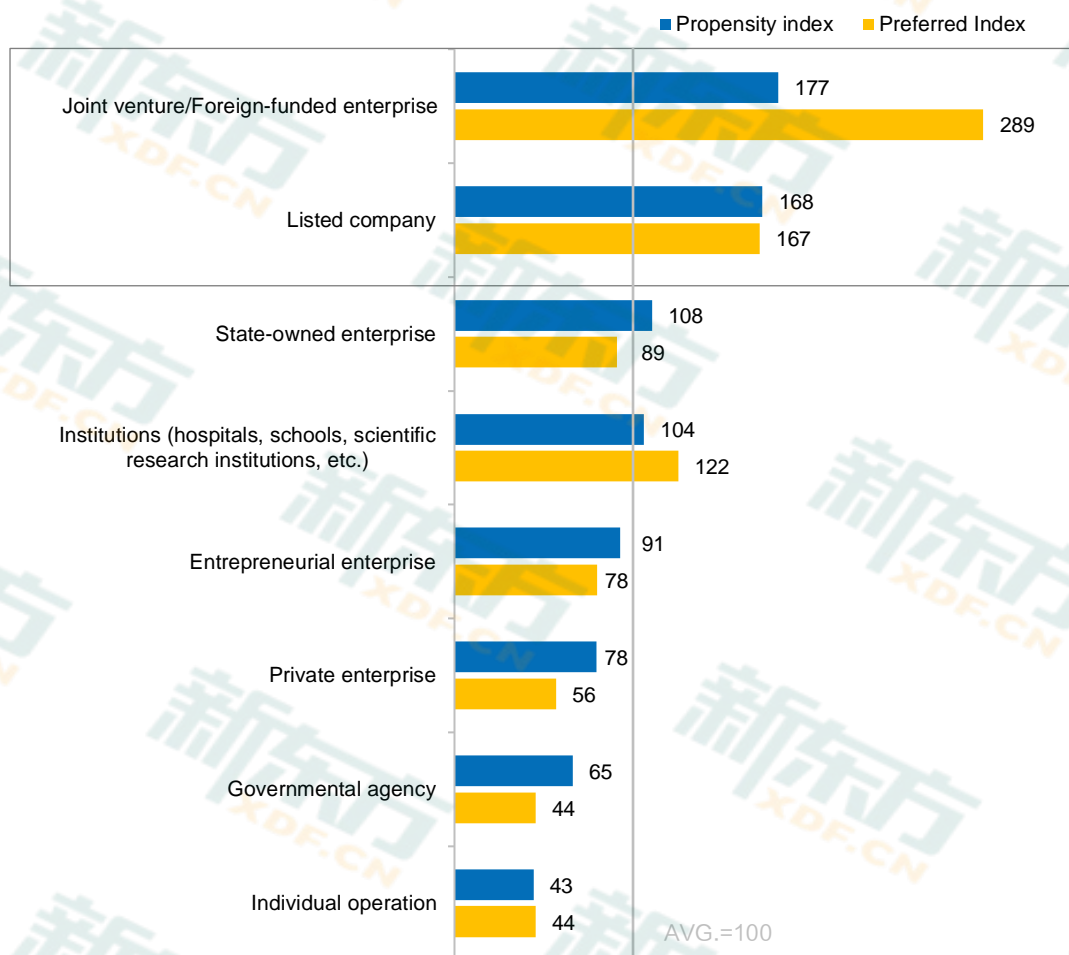


### Large enterprises are still the first choice for employment and overseas students prefer open and diversified work environment

In terms of employment choices, as large platforms can bring more opportunities and maximize the benefits of studying abroad, most overseas students still tend to regard large enterprises as their first choice. In terms of enterprise types, due to the fact that the atmosphere and composition of personnel of joint ventures and foreign-funded enterprises are relatively more international, they are more popular with overseas students, followed by listed companies.

However, although the “in-system” jobs has a impression of stable recognized by elders, it is not the first choice for experienced groups. Overseas students still expect an open and diversified work environment.

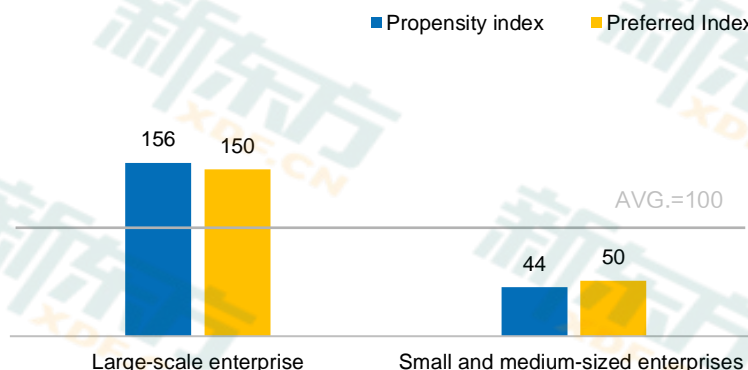
Career Choice Tendency of Experienced Students - Company Nature



\*Career selection tendency is presented in the form of index, including tendency index and preferred index, with 100 as the average level. An index higher than 100 indicates stronger tendency, while an index lower than 100 indicates weaker tendency.



Career Choice Tendency of Experienced Students-Enterprise Scale



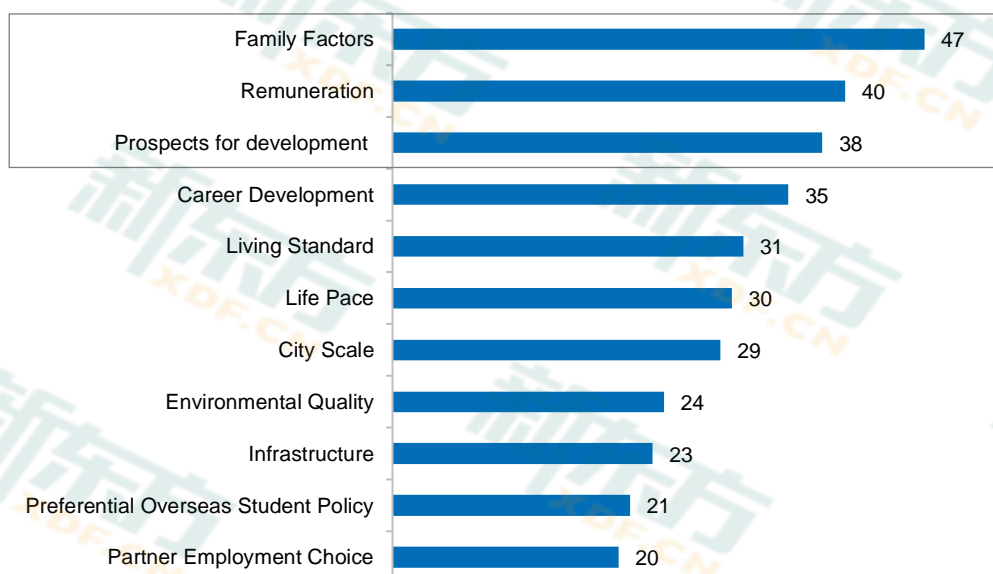
### Family factors, salary and urban development are the main factors for choosing work cities

Influenced by Chinese traditional culture, family factors still occupy the largest proportion of considerations when overseas graduates choose domestic development cities. In addition, salary, urban development prospects and career development are also important consideration aspects.

In contrast, living environment factors such as living standard, rhythm, city size, environment and infrastructure are not very important. In addition, the city's preferential policies for overseas students are rarely emphasized. It can be seen that apart from their families, overseas graduates are mostly concerned about their development in the workplace and do not pay much attention to the quality factors related to life.

This also reflects to a certain extent that in the current era when Chinese society is running towards a well-off society in an all-round way, the younger generation tends to pursue personal values.

Considerations in Choosing Employment Cities of Working Overseas Students (%)



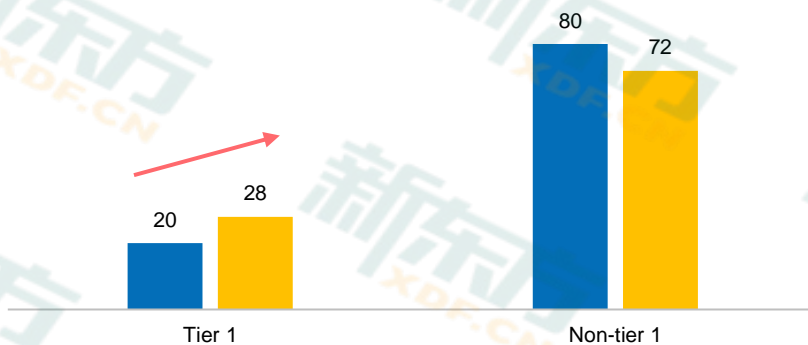
### 70% of the people chose to work in non-first-tier cities

Similarly, with the overall development of Chinese society, the emergence of new first-tier cities and the rapid construction of second-tier and third-tier cities have provided broad development space for overseas graduates. 70% of overseas graduates choose to work in non-first-tier domestic cities, but first-tier cities are still attractive for them to some extent.

In addition, due to the deepening of the popularization of studying abroad, the number of students in various cities and regions across the country who choose to study abroad is increasing. They will also choose to return to their hometown for development due to the influence of family factors. This has also greatly promoted the increase of overseas returnees in non-first-tier cities in China, and they have also become an indispensable innovation force in accelerating China's development process.

Returnees - home city VS career destination (%)

■ Home city before going abroad ■ Career destination after returning



## Problems and challenges in job hunting

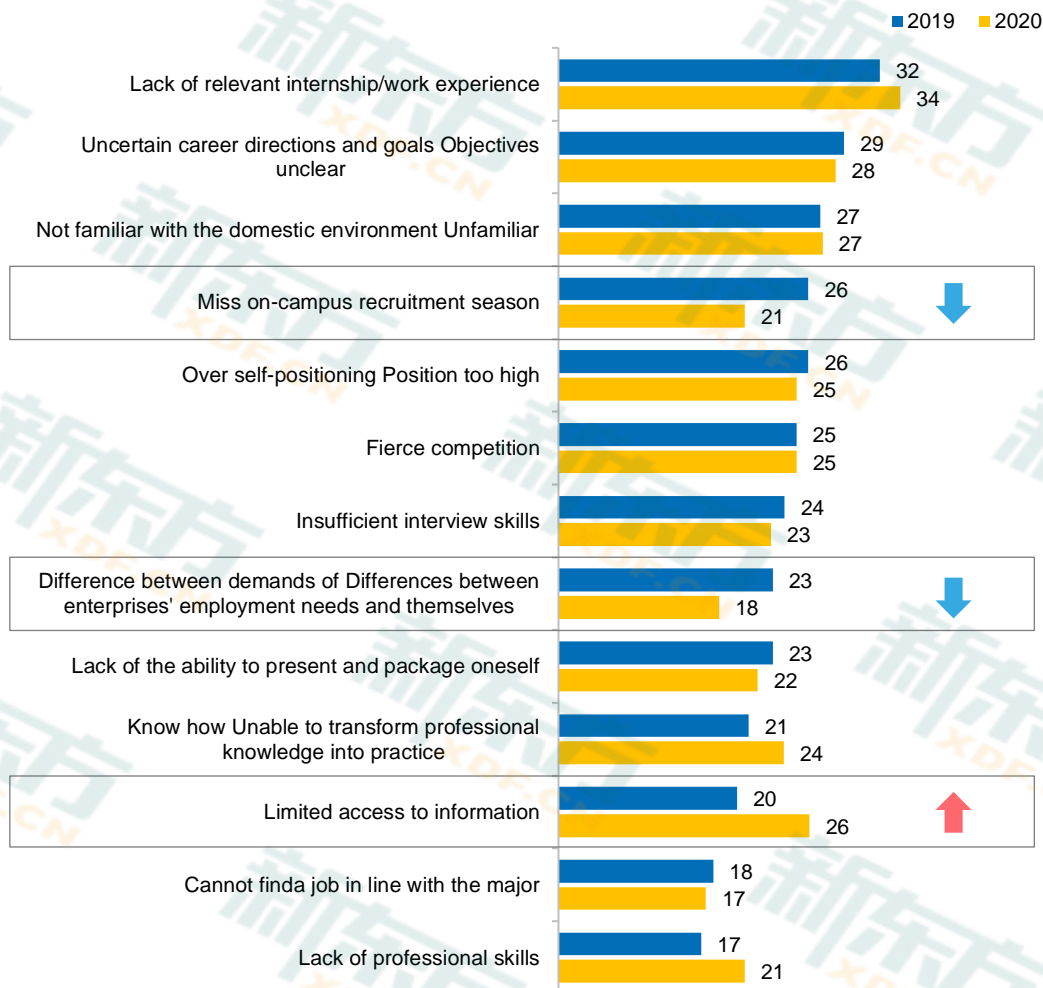
### Lack of work experience becomes a challenge in overseas returnees' job hunting

Even with overseas experience, it is not easy for overseas students to find jobs. In the survey of the experienced interviewees who have jobs, the main disadvantages when looking for a job are insufficient work or internship experience, unclear career direction and lack of understanding of the domestic situation. The early career planning awareness of overseas students still needs to be strengthened.

In addition, in this year's survey, the proportion of "missing the school recruitment season" and "differences between enterprises' employment needs and the abilities of students" has obviously decreased. In view of the fierce competition in the domestic job market, school recruitment has also become the most direct communication bridge between overseas students and enterprises. In recent years, many large domestic enterprises have also started to hold special school moves for overseas students in order to compete for high-quality overseas talents, providing more job opportunities.

The overall job-hunting problem of overseas students is generally personalized, and everyone faces different situations. Therefore, in order to enhance the comprehensive competitiveness of job-hunting and win a place in the workplace, it is necessary to make more targeted career planning schemes in the early stage.

Problems of returnees in job hunting (%)



### More overseas students can quickly adapt to the domestic working environment

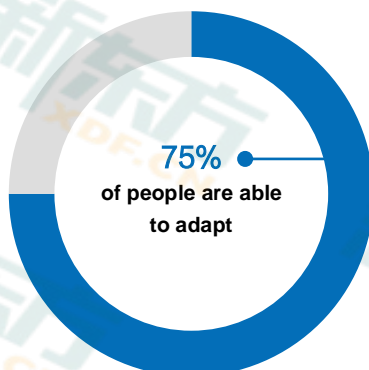
Compared with 73% last year, more overseas graduates said they could quickly adapt to the domestic working environment after returning to home country.

Compared with three years of job satisfaction, the overall situation is relatively stable. More than 60% of overseas graduates said they were satisfied with their current work industry, while their salary satisfaction has been maintained at about 40%. On the one hand, the number of overseas returnees has increased, intensifying job competition in the workplace. On the other hand, the slowdown in economic growth has prevented the overall salary level from quickly reaching the expectations of returnees in the past.

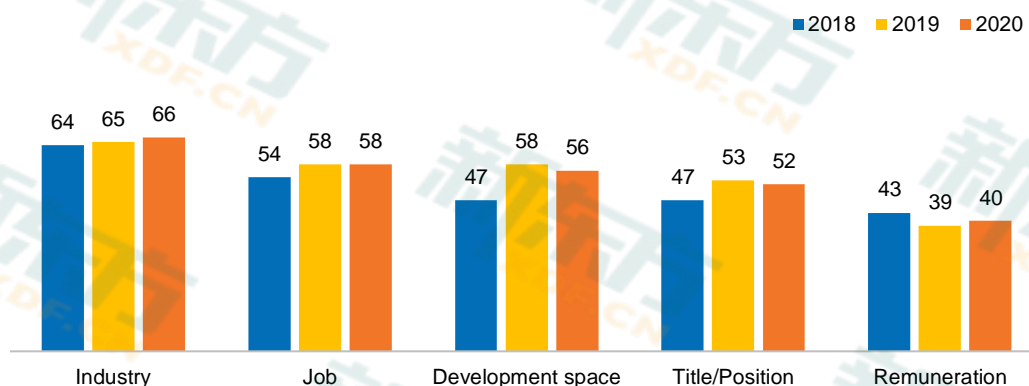
However, the initial salary does not determine everything. After passing through the adaptive learning stage of entering the workplace, if overseas graduates can give full play to the value gained from overseas learning experience, they can have a faster growth rate or long-term development in the workplace in the future.



### Adaptability of returnees to domestic working environment



### Satisfaction with Current job (%)

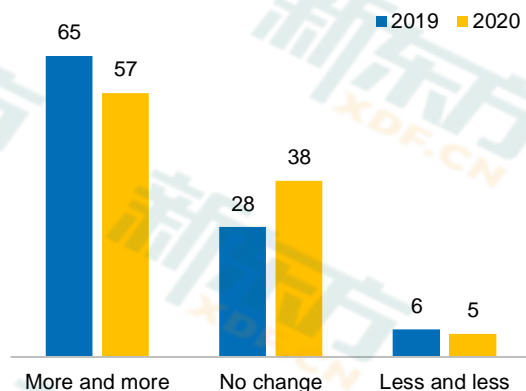


### More than 30% of employers prefer to recruit returnees

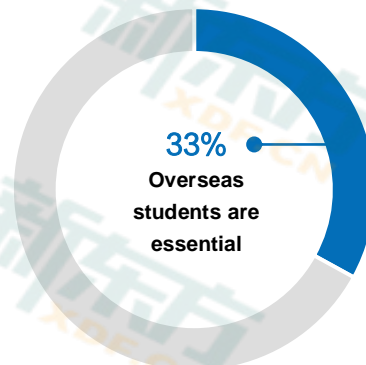
Compared with the two-year survey data, the recruitment trend of enterprises for overseas students has remained basically stable. More than one-third of them believe that the recruitment of returnees is essential, and more than 50% of enterprises still have an upward trend in recruiting returnees. This shows that returnees still have certain advantages in the process of returning to home country to work.

In the current process of globalization, due to their language advantages and global vision, returnees can play an important role to help enterprises in opening up a global market. Therefore, all kinds of enterprises have shown more urgent needs for returnees with solid hard and soft conditions. It is the recruitment preference of enterprises for overseas students that has also intensified the competition for employment in the workplace. To stand out from the crowd requires stronger comprehensive ability.

Recruitment Trend of Employers for Overseas Students (%)



Recruitment Demands for Overseas Students



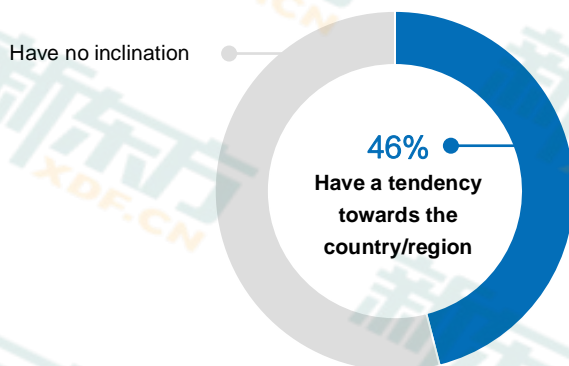
### Employers prefer students from traditional destination countries of studying abroad

According to the survey data from enterprise interviewees, about half of the employers have a certain tendency towards the countries where students study abroad, and students from traditional destination countries such as the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia are more favored by employers.

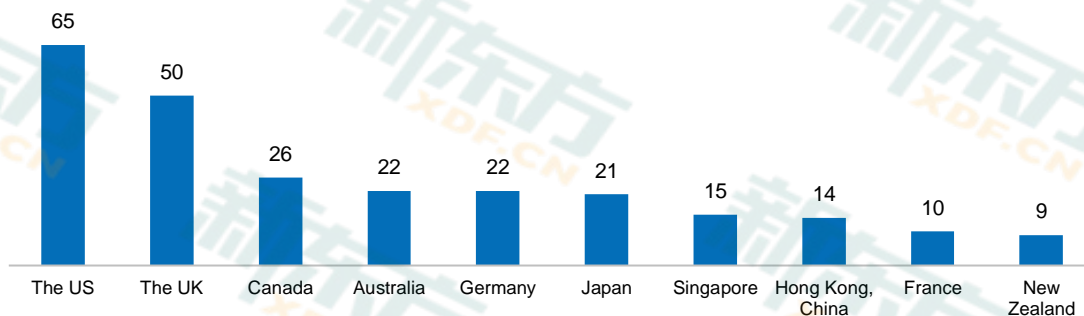
On the one hand, these large countries have advanced education level, more universities, higher ranking of universities, and are more recognized by enterprises. On the other hand, these countries have a higher degree of internationalization of education, a higher degree of industrial maturity and a larger number of students.

With the deepening of communication between China and the world, studying abroad is becoming more and more normal, gradually entering ordinary families. European and Asian countries are also developing well, and their education costs are low enough to be cost effective. Therefore, they are becoming increasingly favored by overseas students. In addition, its advantages in minority languages and the promotion of the national strategy along the Belt and Road will also be a force that cannot be underestimated in the job market in the future.

Employers' Tendency to Countries/Regions in Recruiting Overseas Students



TOP 10 Tendency to Countries/Regions (%)



### Overseas work and internship experience are advantages for returning to home country for employment

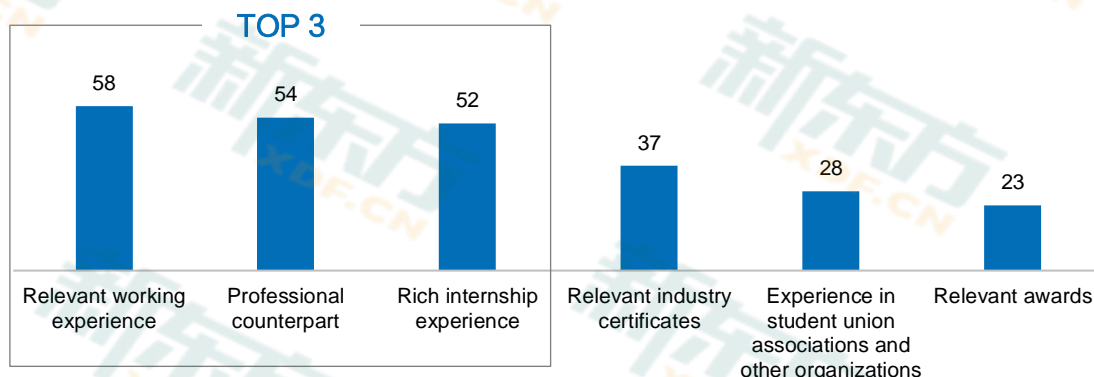
Today's employers not only value the academic situation of overseas students, but also hope that they have rich experience. In this year's survey, more than half of the employers said they preferred overseas students with relevant working background, professional counterparts and rich internship experience.

Professional counterpart requires overseas students to plan their future career fields when choosing their major before going abroad. Overseas work and internship experience are effective ways for overseas students to increase their knowledge and exercise their abilities.

In recent years, in order to attract overseas students, some countries have introduced some favorable policies to facilitate overseas students to accumulate overseas work experience. For example, courses and graduation internships are provided, and overseas students are likely to continue to stay in the destination country if they can find qualified jobs.

In addition, foreign higher education also has many degrees or majors with corresponding internship programs. Schools and teachers often provide students with practical opportunities and resources to help students practice what they have learned in class.

Background of Employers' Tendency to Recruit Overseas Students (%)



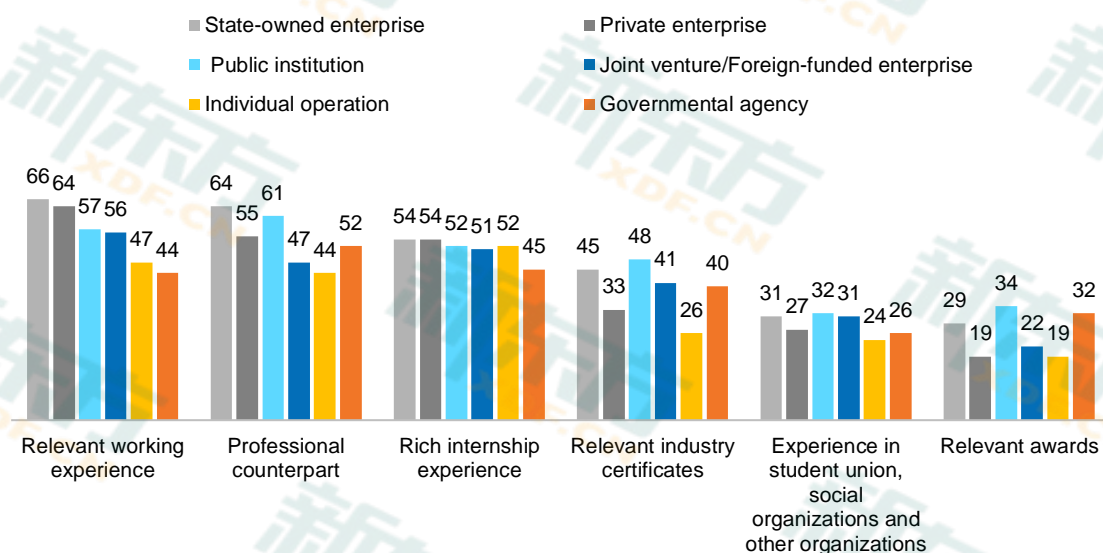


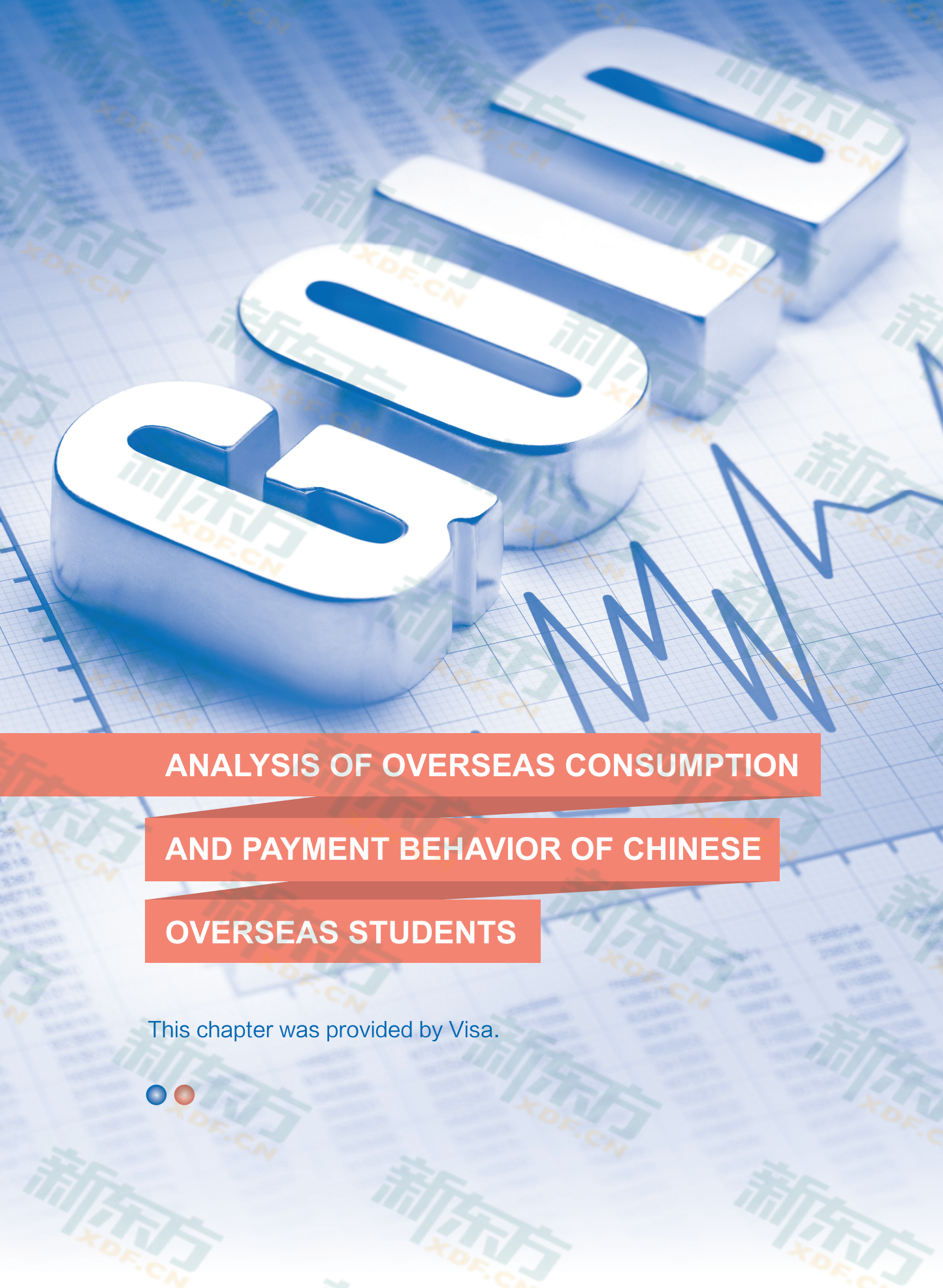
### Different types of enterprises have different emphases in recruiting returnees.

In the survey of different types of enterprises, it is found that, compared with all types of enterprises, the most important background of overseas students is "relevant work experience". However, public institutions and government agencies attach the greatest importance to the "professional counterpart" of overseas students. For private companies which may lack the advantages in recruiting high-quality talents think that rich "internship experience" is enough.

Different types of enterprises have different demands for talents, and overseas students are also required to have clear career plans to enter their favorite platforms for development.

Background of Different Types of Employers Tending to Recruit Overseas Students (%)





# ANALYSIS OF OVERSEAS CONSUMPTION AND PAYMENT BEHAVIOR OF CHINESE OVERSEAS STUDENTS

This chapter was provided by Visa.





# Analysis of Overseas Consumption and Payment Behavior of Chinese Overseas Students

## Data Overview

Payment is indispensable for Chinese students studying abroad. As a global payment technology company, Visa operates the world's most advanced processing network-VisaNet, that is capable of handling more than 65,000 transaction messages a second, with fraud protection for consumers and assured payment for merchants. Visa's mission is to connect the world through the world's most innovative, reliable and secure digital payment network that enables individuals, businesses and economies to thrive. With that in mind, Visa has been adhering to its vision which is to be the best way to pay and be paid, for anyone, everywhere and anytime.

Today, Chinese students who study overseas can enjoy fast, convenient and safe payment as well as cash withdrawal services at more than 61 million point-of-sales<sup>2</sup> and 2.7 million ATM machines<sup>3</sup> worldwide. At the same time, Visa, in cooperation with many commercial banks in China, has been offering a variety of payment products and services tailored to Chinese students and their parents. Chinese students now can enjoy the convenient and secure payment experience with a peace of mind as they travel around the world, or shop online and offline.

Visa card has several unique advantages in supporting and accompanying Chinese students who study overseas:

1. Fast and reliable tuition payment, instant arrival, no need to transfer.
2. Extensive acceptance environment ensure payment convenience for students
3. Merchant promotions available throughout the year appreciated by Chinese students.

Following are the analysis and insights of cross-border transactions made on Visa cards by Chinese students studying overseas:

## European and Asian Countries studying abroad accounted for a significant increase in the proportion of transactions

Considering the distribution of the consumption countries and regions of Chinese students, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada continue to be the four major destination markets which account for 69% out of total transactions, with 3 percentage points down from that (72%) in 2018. In the meantime, the number of European and Asian countries such as Japan, Germany and Spain increased.

In terms of transaction volume, the proportion of transactions in the United States and the United Kingdom is basically the same as that in the previous year, at more than 50 percent. At the same time, respective data in Australia and Canada has remained stable, maintained at 19 percent, while the overall share of major countries studying abroad

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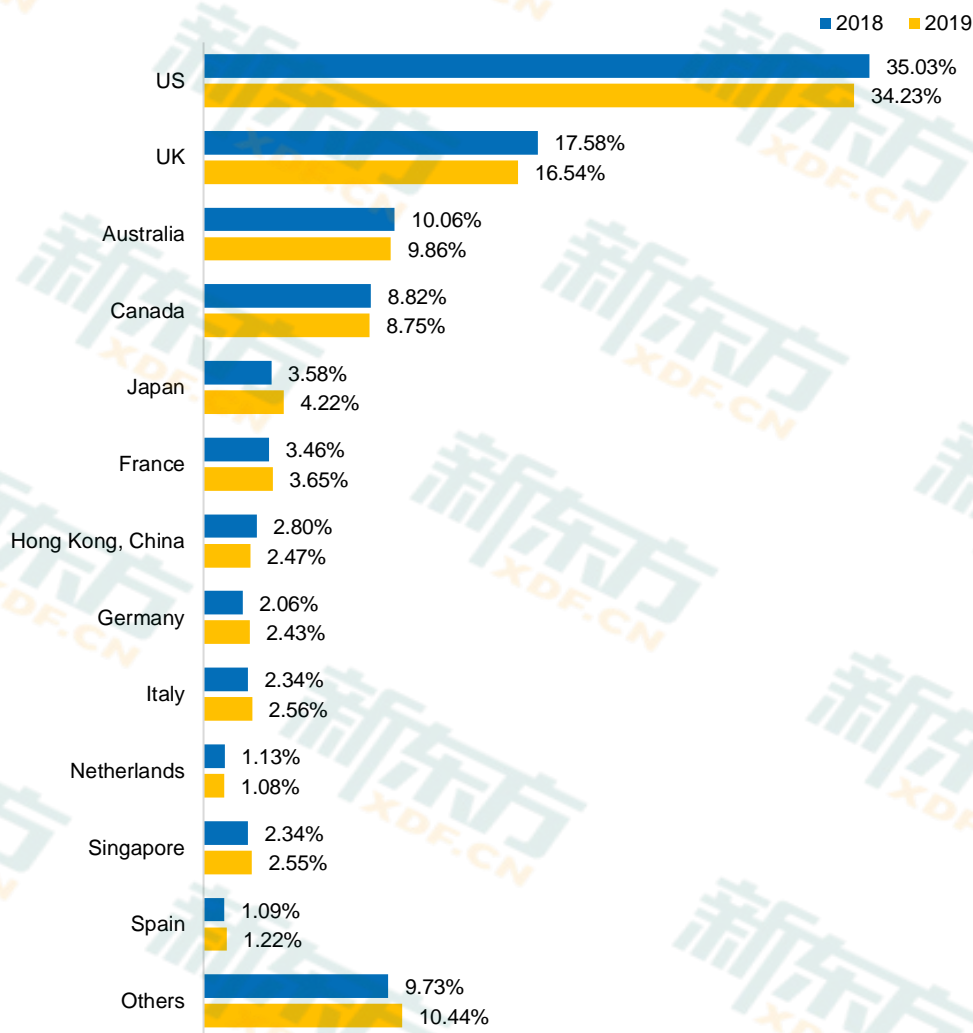
2.Nelson Report; as of June 2019.

3.June 30, 2019. As reported by client financial institutions and therefore may be subject to change.



in Asia, such as Japan and Singapore, has increased slightly, from 5.92 percent in 2018 to 6.77 percent in 2019, with Japan's share growing the most obvious, at about 18 percent, The proportion of countries studying abroad in Europe as a whole also increased slightly, such as France, Germany, Italy and Spain, among which Germany accounted for the most obvious increase, about 18%.

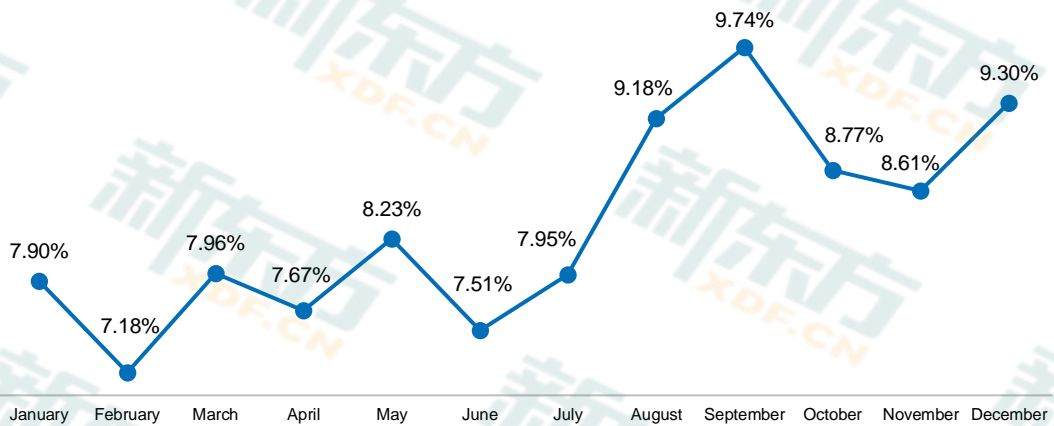
**The Proportion of Cross-border Transactions by Chinese students studying abroad between 2018 and 2019**



### The volume of overseas transactions of Chinese students remains stable

With regards to seasonal distribution of consumption, the volume of overseas transactions of Chinese students in 2019 remains stable, the peak season is from August to December, of which August and September are the opening season, most of the transactions are tuition fees and other related educational expenses, while November and December are the traditional consumption peaks of European and American countries, such as "Black Friday", Christmas and so on, which stimulate the local shopping consumption of foreign students.

**Seasonal distribution of overseas transactions made by Chinese students  
(the proportion in the designated month out of the entire year)**

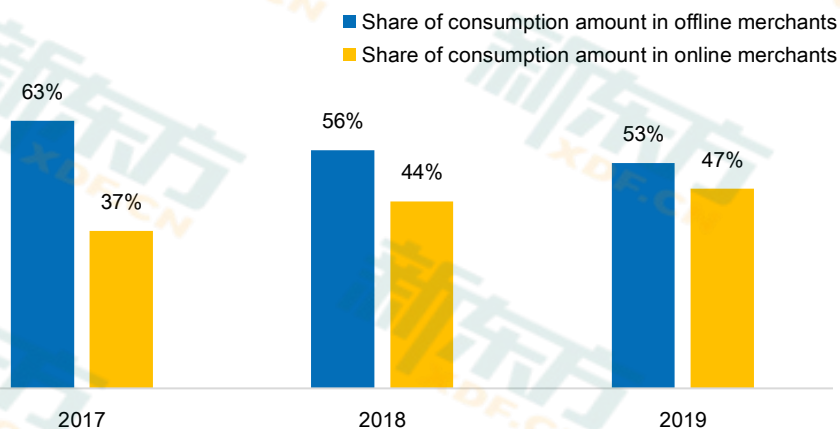


### The share of online and offline payments is almost the same

The proportion of online and offline payments is almost the same for Chinese students for the entire 2019, 53% of the transactions were made offline, 47% completed online, and the two are almost the same. The proportion of online payments continued to rise compared with 37 percent in 2017 and 44 percent in 2018. Although the application of mobile payments in major destination countries and regions is not as mature as that in China, it is beginning to show an upward trend.

Overall, however, it is still not as convenient as at home. Chinese students are advised to bring their plastic Visa cards with them as it is more convenient under certain type of scenarios. For example, in the United Kingdom and Singapore, the Visa Contactless card (Water Wave sign) can be used directly for public transportation without the need to buy another traffic card, offering a greater convenience.

**Comparison of online and offline transaction volume between 2017 and 2019**



## Education expenditure still ranks the first

Education expenditure ranks the first by transaction volume in 2019, despite the fact that education is still the primary expenditure for international students, followed by professional services<sup>4</sup>. Clothing and accessories consumption in all countries occupy the top, which can be seen that foreign students are still very keen on cost-effective shopping. Spending scenarios of foreign students in different countries have their own characteristics. For instance, students in the United States and Canada spend more on food and dining, with the same consumption proportion. Students studying in the United Kingdom spend more in department stores, while those in Australia on retail goods.

Transaction volume ranking under different scenarios in different countries

Merchant type	Ranking in the United States	Ranking in the United Kingdom	Ranking in Australia	Ranking in Canada
Education	1	1	1	1
Apparel and accessories	2	3	3	2
Professional service fee	3	2	2	3
Restaurants	4			4
Food and grocery	5		4	5
Retail goods			5	
Department store		4		
Accommodation		5		

## Nearly 90% of education expenditures are online transactions

Nearly 90 percent of education spending is counted separately for online transactions, which account for a higher proportion of online transactions, rising for the past three consecutive years, from 72 percent to 87 percent. With the continuous ramp up of domestic mobile payment technology, overseas universities have begun to accept tuition fees and other fees in a variety of forms through online payments underpinned by a faster speed and convenient operation.

4. Service fee charged by professional organizations which include government agencies and schools, etc.



Comparison of online and offline transaction volume between 2017 and 2019 (education expenditure)

