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Abstract

The present master's thesis investigates the reasons for the growing popularity of Poland as a study abroad destination among students from Taiwan. Moreover, it explores ways which would attract more international students to attend Polish higher education institutions (HEIs). The thesis is based on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) and employs semi-structured interviews as the data collection method. The interviews were coded according to the structured content analysis.

The thesis argues that the decision to pursue higher education in Poland depends on the financial sources the education is funded by and the type of major one is enrolled in. The results revealed that the scholarship recipients studying humanities are motivated mainly by the scholarship itself. On the other hand, medical students financing their education with private funds decide to come to Poland due to lower enrolment requirements than in Taiwan, English-speaking programs, an easier enrolment process than in the USA and more affordable tuition fees than in most countries offering medical studies in English.

To raise the attractiveness of Poland as a prospective host country, the research recommends using scholarships to fund majors highly demanded by the job market, providing students with opportunities to gain work experience as well as increase the number of partner schools and student exchanges between Poland and Taiwan. Furthermore, providing medical students from Taiwan with internships before graduation, improving the organisation of the scholarship program and increasing the English proficiency of teachers working at English-speaking programs would also positively impact the number of international students at Polish HEIs. Other suggested changes include providing medical students with Polish classes, familiarising incoming students with the teaching style of Polish HEIs, speeding up the administration and creating a more open society.

Keywords: academic migration, internationalisation of higher education, Polish-Taiwanese relations, study abroad destination choice

Abstrakt

Die vorliegende Masterarbeit untersucht die Gründe für die wachsende Popularität Polens als ausländisches Studienziel unter Studierenden aus Taiwan. Darüber hinaus erforscht die Thesis Methoden, die es polnischen Hochschulen ermöglichen würden, noch mehr internationale Studierende zu gewinnen. Die Arbeit basiert auf der Theorie des geplanten Verhaltens und verwendet halbstrukturierte Interviews als Datenerhebungsmethode. Die Interviews wurden gemäß der strukturierten Inhaltsanalyse kodiert.

Die Thesis argumentiert, dass die Entscheidung in Polen eine Hochschule zu besuchen sowohl von den finanziellen Quellen, aus denen die Ausbildung finanziert wird, als auch von der Art des Studiengangs, in dem eine Person eingeschrieben ist, abhängt. Die Ergebnisse zeigten, dass für Studierende, die Geisteswissenschaften studieren und ihre Bildung durch Stipendien finanzieren, das Stipendium der Hauptgrund ist, um Polen als Gastland auszuwählen. Im Fall von Medizinstudierenden, die ihre Bildung durch private Mittel finanzieren, sind die wichtigsten Gründe, um in Polen zu studieren niedrigere Einschreibungsvoraussetzungen als in Taiwan, englischsprachige Programme, einfachere Einschreibungsprozesse als in den USA und günstigere Studiengebühren als in den meisten Ländern, die Medizinstudien auf Englisch anbieten.

Um die Attraktivität Polens als potenzielles Gastland zu erhöhen, empfiehlt die Arbeit die Verwendung von Stipendien zur Finanzierung von am Arbeitsmarkt nachgefragten Studiengängen, Studierenden die Möglichkeiten zum Sammeln von Berufserfahrungen zu bieten und die Zahl der Partnerschulen und Studentenaustauschen zwischen Polen und Taiwan zu erhöhen. Außerdem, die Bereitstellung von Praktika für Medizinstudierende aus Taiwan vor ihrem Studienabschluss, die Verbesserung der Organisation des Stipendienprogramms und die Verbesserung der Englischkenntnisse von an englischsprachigen Programmen arbeitenden Lehrkräften würden die Zahl der internationalen Studierenden an polnischen Hochschulen positiv beeinflussen. Weiters wird die Bereitstellung von Polnischkursen für Medizinstudierende, die Einführung in den Unterrichtsstil der polnischen Hochschulen, die Optimierung der administrativen Prozesse und die Entwicklung einer offeneren Gesellschaft empfohlen.

Schlüsselwörter: akademische Migration, Internationalisierung der Hochschulbildung, polnisch-taiwanesischen Beziehungen, Wahl des Studienziels im Ausland

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List of abbreviations

AST	the Advanced Subjects Test
ATB	the attitude toward the behaviour
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
COVID-19	the Corona Virus Disease 2019 caused by SARS-CoV-2
CRASP	the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland
DVE	the Degree-Verification Exam
EEA	the European Economic Area
EMBA	Executive Master of Business Administration
EU	the European Union
GSAT	the General Scholastic Ability Test
HE	higher education
HEI	higher education institution
IELTS	the International English Language Testing System
MAXQDA	the software for qualitative and mixed methods data analysis
MBA	Master of Business Administration
NAWA	the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange
NLE	the National Licensing Examination
OECD	the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBC	the perceived behavioural control
PiS	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Eng.: Law and Justice) – a national conservative ruling party in Poland
ROC	the Republic of China
SARS-COV-2	the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus type 2
SN	the subjective norm
TOEFL	the Test of English as a Foreign Language
TPB	the theory of planned behaviour
UJ	the Jagiellonian University
UW	the University of Warsaw

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1 Introduction

The first signs of students taking up education abroad can be traced back to at least the sixth century BC.¹ However, never before has the world experienced student mobility to be as dynamic as it is nowadays. In the year 2000, 1.8 million students were attending higher education institutions (HEIs) outside their homelands² and during the first decade of the 21st century, the number of international students raised more than 75%.³ From 2010-2020, this number doubled, reaching five million people studying abroad.⁴ It has been estimated that the number of international students in 2025 will reach 7.2 million people.⁵

The internationalisation of higher education (HE) is a result of economic, political and societal practices existing under the common umbrella of *globalisation*.⁶ Globalisation can be described as “(...) *the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas... across borders. Globalisation affects each country differently due to a nation's individual history, traditions, culture and priorities.*”⁷ The globalisation is often discussed together with the *internationalisation* which in the case of HE can be seen as “*one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalisation yet, at the same time respects the individuality of the nation*”.⁸ Hence, the globalisation can be comprehended as the catalyst and the internationalisation as a proactive response.⁹

“In the current global-knowledge society, the concept of internationalization of higher education has itself become globalized, demanding further consideration of its impact on policy and practice as more countries and types of institution around the world engage in the

¹ Philip G. Altbach, David H. Kelly, and Y. G.-M. Lulat, *Research on Foreign Students and International Study* (New York: Praeger, 1993), quoted in Terry Gatfield and Ching-huei Chen, “Measuring Student Choice Criteria Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour: The Case of Taiwan, Australia, UK, and USA,” *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 16, no. 1 (2006): 78, https://doi.org/10.1300/J050v16n01_04.

² “Report Forecasts Global Demand for International Higher Education,” *The Presidency* 6, no. 3 (2003): 13, 3.

³ Fred Dervin, “Introduction,” In *Analysing the Consequences of Academic Mobility and Migration*, 1. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011.

⁴ Hans de Wit, “Internationalization of Higher Education: The Need for a More Ethical and Qualitative Approach,” *Journal of International Students* 10, no. 1 (2020): ii, <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v10i1.1893>.

⁵ Tekle Shanka, Vanessa Quintal and Ruth Taylor, “Factors Influencing International Students' Choice of an Education Destination-A Correspondence Analysis,” *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 15, no. 2 (2006): 32, https://doi.org/10.1300/J050v15n02_02.

⁶ Philip G. Altbach and Jane Knight, “The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities,” *Journal of Studies in International Education* 11, no. 3-4 (2007): 290, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315307303542>.

⁷ Jane Knight and Hans de Wit, “Internationalisation of Higher Education in Asia Pacific Countries” (Amsterdam: European Association for International Education, 1997) quoted in Jane Knight and Hans de Wit, “Internationalisation of Higher Education,” in *Quality and Internationalisation in Higher Education* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 1999), 14.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

process. Internationalization should no longer be considered in terms of a westernized, largely Anglo-Saxon, and predominantly English-speaking paradigm.”¹⁰

Students from Taiwan have been active participants in the student mobility movement for over sixty years. Already in the 1960s, more and more students from Taiwan decided to attend studies at foreign universities, mostly in the USA. The popularity of international education has been so high that from the 1960s to the mid-1990s there were a quarter million students from Taiwan studying abroad.¹¹

In Poland, the internationalisation of higher education became a part of the government's agenda in the first decade of the 21st century. The country's invisibility within global academic rankings and a low number of international students at its HEIs hindered the plan to build Poland's stronger position in the dynamically changing Eastern Europe.

According to Taiwan's Ministry of Education, in 2021, the most frequently chosen countries to study in by students from Taiwan were: the USA (19,673 students), Australia (15,582 students), Japan (7,174 students), the UK (4,185 students), Canada (3,980 students), Germany (2,862 students), South Korea (1,558 students) and Poland (923 students), lifting Polish position to the 8th place among most popular study destinations for students from Taiwan worldwide and the 3rd Europe-wide.¹²

Hence, the choice of the topic for this paper was motivated by, on one hand, the Polish government's plan to increase the number of international students at Polish HEIs, and on the other hand by the growing number of students from Taiwan deciding to pursue education in Poland.

There is a substantial research gap regarding the subject of students from Taiwan studying in Poland. Even though the number of these incoming students has been rising for over a decade, the only work thoroughly focusing on the topic of students from Taiwan studying medicine in Poland is an article by Dr Ming-Jung Ho from 2014, debating the situation of medical

¹⁰ Jones and de Wit (2014), p. 28 quoted in Hans de Wit, “Internationalization of Higher Education: The Need for a More Ethical and Qualitative Approach”, ii.

¹¹ Legislative Yuan, *The Republic of China Yearbook*. 1996 (Taipei: The Chinese Statistical Association, 1996) quoted in Tim Mazzarol, Lawson Savery and Steven Kemp, *International Students who Choose not to Study in Australia* (Canberra: Australian International Education Foundation, 1997), 42.

¹² Ministry of Education 教育部, “110 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 110 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2021], accessed 12 September 2022, https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ed2500/News_Content.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&sms=4061A6357922F45A&s=47EA35D53954DCB8.

graduates from universities in Taiwan and Poland.¹¹ Nonetheless, the topic of students from Taiwan financing higher education with the Polish government's scholarships stays unexplored. Another gap is present in the research dedicated to the motivations of international students deciding to select HEIs in non-English speaking countries.¹²

The goals of this thesis are to recognise elements that motivate students from Taiwan to study at Polish HEIs and to identify factors which should be either developed, altered or eliminated to improve the quality of international students' stay in Poland. This way, Poland should become a more attractive study abroad destination and hence welcome even more international students.

The research should contribute to the literature related to such subjects as students from Taiwan in Poland, international students in Poland, internationalisation of Polish HEIs and motivators for the choice of non-English speaking study destinations.

The thesis has been inspired by the one-year stay in Taiwan, where during the exchange program at the National Chengchi University as well as the internship at the Polish Office in Taipei, I had the precious opportunity to learn about students from Taiwan choosing to pursue higher education in Poland.

The objectives should be achieved by conducting semi-structured interviews with six students from Taiwan studying in Poland. The interview questions were based on Icek Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (TPB) as well as the literature related to academic migration. The questions were structured in a way that enabled students to touch upon subjects concerning the time before they got enrolled at Polish universities, the time during their education in Poland and their expectations for the future. The answers were coded and categorised according to Phillip Mayring's structured content analysis.

One of the limitations the research came across is a gap in data on the number of students from Taiwan going abroad, as the authorities ceased to collect such information.¹² However, the statistics started being published again in 2012 and is now available on the website of the Ministry of Education.¹³ Another obstacle in gaining data on these students is caused by the non-recognition of Taiwan as a country by the United Nations, which is the leading source for the statistical data of international students.¹⁴

The role of the two following chapters is to introduce the state of the art. The chapter "*Academic migration from the global perspective*" introduces findings regarding the subject of academic migration generally. The chapter "*Students from Taiwan studying abroad*"

depicts the reality of studying in Taiwan and briefly discusses the development of Taiwan's academic migration since the 1960s. It also presents the characteristics of students from Taiwan. The next part is dedicated to the employment of TPB. The methodological part addresses the application of semi-structured interviews followed by the implementation of Phillip Mayring's structured content analysis. Further, the next two chapters provide background knowledge. The chapter "*International students in Poland*" presents steps Poland has been taking to strengthen its position as a study abroad destination and provides information about international students studying in Poland. The chapter "*Students from Taiwan in Poland*" unveils historical and current ties between Taiwan and Poland as well as describes the situation of students from Taiwan studying over the Vistula River.¹³ In the chapter "*Outcomes of interviews' analysis*" the answers collected during the six interviews are presented and the chapter "*Conclusion*" will provide a summary and recommendations based on the thesis's findings.

2 Academic migration from the global perspective

The literature on the academic migration divides international students into various categories. According to Altbach and Knight, students willing to invest in studying abroad can be split into two groups: the first coming from middle-income countries of Asia and Latin America and the second coming from North America and Europe. The former group's main intention is to attend studies highly demanded by the market which are unavailable for these students in their home countries and the latter group intends to experience the education and culture of foreign locations.¹⁴

Another categorisation was introduced by Börjesson, who stated that the global flows of international students can be divided into three regions: *the Pacific pole*, comprising student flows from Asia to North America, Oceania and the UK; *the central European pole*, describing intra-European mobility; and *the French/Iberian pole*, comprising recruitment from the former colonies to Southwestern Europe.¹⁵

¹³ Vistula is the largest river in Poland, it is 1,047 km long and its sources are located in the Silesian Beskids. Source: Odra Vistula Flood Management Project, "Vistula River," accessed 13 July 2022, <https://odrapcu.pl/en/rivers/vistula>.

¹⁴ Altbach and Knight, "The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities", 295.

¹⁵ Mikael Börjesson, "The Global Space of International Students in 2010," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43, no. 8 (2017): 1266-1267, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1300228> quoted in Cristina Sin, Dominik Antonowicz, and Janneke Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal," *Higher Education Policy* 34, no. 1 (2019): 5, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-019-00135-3>.

Numerous studies dedicated to the subject of students' intentions to study abroad point out that the first decision students make is the choice of either going abroad or staying in the homeland. Once they choose to leave, they choose which country to go to and only then the HEI is decided upon.^{16 17 18 19} Hence, it is also important to note that the image of a country has a bigger impact on potential incoming students than the image of a particular HEI.^{20 21}

There have been several shifts in the perception of the higher education internationalisation within the last three decades. In the 1990s, it was up to international students to adapt to host countries' institutions. In the 2000s, the focus began to be laid on schools' teaching and learning practices, as the number of international students kept rising. Nowadays, the roles have been reversed, as it is HEIs who attempt to internationalise their curriculum for international as well as domestic students.²² Another shift is being reported within the values the academic internationalisation is based on. Previously, the values included exchange and cooperation, peace, mutual understanding, human capital development and solidarity, which are now being replaced by competition, revenue and reputation/branding.²³

There are several motivators common for countries wishing to increase their attractiveness in the eyes of international students, such as increased importance of reputation, visibility and

¹⁶ Tim Mazzarol and Geoffrey N. Soutar, "»Push-pull« factors influencing international student destination choice," *International Journal of Educational Management* 16, no. 2 (2002): 82-90, <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540210418403> quoted in Peter G. Ghazarian, "Country Image and the Study Abroad Destination Choice of Students from Mainland China," *Journal of International Students* 6, no. 3 (2016): 702, <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v6i3.350>.

¹⁷ Catherine Llewellyn-Smith and Vivienne S. McCabe, "What Is the Attraction for Exchange Students: The Host Destination or Host University? Empirical Evidence from a Study of an Australian University," *The International Journal of Tourism Research* 10, no. 6 (2008): 593–607, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.692> quoted in Ghazarian, "Country Image and the Study Abroad Destination Choice of Students from Mainland China", 702.

¹⁸ Llewellyn-Smith and McCabe, "What Is the Attraction for Exchange Students: The Host Destination or Host University? Empirical Evidence from a Study of an Australian University" quoted in Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 5.

¹⁹ Tim Mazzarol and Geoffrey N. Soutar, "»Push-pull« factors influencing international student destination choice" quoted in Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 5.

²⁰ Liang-hsuan Chen, "Internationalization or International Marketing?," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 18, no. 1 (2008): 1–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841240802100113> quoted in Ghazarian, "Country Image and the Study Abroad Destination Choice of Students from Mainland China", 703.

²¹ Llewellyn-Smith and McCabe, "What Is the Attraction for Exchange Students: The Host Destination or Host University? Empirical Evidence from a Study of an Australian University" quoted in Ghazarian, "Country Image and the Study Abroad Destination Choice of Students from Mainland China", 703.

²² Janette Ryan, "Teaching and Learning for International Students: Towards a Transcultural Approach," *Teachers and Teaching, Theory and Practice* 17, no. 6 (2011): 638-639, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2011.625138> quoted in Jürgen Henze and Jiani Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 7, no. 1 (2012): 92, <https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2012.7.1.90>.

²³ Jones and de Wit (2014), p. 28 quoted in Hans de Wit, "Internationalization of Higher Education: The Need for a More Ethical and Qualitative Approach", iii.

competitiveness; the competition for talented students and scholars; short-term and/or long-term economic gains and demographic considerations. Also, the inflow of students from abroad could save study destinations' HEIs from closing²⁴ and a host country's overall position and status could be strengthened within its region.²⁵

As the goal of this research is not only to find out why students from Taiwan decide to study in Poland but also to discover ways to improve the quality of their stay over the Vistula River, it is necessary to learn about the difficulties international students may encounter when living abroad. The scientific findings divide international students' problems into various categories: as a foreigner living in an unfamiliar environment; being a university student facing unfamiliar demands; as an adolescent encountering the problems of becoming and being an adult; being a representative of one's home country;²⁶ academic problems; personal problems; and sociocultural problems;²⁷ language ability, cultural awareness, and academic achievement.²⁸ Studies focusing mainly on problems faced by Chinese students point out that the main issues can be described as academic, psycho-socio-cultural, financial, and political as well as linguistic.²⁹ Studying abroad in a non-English environment has been reported especially troublesome for Chinese native speakers,^{30 31 32} as the ability to speak the language of a host country influences academic progress, social life and the understanding of the host country's culture.³³ Another set of problems encountered by Chinese students is their

²⁴ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 3.

²⁵ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 12.

²⁶ Peter Wicks, *Overseas Students in Australia*. Randwick: New South Wales University Press, 1972 quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 96.

²⁷ Austin T. Church, "Sojourner Adjustment," *Psychological Bulletin* 91, no. 3 (1982): 540–72, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.91.3.540> quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 96.

²⁸ Wei Sun and Guo-Ming Chen, "Dimensions of Difficulties Mainland Chinese Students Encounter in the United States," *Intercultural Communication Studies* 9, no. 1 (1999): 19-30, <https://web.uri.edu/iaics/files/04-Wai-Sun-Guo-Ming-Chen.pdf> quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 97.

²⁹ Pan, Jia-Yan et al., "The Protective Function of Meaning of Life on Life Satisfaction Among Chinese Students in Australia and Hong Kong: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study," *Journal of American College Health* 57, no. 2 (2008): 221, <https://doi.org/10.3200/JACH.57.2.221-232>.

³⁰ Huiping Guan, "Anpassung und Integration der Chinesischen Studierenden in Deutschland. Eine Untersuchung anhand des Beispiels an der Universität Bremen," PhD diss., (University of Bremen, 2007) quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 97.

³¹ Lihai Guan, "Anpassung der Chinesischen Studenten in Deutschland," Master's thesis, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, 2010 quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 97.

³² Jun Zhou, "Zwischen »Elite von Morgen« und »Liu Xue La Ji« (»Müllstudenten«)," PhD diss., (University of Münster, 2010) quoted in Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 97.

³³ Pan, Jia-Yan et al., "The Protective Function of Meaning of Life on Life Satisfaction Among Chinese Students in Australia and Hong Kong: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study," *Journal of American College Health* 57, no. 2 (2008): 227, <https://doi.org/10.3200/JACH.57.2.221-232>.

participation in class, academic conventions, reduced intercultural communication with local students, surrounding oneself only with co-national friends, loneliness and depression.³⁴

For decades, English-speaking countries have been enjoying the biggest inflow of international students. However, destinations like the USA, Canada, Australia, and the UK even though still most preferred, started to receive fewer international students within the last few years.³⁵ Even though the USA remains the most popular host country, the steps taken by President Trump's administration made non-American students less welcome. Due to the nerve-wracking bureaucracy regarding work visa regulations and nationalistic movements, the USA has lost 6.6% of incoming students since 2017. The most attractive study destination for international students in Europe, the UK, also sees a decline in the number of international students. Many potential newcomers seem to be scared off by Brexit and possibly higher tuition fees that could follow this political change.³⁶ In the light of these alterations, international students seek other places to build their academic paths in.^{37 38} While searching for additional options, many stumble upon the idea of coming to universities in Eastern Europe, oftentimes choosing Poland.^{39 40}

3 Students from Taiwan studying abroad

3.1 The state of Taiwan's higher education system

3.1.1 Challenges for the HE system in Taiwan

For at least three decades, the system of higher education in Taiwan has been facing several challenges. One of the issues is the oversupply of universities and the devaluation of college degrees which are the result of educational reforms upgrading vocational and technical colleges to the position of universities in the early 2000s. Other problems include a mismatch of the labour supply to the demands of the job market as well as a low birth rate. The low

³⁴ Henze and Zhu, "Current Research on Chinese Students Studying Abroad", 97-99.

³⁵ "A Comparative Study of International Student Choices, Motivations and Expectations 2009-2013. Trends in International Student Mobility," Top Universities, accessed 15 June 2020, <https://www.topuniversities.com/student-info/qs-guides/trends-International-Student-Mobility-2014>.

³⁶ "Number of International Students Are Steadily Rising in this Eastern European Country," Study International, accessed 15 June 2020, <https://www.studyinternational.com/news/number-of-international-students-are-steadily-rising-in-this-eastern-european-country>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Alina Mihaela Dima and Vasilache Simona, "Trends in the Internationalization of European Higher Education in a Convergence Perspective," *Management & Marketing* 11, no. 2 (2016): 454, <https://doi.org/10.1515/mmcks-2016-0008>.

³⁹ "Number of International Students Are Steadily Rising in this Eastern European Country," Study International.

⁴⁰ Karolina Wysocka and Krzysztof Leja, "Internationalization Applied?," *Przedsiębiorczość i Zarządzanie* 18, no. 11.3 (2017): 359-361.

demographic growth will contribute to a 32% decline in the number of college entrants in 2023 (a drop from 271,108 entrants in 2013 to 184,000 in 2023).⁴¹

3.1.2 Requirements to study in Taiwan

To study in Taiwan, domestic students need to pass the General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT) (大学学科能力测验 *daxue xueke nengli ceyan*) organised in January each year.⁴²

GSAT is decisive when determining the eligibility for university admission. It is conducted by testing knowledge gained during the first and second years of high school. The test includes questions from five subjects: Chinese, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science and for each subject a maximum of 15 points can be scored, giving a maximum of 75 points in the case of an error-free result. If the score is not satisfactory, the students can take the Advanced Subjects Test (AST) (大学入学指定科目考试 *daxue ruxue zhiding kemu kaoshi*) offered each year in July. In contrast to GSAT, AST takers can choose from three up to ten subjects (including Chinese, English, Mathematics I, Mathematics II, Geography, History, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Civics⁴³), depending on their selected academic discipline. Each subject's maximum score is 100 points.⁴⁴

3.1.3 Study costs in Taiwan

Students in Taiwan can attend studies at public as well as private universities, however, unlike in the case of full-time studies at public HEIs in Poland, both public and private universities in Taiwan require students to cover tuition fees. The tuition fees at private universities are approximately twice as expensive as the tuition fees required by public institutions. In 2018, the average tuition fee for a public university was 58,728 TWD (1,866 EUR) and 109,944 TWD (3,494 EUR) for a private university.⁴⁵ In 2020, the average tuition fee for students in medical departments at public universities was 39,163 TWD (1,245 EUR) and at private

⁴¹ "Taiwan – Education," Export, accessed 5 January 2021, <https://www.export.gov/apex/article2?id=Taiwan-Education>.

⁴² "General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT)," CEEC, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://www.ceec.edu.tw/en/xmdoc/cont?xsmsid=0J180519762978782512>.

⁴³ "The contents of civics courses focus on the knowledge, skills and dispositions a citizen requires for living in a democratic society" quoted in Meihui Liu, "Civics Education in Taiwan: Values Promoted in the Civics Curriculum," *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 20, no. 1 (2000): 74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0218879000200107>.

⁴⁴ "Advanced Subjects Test (AST)," CEEC, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://www.ceec.edu.tw/en/xmdoc/cont?xsmsid=0J180520257949680510>.

⁴⁵ "Zhuyao guojia zhi daxuesheng yi xue nian xue zafei 主要国家之大学生一学年学杂费" [One-Year Tuition and Miscellaneous Fees for College Students in Major Countries], accessed 29 June 2022, https://stats.moe.gov.tw/files/important/OVERVIEW_N06.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1NTZVRITdoaSxqDmJ9SwZr0XUEmBYOC30-mjr-EBwbVh0j3JsQpcins_o.

universities the average tuition fee was 67,915 TWD (2,158 EUR).⁴⁶ Prices for other popular majors are listed in the table below:

Studies	Tuition fees at public university	Tuition fees at private university
Department of Medicine	39,163 TWD (1,245 EUR)	67,915 TWD (2,158 EUR)
Department of Dentistry	35,803 TWD (1,138 EUR)	65,341 TWD (2,076 EUR)
Faculty of Medicine	29,480 TWD (937 EUR)	45,526 TWD (1,447 EUR)
Faculty of Engineering	27,328 TWD (868 EUR)	53,086 TWD (1,687 EUR)
Faculty of Science and Agriculture	26,802 TWD (852 EUR)	53,497 TWD (1,700 EUR)
Faculty of Business	23,956 TWD (761 EUR)	46,377 TWD (1,474 EUR)
Faculty of Liberal Arts	23,193 TWD (737 EUR)	45,942 TWD (1,460 EUR)

Figure 1 Average tuition and miscellaneous fees at universities in Taiwan in 2020.⁴⁷

3.1.4 Living costs as a student in Taiwan

On average, an international student in Taiwan needs to spend 680–880 EUR per month excluding tuition fees. When it comes to the accommodation, students can choose either dormitories (80–200 EUR per month), rented flats (300–600 EUR per month) or live with host families (7–25 EUR per night). Food costs are about 13 EUR per day, adding up to 390 EUR per month. A one-day pass enabling everyday transportation costs approximately 5 EUR.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ “109 xue niandu gongli daxue xiao yuan rijian xuezhi xueshi ban xue zafei shoufei jizhun yilanbiao 109 学年度公立大学校院日间学制学士班学杂费收费标准一览表” [List of Tuition and Miscellaneous Fees for Bachelor's Day Schools in Public Universities and Colleges for the 2020 Academic Year], accessed 29 June 2022, https://ws.moe.edu.tw/Download.ashx?u=C099358C81D4876CE33C455F1B761E1E9C1B1C9D4C5C3D01EF3F861877AD3CF75AB34123F6A3F7115C7E80ACC497136190C6EEABBA65497ADAD4936A7C0564F7CD22E1E3C77C22905FCD2B133D17DC7B&n=9DD66D866269B1FF0E0E7615C32A2BE88226231EFDBE3A697C5F076252B22B5974FAA2446E983A16915D0D30452A650846A36BED914AFC205E2796B77C1574CD&icon=.pdf&fbclid=IwAR0atrQr0dPA8bN-eyZSY6oo4zvEX1nEmlAqvF_xXrq3VbZWEF58XuNBHXU.

⁴⁷ Ibid., calculation by author.

⁴⁸ “Tuition Fees and Living Costs in Taiwan in 2022,” Mastersportal, accessed 20 March 2022, <https://www.mastersportal.com/articles/2899/tuition-fees-and-living-costs-in-taiwan-in-2022.html#:~:text=Living%20in%20Taiwan%20on%20a,food%2C%20books%2C%20and%20other%20items>.

3.1.5 Salaries in Taiwan

The minimum average salary in Taiwan is 32,700 TWD (1,047 EUR) and the maximum average salary reaches up to 577,000 TWD (18,478 EUR) per month. The average salary is 129,000 TWD (4,131 EUR) per month.⁴⁹

3.2 The development of Taiwan's academic migration

3.2.1 Taiwan's government promoting studies abroad

Students from Taiwan are provided with many opportunities to undertake studies abroad. It is possible due to the establishment of international linkages between universities and changes within the immigration system, either in the form of government policies introduced since the lifting of martial law in 1987 or the review of the educational system in 1990.⁵⁰ Another factor enhancing the chances of students from Taiwan to undertake studies overseas has been the strong economic growth providing students with the financial means enabling them such decision.⁵¹

The government encourages its students to take up education overseas by launching appropriate policies as well as setting up hundreds of scholarships and loans. There are also more and more exclusively English-taught programs at Taiwan's universities and many HEIs established institutional partnerships with foreign schools. On top of enabling students the education abroad, the government comes up with policies encouraging students to return to Taiwan after graduation.⁵²

3.2.2 The academic migration from Taiwan worldwide from 1960 - 2000

The idea of studying abroad has been popular among students from Taiwan for over six decades.⁵³ Political and economic changes oftentimes influence students' decision of coming back to their homelands and Taiwan is a good example of both of those factors.⁵⁴ Taiwan

⁴⁹ "Average Salary in Taiwan 2022," Salary Explorer, accessed 29 June 2022, <http://www.salaryexplorer.com/salary-survey.php?loc=212&loctype=1#:~:text=A%20person%20working%20in%20Taiwan%20typically%20earns%20around%20129%2C000%20TWD,%2C%20transport%2C%20and%20other%20benefits.>

⁵⁰ F.Y. Weng, "Education reform and policy in Taiwan," in *Taiwan and Mainland China*, ed. K.H. Mok and Y.W. Ku (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Humanities Press, 2000) quoted in Ching-Huei Chen and Craig Zimitat, "Understanding Taiwanese Students' Decision-Making Factors Regarding Australian International Higher Education," *International Journal of Educational Management* 20, no. 2 (2006): 92, <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540610646082>.

⁵¹ Ching-Huei Chen and Craig Zimitat, "Understanding Taiwanese Students' Decision-Making Factors Regarding Australian International Higher Education," 92.

⁵² Rosa Becker and Renze Kolster, "International Student Recruitment: Policies and Developments in Selected Countries," NUFFIC, 2012, 70.

⁵³ Rueyling Tzeng, "Reverse Brain Drain," *Asian Population Studies* 2, no. 3 (2006): 242, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441730601073821>.

⁵⁴ Philip G. Altbach, "Impact and Adjustment: Foreign Students in Comparative Perspective," *Higher Education* 21, no. 3 (1991): 311, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00132723>.

entered the global economy in the 1960s by adopting an export-oriented strategy and offering low labour costs. The changes caught the attention of many investors from North America and Japan who ended up constructing assembling factories. Since then, the island has been abandoned by 40% of all engineering and science graduates who decided to continue their studies mostly in the USA. In the period 1960-1980, 90% of those students decided not to return, and hence Taiwan was faced with the problem of the brain drain effect.⁵⁵ Since the late 1970s, due to even cheaper labour costs offered by China and Southeast Asian countries, Taiwan started to shift from labour-intensive to capital- and technology-intensive industries. This evolution collided with the liberalisation of Taiwan's political system, which also contributed to the island becoming a more attractive place to go back to for students and graduates living abroad.⁵⁶ This way, the brain drain effect has been resolved, as after transforming the economic model and entering democratising processes, Taiwan welcomed back 90% of returnees, many of whom had become highly educated during their stay abroad.⁵⁷

Even though the number of returnees increased, academic migration has not become any less popular. During 1960-1995, 250,000 students from Taiwan decided to study at foreign universities.⁵⁸ In the late 1980s, the regulations regarding the outflow of international students from Taiwan relaxed, enabling almost all students to study abroad. The only exception was males over 20 years old who have not completed their military service yet.⁵⁹

In the 1990s, the most popular study destinations among students from Taiwan were the USA, Japan, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.⁶⁰ Within the next 30 years, these preferences have not changed much, because as reported by the Ministry of Education, between 2012-2021 the USA, Australia, Japan, the UK and Canada continued to be most popular choices. However, New Zealand has been slowly replaced by South Korea and several European destinations such as Germany, France and Poland.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Shirley L. Chang, "Causes of Brain Drain and Solutions: The Taiwan Experience," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 27, no. 1 (1992): 27–43, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02687103> quoted in Rueyling Tzeng, "Reverse Brain Drain", 242.

⁵⁶ Philip G. Altbach, "Impact and Adjustment: Foreign Students in Comparative Perspective," *Higher Education* 21, no. 3 (1991): 311, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00132723>.

⁵⁷ Rueyling Tzeng, "Reverse Brain Drain", 242.

⁵⁸ Legislative Yuan, *The Republic of China Yearbook* quoted in Tim Mazzarol, Lawson Savery and Steven Kemp, *International Students who Choose not to Study in Australia*, 43.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ministry of Supply and Services, *International Education: The Asia Pacific Region and Canada*, Ottawa: MSS, 1993 quoted in Tim Mazzarol, Lawson Savery and Steven Kemp, *International Students who Choose not to Study in Australia*, 44.

⁶¹ In figure 2

3.2.3 The academic migration from Taiwan to Europe 2000 - 2020

The interest of students from Taiwan towards Europe has been subject to fluctuation over the last twenty years. The number of students getting student visas for the UK began to fall after reaching its peak in 2006 and at the same time, France started being more popular.⁶² The third most attractive academic destination in Europe has been Germany, significantly growing its popularity since 2013.^{63 64 65 66 67 68 69} When choosing to study in Eastern Europe, students from Taiwan tend to select Poland, Russia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic became a Taiwanese study destination in 2008, with its popularity starting to bloom in 2014. The Hungarian educational potential is still waiting to be recognised by the students. Poland experienced the most intense growth in its popularity among mentioned countries. After years of being barely visible, the year 2009 seems to be the turning point for Poland's

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ “102 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 102 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2013], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/RelFile/6656/10509/102%E5%B9%B4%E5%BA%A6%E4%B8%96%E7%95%8C%E5%90%84%E4%B8%BB%E8%A6%81%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%B6%E4%B9%8B%E6%88%91%E7%95%99%E5%AD%B8%E7%94%9F%E4%BA%BA%E6%95%B8%E7%B5%B1%E8%A8%88%E8%A1%A8.pdf>.

⁶⁴ “103 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 103 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2014], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/RelFile/6656/10507/103%E5%B9%B4%E5%BA%A6%E4%B8%96%E7%95%8C%E5%90%84%E4%B8%BB%E8%A6%81%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%B6%E4%B9%8B%E6%88%91%E7%95%99%E5%AD%B8%E7%94%9F%E4%BA%BA%E6%95%B8%E7%B5%B1%E8%A8%88%E8%A1%A8.pdf>.

⁶⁵ “104 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 104 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2015], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/relfile/6656/46488/114f4f8e-3137-4d3d-843a-0d7d39d449a8.pdf>.

⁶⁶ “105 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 105 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2016], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 June 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/relfile/6656/49173/c793304f-a392-4eac-9339-fe459060cee0.pdf>.

⁶⁷ “106 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 106 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2017], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 June 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/relfile/6656/54436/3f6eb687-b122-4937-acb3-4bc4cd3a5b47.pdf>.

⁶⁸ “107 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 107 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2018], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 June 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/7/relfile/6656/62728/42a6ac93-57b0-4a1d-bd4b-6347ec3c68b3.pdf>.

⁶⁹ “108 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 108 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2019], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/Download.ashx?u=C099358C81D4876CC7586B178A6BD6D5062C39FB76BDE7EC44DA152B992D3EF25957E87B1BA50252FBFFC8F501E557E12FF1B007780512CFE2D1BE42C9E1FC8EE D5522A87B8F7E8BE73DF67F35C9C441&n=F08257EEFED19A870B7056188D92931A86B9FD323E413B6A&icon=..pdf>.

international recognition.⁷⁰ Since then its popularity as a host country kept growing, resulting in Poland being the third most chosen destination by students from Taiwan Europe-wide and the eighth worldwide in 2021.⁷¹

While analysing the total number of Taiwan's students studying abroad, one cannot ignore the sudden drop from 71,488 students to only 60,307 after eight years of constant raise. This is the result of the SARS-COV-2 pandemic, which diminished the number of international students all around the world.

	2012	2013 ⁷²	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1.	USA (24,818)	USA (23,250)	USA (21,867)	USA (21,266)	USA (21,127)	USA (21,516)	USA (22,454)	USA (23,369)	USA (23,724)	USA (19,673)
2.	Australia (12,424)	Australia (7,211)	Australia (8,201)	Australia (10,220)	Australia (13,582)	Australia (16,573)	Australia (18,227)	Australia (18,791)	Australia (18,439)	Australia (15,582)
3.	Japan (6,591)	Japan (6,402)	Japan (6,531)	Japan (7,491)	Japan (8,444)	Japan (9,642)	Japan (10,347)	Japan (9,524)	Japan (9,584)	Japan (7,174)
4.	UK (4,625)	UK (4,380)	UK (4,135)	UK (3,965)	Canada (4,827)	UK (3,920)	Canada (5,330)	Canada (4,390)	Canada (5,123)	UK (4,185)
5.	Canada (3,349)	Canada (2,883)	Canada (2,648)	Canada (3,500)	UK (3,815)	Canada (3,202)	UK (3,775)	UK (3,850)	UK (4,045)	Canada (3,980)
6.	France (1,410)	South Korea (1,690)	South Korea (1,837)	South Korea (1,968)	South Korea (1,991)	South Korea (2,163)	South Korea (2,162)	Germany (2,390)	Germany (3,155)	Germany (2,862)
7.	Germany (1,364)	New Zealand (1,448)	France (1,680)	New Zealand (1,225)	Germany (1,488)	New Zealand (1,820)	New Zealand (2,070)	South Korea (2,249)	South Korea (1,382)	South Korea (1,558)
8.	New Zealand (975)	Germany (1,441)	Germany (1,509)	Vietnam (994)	New Zealand (1,106)	Germany (1,755)	Germany (2,013)	New Zealand (2,249)	New Zealand (1,300)	Poland (923)
9.	Poland (502)	Poland (485)	New Zealand (1,366)	Malaysia (985)	Poland (561)	France (1,004)	France (1,079)	Poland (853)	Poland (1,007)	New Zealand (635)
10.	The Netherlands (410)	Austria (383)	Malaysia (1,035)	Germany (919)	Malaysia (502)	Poland (758)	Poland (853)	France (648)	France (668)	The Netherlands (481)

⁷⁰ "The Number of Taiwanese Students Studying Abroad for 2018," Envision Recruit, accessed 12 June 2020, <http://www.envisionrecruit.com/home/market-updates/in-the-news/thenumberoftaiwanestudentsstudyingabroadfor2018>.

⁷¹ Ministry of Education 教育部, "110 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 110 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计" [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2021].

⁷² No data available for France in 2013

11.	Austria (366)	The Netherlands (370)	Vietnam (904)	France (842)	Austria (419)	Malaysia (513)	Malaysia (498)	Malaysia (501)	The Netherlands (504)	Malaysia (470)
12.	South Korea (328)	Thailand (214)	Poland (465)	Poland (612)	The Netherlands (400)	Austria (456)	The Netherlands (408)	Spain (450)	Austria (428)	Spain (405)
13.	Thailand (214)	Russia (144)	Austria (389)	Austria (450)	Vietnam (364)	The Netherlands (400)	Austria (400)	Austria (413)	Spain (350)	Austria (366)
14.	Russia (147)	Sweden (117)	The Netherlands (360)	The Netherlands (405)	Thailand (217)	Sweden (307)	Thailand (199)	The Netherlands (353)	Malaysia (346)	France (363)
15.	Sweden (117)	Belgium (108)	Thailand (247)	Spain (270)	Indonesia (210)	Spain (300)	Belgium (156)	Thailand (305)	Thailand (291)	Thailand (332)
16.	Belgium (111)	Malaysia (76)	Sweden (130)	Thailand (207)	Russia (181)	Italy (250)	Russia (146)	Belgium (232)	Italy (212)	The Czech Republic (244)
17.	Malaysia (59)	Finland (27)	Russia (126)	Russia (183)	Belgium (120)	Thailand (176)	Sweden (133)	Italy (197)	Belgium (178)	Switzerland (200)
18.	Finland (33)	Denmark (24)	Belgium (110)	Belgium (121)	Sweden (113)	Russia (172)	Finland (71)	Sweden (160)	Hungary (160)	Belgium (183)
19.	Denmark (16)		Finland (41)	Sweden (120)	Philippines (64)	Belgium (120)	Vietnam (60)	Hungary (147)	Sweden (137)	Hungary (150)
20.			Denmark (28)	Finland (39)	Finland (37)	Sweden (105)	Hungary (53)	Philippines (101)	Russia (71)	Sweden (147)
21.			Norway (11)	Denmark (23)	Denmark (33)	Finland (45)	Turkey (30)	Vietnam (74)	Philippines (66)	Singapore (63)
22.			Paraguay (1)	Norway (11)	Norway (20)	The Czech Republic (43)	Israel (29)	Finland (46)	Indonesia (48)	The United Arab Emirates (45)
23.				Paraguay (1)	Brunei (19)	Turkey (36)	The Czech Republic (26)	Israel (34)	Singapore (41)	Russia (38)

24.					India (15)	Denmark (24)	Indonesia (25)	Indonesia (25)	Finland (37)	Finland (29)
25.					Sri Lanka (14)	The United Arab Emirates (21)	Saudi Arabia (22)	Denmark (23) India (23)	Turkey (28)	Philippines (27)
26.					Singapore (9)	Jordan (20)	Norway (20)	Ireland (21)	Denmark (22)	Israel (22)
27.					Iceland (2)	Panama (20)	India (18) Ireland (18)	Saudi Arabia (20), Turkey (20)	Ireland (21)	Israel (21)
28.					Bangladesh (1), Nepal (1)	Israel (19)	Denmark (16)	Norway (12)	India (20)	Denmark (17)
29.						Indonesia (16)	Kuwait (9)	Kuwait (10)	Latvia (17)	Estonia (14)
30.						India (13)	Saint Lucia (7)	Singapore (8)	Lithuania (16)	Turkey (13)
31.						Ireland (10)	The United Arab Emirates (4)	Colombia (5)	Norway (14)	Latvia (12), Norway (12)
32.						Norway (7)	Chile (1), Colombia (1), the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis (1)	The United Arab Emirates (4)	Palau (10)	India (11)

							Myanmar (1), Bahrain (1)		Ukraine (10)	
33.								Saint Lucia (3), the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis (3)	Estonia (8)	Honduras (10)
										Ukraine (10)
34.								Iceland (2)	Jordan (6)	Palau (9)
									the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis (6)	
35.								Bahrain (1)	Honduras (4)	Indonesia (6), Saudi Arabia (6)
								Chile (1)		
36.									Nigeria (2)	Jordan (5)
									Saint Lucia (2)	
37.									Chile (1), Colombia (1)	Saint Lucia (4), the Federation of Saint
									Fiji (1)	

									Mongolia (1), Oman (1) Slovakia (1)	Christopher and Nevis (4)
										Italy (3), Lithuania (3)
										Belize (2)
										Fiji (1), Republic of the Marshall Islands (1) Mongolia (1), Oman (1), Vietnam (1)
Total	57,859	50,653	52,031	55,817	59,682	65,580	70,665	71,308	71,488	60,307

Figure 2 Most popular study destinations among students from Taiwan in 2012-2021.^{73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82}

⁷³ “101 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 101 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2012], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, [https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/userfiles/101%E5%B9%B4%E5%BA%A6%E4%B8%96%E7%95%8C%E5%90%84%E4%B8%BB%E8%A6%81%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%B6%E4%B9%8B%E6%88%91%E7%95%99%E5%AD%B8%E7%94%9F%E4%BA%BA%E6%95%B8\(1\).PDF](https://ws.moe.edu.tw/001/Upload/userfiles/101%E5%B9%B4%E5%BA%A6%E4%B8%96%E7%95%8C%E5%90%84%E4%B8%BB%E8%A6%81%E5%9C%8B%E5%AE%B6%E4%B9%8B%E6%88%91%E7%95%99%E5%AD%B8%E7%94%9F%E4%BA%BA%E6%95%B8(1).PDF).

⁷⁴ Ministry of Education 教育部, “102 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 102 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2013].

⁷⁵ Ministry of Education 教育部, “103 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 103 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2014].

⁷⁶ Ministry of Education 教育部, “104 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 104 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2015].

⁷⁷ Ministry of Education 教育部, “105 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 105 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2016].

3.3 Characteristics of students from Taiwan

Studying abroad has been a popular option among students from Taiwan for many reasons. While deciding on whether and where to study abroad, students from Taiwan tend to follow the advice of parents, secondary school teachers, and counsellors.⁸³ The findings of Mazzarol and Lawley also point out that students from Taiwan take the opinions of others very seriously when facing the choice of foreign destinations.^{84 85}

The advantageous financial situation of students from Taiwan is a significant factor enabling them studies abroad. Taiwan is home to the largest proportion of people with a “high income” in Asia. 33.8% of its population lives on over 50 USD per day, 56.8% spend 20-50 USD daily and 9% get by with 10-20 USD a day.⁸⁶ The average disposable income per household has seen stable growth in recent years, reaching 1,079,648.00 TWD in 2020.⁸⁷

⁷⁸ Ministry of Education 教育部, “106 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 106 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2017].

⁷⁹ Ministry of Education 教育部, “107 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 107 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2018].

⁸⁰ Ministry of Education 教育部, “108 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 108 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2019].

⁸¹ “109 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 109 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2019], Ministry of Education 教育部, accessed 27 May 2020, <https://ws.moe.edu.tw/Download.ashx?u=C099358C81D4876CC7586B178A6BD6D5062C39FB76BDE7EC3B5412F77EDD121F4572874DC01073EE9EA458A973B287AF96CA8F4552C93105BDB4410134009649F45B62DD5939D0EE2FE2D553FB47487C&n=D5D3A0DD2B8CD709&icon=..pdf>.

⁸² Ministry of Education 教育部, “110 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 110 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2021].

⁸³ Susan P. Choy and Cecilia A. Ottinger, *Choosing a Postsecondary Institution*, Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics, 1998, accessed 10 June 2020 quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, “Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities”, 123.

⁸⁴ Tim Mazzarol, “An Examination of the Factors Critical to the Establishment and Maintenance of Competitive Advantage for Education Services Enterprises within International Markets,” PhD diss., (Curtin University of Technology, 1997) quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, “Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities”, 123.

⁸⁵ Meredith Lawley, “Choice of Destination in International Education: A Cross National Model,” PhD diss., (University of Southern Queensland, 1998) quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, “Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities”, 123.

⁸⁶ Ryan Drillsma, “Taiwan Contains Lowest Percentage of Citizens Living Below Poverty Line in Asia,” Taiwan News, accessed 8 July 2020, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3711698>.

⁸⁷ Statista, “Taiwan: Average Disposable Income Per Household 2020,” accessed 22 August 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/922544/taiwan-average-disposable-income-per-household/>.

Another factor convincing students to move abroad to study is the belief that education overseas is superior to the one offered at home.⁸⁸ Also, while looking for a suitable foreign university, students from Taiwan pay attention to the quality of information about admission requirements,⁸⁹ college rankings⁹⁰ and the potential benefits which the overseas education should provide them with, such as the understanding of the Western culture, migration- and job opportunities.⁹¹

One reason why the US degrees are particularly attractive for students from Taiwan is because they are highly recognised, accepted and valued among Taiwan's employers and HEIs. On the other hand, studies in South-East Asian countries are a frequent choice due to their economic, political, linguistic and cultural ties with Taiwan.⁹²

4 Theory of planned behaviour

4.1 Reasons for choosing the theory of planned behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) was introduced by Icek Ajzen in 1985 and was created on the grounds of the theory of reasoned action, which Ajzen had published together with Martin Fishbein five years earlier.⁹³ TPB was chosen as the theoretical framework for this research, as for over four decades the theory has been applied and tested successfully in many projects regarding the study abroad decision-making process. One of the latest applications of TPB can be found in Andrew Nowlan's research regarding the decreasing number of Japanese students willing to study abroad and the second language acquisition influencing their decision.⁹⁴ Terry Gatfield and Ching-Huei Chen employed TPB to find out the reasons leading

⁸⁸ Tim Mazzarol, Lawson Savery and Steven Kemp, *International Students who Choose not to Study in Australia* quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, "Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities", 120.

⁸⁹ Simon Marginson, "Australian International Education in Asia-Pacific: Opportunities, Conditions, Prospects" (paper presented at the ISANA 14th International Educational Association Annual Conference, Yeppoon, Australia, 8-10 October 2003) quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, "Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities", 123.

⁹⁰ Jacquelyn Warwick and Phylis M. Mansfield, "Perceived Risk in College Selection: Differences in Evaluative Criteria Used by Students and Parents," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 13, no. 1-2 (2004): 101–25, https://doi.org/10.1300/J050v13n01_07 quoted in Muthaly, Lobo and Song, "Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities", 123.

⁹¹ Muthaly, Lobo and Song, "Marketing of Postgraduate Education in Taiwan: Issues for Foreign Universities", 127.

⁹² Becker and Kolster, "International Student Recruitment: Policies and Developments in Selected Countries", 71.

⁹³ Icek Ajzen, "From Intentions to Actions: A Theory of Planned Behavior." In *Action Control. From Cognition to Behavior*, ed. Julius Kuhl and Jürgen Beckmann (Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo: Springer-Verlag, 1985), 36.

⁹⁴ Andrew Nowlan, "The Theory of Planned Behavior and Japanese Student Intent to Study Abroad," *International Journal of Recent Advances in Organizational Behaviour and Decision Sciences* 4, no. 1 (2018): 1092-1111,

students from Taiwan to choose universities in the USA, the UK as well as Australia.⁹⁵ Researchers such as Adrien Presley, Datha Damron-Martinez and Lin Zhang used TPB to investigate factors that influence business students' intentions to attend schools abroad.⁹⁶ Ching-Huei Chen and Craig Zimitat employed TPB in the research exploring the motivations of students from Taiwan to study at Australian and US HEIs. Oliver Schnusenberg, Pieter de Jong and Lakshmi Goel's research attempting to predict students' intentions to participate in short-term programs abroad was also accompanied by TPB.⁹⁷

The widespread application of the theory of planned behaviour will enable a comparison of the outcomes with other projects related to study abroad destination choices using the same theoretical framework. Also, the focus on the attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control makes it easier to recognise factors that enable or disable students to take up education abroad.

As already stated, the theory of planned behaviour was created on the grounds of the theory of reasoned action. The theory of reasoned action, even though is quite similar to the theory of planned behaviour, was not chosen as the theoretical framework because it does not recognise the influence of the perceived behavioural control, which has been proven as a significant determinant in the decision-making process.^{98 99} It is important to note that a behaviour can be enacted only if the person has actual means enabling him/her to perform the behaviour.¹⁰⁰

4.2 Main concepts of the theory of planned behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour was created to predict and explain human behaviour in specific contexts.¹⁰¹ TPB clarifies why people perform certain behaviours based on three independent predictors: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control.

https://www.academia.edu/38448172/The_theory_of_planned_behavior_and_Japanese_student_intent_to_study_abroad.

⁹⁵ Terry Gatfield and Ching-huei Chen, "Measuring Student Choice Criteria Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour: The Case of Taiwan, Australia, UK, and USA", 77–95.

⁹⁶ Adrien Presley, Datha Damron-Martinez and Lin Zhang, "A Study of Business Student Choice to Study Abroad," *Journal of Teaching in International Business* 21, no. 4 (2010): 227–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2010.526009>.

⁹⁷ Oliver Schnusenberg, Pieter de Jong and Lakshmi Goel, "Predicting Study Abroad Intentions Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior," *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* 10, no. 3 (2012): 337, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4609.2012.00350.x>.

⁹⁸ Icek Ajzen, "The Theory of Planned Behavior," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 50, no. 2 (1991): 181, [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T).

⁹⁹ Ibid., 183.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 181.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 181.

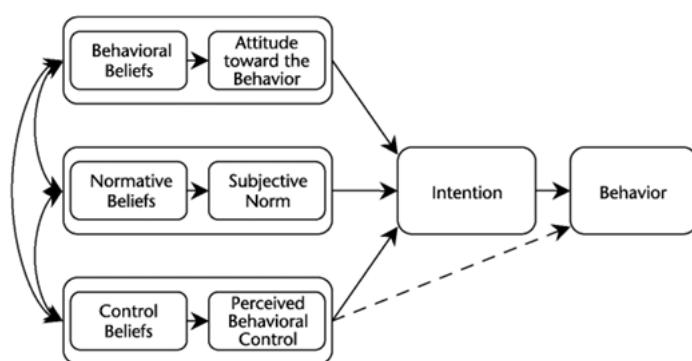


Figure 3 Theory of planned behaviour.¹⁰²

The attitude toward the behaviour refers to the degree to which a person has a positive or negative attitude towards carrying out the behaviour in question.¹⁰³ It is rooted in *behavioural beliefs* which are beliefs about the probable consequences, experiences,¹⁰⁴ and attributes¹⁰⁵ associated with the behaviour. They influence the creation of favourable or unfavourable attitudes toward the behaviour.¹⁰⁶

The second predictor, *the subjective norm* is a consideration of the decision-maker whether people that are important to him/her approve the behaviour.^{107 108} Moreover, the subjective norm deals with the question whether the important people themselves engage in a given behaviour.¹⁰⁹ The subjective norm is an outcome of *the normative beliefs* which refer to a person's consideration of his/her relevant social circle's approval or disapproval regarding the behaviour's enactment.¹¹⁰ Hence, normative beliefs influence the creation of subjective norms¹¹¹ as well as the perceived social pressure.¹¹²

The third predictor of human behaviour, *the perceived behavioural control*, refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour, which is strongly influenced by a person's experience and anticipated obstacles.¹¹³ The perceived behavioural control is a result

¹⁰² Icek Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior* (Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education: Open University Press, 2005), 126.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 188.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 189.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 191.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 189.

¹⁰⁷ Terry Gatfield and Ching-huei Chen, "Measuring Student Choice Criteria Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour: The Case of Taiwan, Australia, UK, and USA", 81.

¹⁰⁸ Ching-Huei Chen and Craig Zimitat, "Understanding Taiwanese Students' Decision-Making Factors Regarding Australian International Higher Education," 98.

¹⁰⁹ Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 124.

¹¹⁰ Icek Ajzen, "The Theory of Planned Behavior", 195.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 189.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid., 188

of *control beliefs* which represent an individual's perception of the ease of performing the behaviour in question,¹¹⁴ such as cost, time, and competitiveness associated with the performance of the behaviour.¹¹⁵ The control beliefs lead to the perception that one has or does not have the capacity to carry out a given behaviour.¹¹⁶

The three predictors influence a person's intention to conduct the behaviour. *The intention* reflects one's willingness to attempt a particular behaviour¹¹⁷ and determines whether the behaviour will be enacted.^{118 119} Hence, the stronger the intention to enact the behaviour, the more likely its performance.¹²⁰

Summing up, the main point of the theory of planned behaviour is that the more favourable attitude toward the behaviour and the more positive the opinions of important people as well as the greater the perceived behavioural control, the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour, and in consequence, the higher the chance of the actual enactment of the behaviour. The influence and the intensity of each predictor depend on the nature of the behaviour in question, meaning that in some cases only one or two predictors will be decisive and in other cases, the intention to perform a behaviour will be influenced by all three predictors.^{121 122}

5 Method

The data collection method employed in this research included semi-structured interviews and a demographic survey. The interviews were later coded according to the structured content analysis.

Due to the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, all interviews were held online. Before the interviews began, each participant signed an interview consent asking for permission to record the interview and was reassured about the anonymity of their identities. The consent included an option for the interviewees to mark whether in case of a direct quotation they would like to be called by a pseudonym. The interviewees' identity is kept anonymous and since there were two female and four male students, they will be called "F1" and "F2" (for

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 191.

¹¹⁵ Terry Gatfield and Ching-huei Chen, "Measuring Student Choice Criteria Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour: The Case of Taiwan, Australia, UK, and USA", 81.

¹¹⁶ Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 125.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 118.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 117.

¹¹⁹ Icek Ajzen, "The Theory of Planned Behavior", 181.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 182.

¹²¹ Ibid., 188.

¹²² Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 118.

female students) and “M1”, “M2”, “M3” and “M4” (for male students). Interview partners F1, F2, M1 and M2 are enrolled in linguistics, cultural studies, history as well as administration and management taught in Polish; each of them finances their stay in Poland with scholarships funded by the Polish government known as *Exchange Programme for students and scientists as part of bilateral cooperation - offer for incoming students and scientists*; the interview partners M3 and M4 are enrolled in medical studies taught in English and finance their education with private funds. The interviewees were also asked to fill out a demographic survey. The participants were found through a Facebook group uniting people from Taiwan living in Poland, a snowball effect resulting from these connections as well as through recommendations possible due to contacts built during the author’s one-year stay at the National Chengchi University in Taiwan.

5.1 Semi-structured interview

The research used semi-structured interviews as a method to collect data and the participants consisted of students from Taiwan attending universities in Poland. A semi-structured interview is a data collection method commonly used in many research fields such as social sciences, marketing and survey methodology as an exploratory tool.¹²³ It is a combination of structured and unstructured interviews, allowing the interviewer to ask unplanned questions that the interviewer comes up with during the interview and at the same time requires a certain order, as the interviewer uses an interview guide with questions that were planned for the interview.¹²⁴

5.2 Interview guide

The questions included in the interview guide were based on the theory of planned behaviour and the literature regarding academic migration.

The following questions are based on the theory of planned behaviour’s most important elements: the attitude toward behaviour, the subjective norm and the perceived behavioural control.

5.2.1 Questions relating to the time before students’ enrolment at Polish HEIs

The attitude toward behaviour-based questions

¹²³ George Tegan, “Semi-Structured Interview. Definition, Guide & Examples,” *Scribbr*, accessed 15 July 2022, <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/semi-structured-interview/>.

¹²⁴ William C. Adams, “Conducting Semi-Structured Interviews,” in *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, ed. Harry P. Hatry, Kathryn E. Newcomer and Joseph S. Wholey (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2015), 492.

As mentioned above, ATB addresses the degree to which the enactment of the behaviour is positively or negatively valued by the decision-maker.¹²⁵ Hence, the role of the interview questions based on ATB was to find out how the interview partners felt about the idea of moving to Poland and attending local universities, and how they imagined life, universities and classes they were about to experience in Poland.

- 7.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于你在波兰的生活有什么样的期待？ ”
(“What were your expectations towards your life in Poland before attending a Polish university?”)
- 8.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于大学有什么样的期待？ ”
(“What were your expectations towards your Polish university before you arrived in Poland?”)
- 9.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于大学课程有什么样的期待？ ”
(“What were your expectations towards classes at your Polish university before you arrived in Poland?”)
- 12.: “来波兰上大学前，你对在波兰念书的看法是什么？ ”
(“What was your opinion about studying in Poland before you began attending a Polish university?”)

The subjective norm-based questions

SN should be understood as the social pressure to engage or not to engage in a behaviour. SN depends on all accessible normative beliefs concerning the expectations and behaviours of significant social referents. The stronger the relationships with a referent, the stronger the normative belief.¹²⁶ Hence, the role of the two questions based on SN was to explore who the referents were, what views towards studying in Poland they held, whether any of them had

¹²⁵ “Attitude Toward the Behavior,” UMass, accessed 11 July 2022, <https://people.umass.edu/aizen/att.html>.

¹²⁶ “Subjective Norm,” UMass, accessed 11 July 2022, <https://people.umass.edu/aizen/sn.html>.

personally studied in Poland and what the impact of their opinions on the interviewees' decisions was.

- 13.: “对你最重要的人（父母，家人，男/女朋友，朋友，同学，老师，教授等）对于你要来波兰念书的看法是什么？”
(("What was the opinion of people that were important to you (parents, family members, boyfriend, girlfriend, friends, classmates, teachers, professor, etc.), about your wish to study in Poland before your arrival?"))
- 14.: “在你来波兰上大学之前，你是否认识目前正在波兰念书或从波兰大学毕业的人？”
(("Had you known anybody who had been already studying in Poland or who had graduated from a Polish university before you attended the university in Poland?"))

The perceived behavioural control-based questions

PBC describes people's perceptions of their ability to perform a given behaviour. PBC is determined by all accessible control beliefs, i.e., beliefs related to the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede the conduct of the behaviour.¹²⁷ Hence, the goal of the interview questions based on PBC was to learn about those aspects that according to students were supposed to enable them to study at Polish universities and those that the students regarded as obstacles. The PBC-based interview questions were:

- 15.: “是否有任何因素让你认为，在波兰大学完成学业是一个你可以实现的目标？这些因素是什么？”
(("Were there any factors that made you believe studying in Poland was an achievable goal? What were those factors?"))

¹²⁷ “Perceived Behavioral Control,” UMass, accessed 11 July 2022, <https://people.umass.edu/aizen/pbc.html>.

- 16.: “是否有任何因素让你认为，在波兰大学完成学业是一个你难以实现的目标？ 这些因素是什么？ ”

(“Were there any factors that made you doubt whether studying in Poland was an achievable goal? What were those factors?”)

Questions based on the literature regarding the academic migration

The roles of the questions based on the literature regarding the academic migration were to find out which elements stopped the interviewees from continuing their education in Taiwan...

- 2.: “你为什么没有选择在台湾念大学？”

(“Why didn’t you choose to study in Taiwan?”)

...and which elements made the interviewees particularly attracted to Poland as a study abroad destination.

- 1.: “你为什么想要来波兰上大学？”

(“Why did you want to study in Poland?”)

Moreover, the studies regarding the academic migration indicate that the quality of the information source on study abroad opportunities in a certain country strongly impacts potential students’ interest in studying in that country. Hence, the following question was included in the interview guide:

- 6.: “你从何处得知可以来波兰就读大学的相关资讯？”

(“Where did you find the information about the possibility of studying in Poland?”)

5.2.2 Questions relating to the time during students' education in Poland

To better understand the needs of international students, the interview guide consisted also of questions relating to students' perceptions of the positive and negative sides of studying and living in Poland. Exploring these aspects should help the authorities to introduce changes to raise the attractiveness of Poland as a study abroad destination.

Questions relating to students' perceptions of studying and living in Poland after getting enrolled at Polish HEIs included:

- 3.: “你对在波兰生活有什么看法？ ”
(“What is your opinion about living in Poland?”)
- 4.: “你对你的波兰大学有什么看法？ ”
(“What is your opinion about your university in Poland?”)
- 5.: “你对于现有的大学课程有什么看法？ ”
(“What is your opinion about the study program?”)
- 10.: “在波兰就读大学期间， 你所获得最正面的体验是什么？ ”
(“What is the most positive experience you have made since you have been studying in Poland?”)
- 11.: “在波兰就读大学期间， 你所获得最负面的体验是什么？ ”
(“What is the most negative experience you have made since you have been studying in Poland?”)
- 17.: “你对于在波兰念书的相关期待， 是否已经获得实现？ ”
(“Have your expectations related to studying in Poland already been fulfilled?”)

- 19.: “你会推荐别人来波兰念大学吗？ ”
(“Can you recommend studying in Poland to others?”)

5.2.3 Questions relating to the time after students’ graduation

The interview guide also included questions relating to the interviewees’ future and gave them a chance to talk about issues they perceived as particularly relevant. The role of this segment was to find out how the interviewees evaluate their decision of choosing Poland as a study abroad destination and learn about aspects that they felt like are necessary to be touched upon while handling the subject of international students in Poland. The questions were as follows:

- 18.: “你觉得在波兰念书的经验会如何影响你日后的职涯发展？ ”
(“How will studying in Poland influence your future career development?”)
- 20.: “你大学毕业以后打算生活在哪个国家？ ”
(“Which country are you planning to live in after graduating?”)
- 21.: “你大学毕业以后会打算回去台湾吗？ ”
(“Are you planning to go back to Taiwan after graduating?”)
- 22.: “你未来有什么计划？ ”
(“What are your plans for the future?”)
- 23.: “还有什么你想要说？ ”
(“Is there anything you would like to add?”)

5.3 Demographic survey

The interview participants included six students from Taiwan studying in Poland. The table below displays their profiles based on interviewees’ self-assessment. The data was collected by conducting a demographic survey filled out by each participant before the start of the interviews.

Category	Respondents
Origin	6x Taiwan
Gender	4x male (2 medical students, 2 scholarship recipients) 2x female (2x scholarship recipients)
Age	19 – 32
Marital status	6x unmarried
The highest educational degree obtained so far	2x High school (2x medical students) 4x Bachelor's degree (4x scholarship recipients)
University in Poland	3x Jagiellonian University 1x University of Warsaw 1x Medical University of Lublin 1x Poznan University of Medical Sciences
Start of the studies in Poland	2x 2020 1x 2019 1x 2018 1x 2017 1x 2016
Currently enrolled in	2x undergraduate studies (2x medical students) 4x graduate studies (4x scholarship recipients)
Major	2x Medical and health sciences: Basic medicine 1x Social sciences: Economics and business 1x Social sciences: Other social sciences 1x Humanities: History and archaeology 1x Humanities: Languages and literature
Language of the study program	2x English (2x medical students) 4x Polish (4x scholarship recipients)
Level of English proficiency	3x Advanced (1x medical student, 2x scholarship recipients)

	3x Intermediate (1x medical student, 2x scholarship recipients)
Level of Polish proficiency	2x Advanced (2x scholarship recipients) 2x Intermediate (1x medical student, 1x scholarship recipient) 1x Beginner (1x scholarship recipient) 1x None (1x medical student)
Social class	4x Upper middle class (2x medical students, 2x scholarship recipients) 1x Lower middle class (1x scholarship recipient)
Family's approximate disposable household income	2x 1,200,000 NT\$ (1x medical student, 1x scholarship recipient) 1x 900,000 NT\$ (1x scholarship recipient)
Employment	2x Part-time job (2x scholarship recipients) 4x Unemployed (2x medical students, 2x scholarship recipients)

Figure 4 Demographic survey.¹²⁸

5.4 Categories

The main three categories divided the interviews into *the time before students' enrolment*, *the time during students' enrolment* and *the time after students' enrolment*. The main category *the time before students' enrolment* was further split into categories presenting answers to questions based on ATB, SN and PBC. The category *the time during students' enrolment* was divided into expressions displaying positive and negative sides of living and studying in Poland. Similarly, the category *the time after students' enrolment* was divided into positive and negative statements. The way of categorising the interviews can be depicted using the following graph.

¹²⁸ By author, based on the data obtained by the demographic surveys the interview partners filled out before each interview.

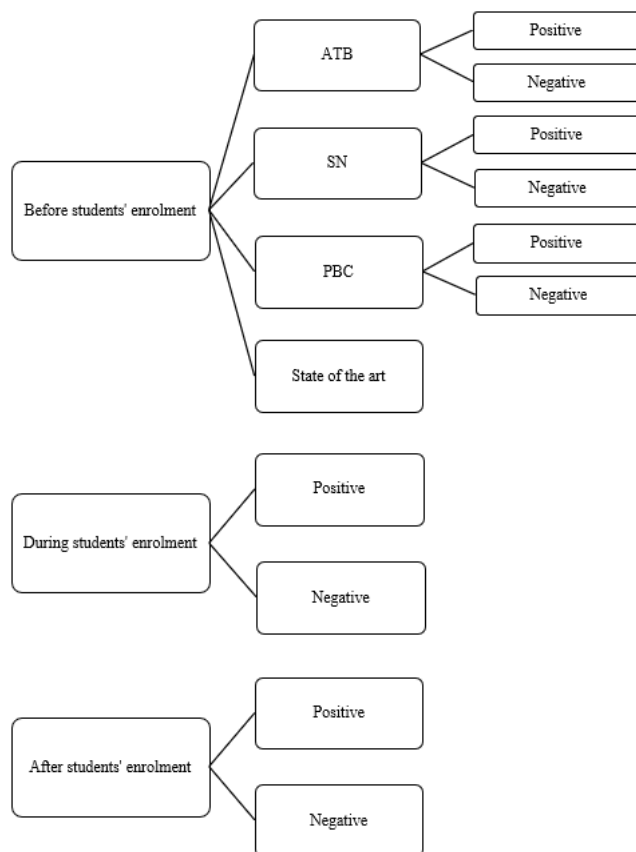


Figure 5 Visual representation of categories employed in the research.

5.5 Structured content analysis

Later, the recorded interviews were coded using the MAXQDA software, applying Phillip Mayring's structured content analysis.^{129 130} The structured content analysis can be presented using the following graph:

¹²⁹ Philipp Mayring, *Einführung in die qualitative Sozialforschung: eine Anleitung zu qualitativem Denken*, (Weinheim Basel: Beltz, 2016).

¹³⁰ Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution* (Klagenfurt, Austria: SSOAR, 2014), https://www.psychopen.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/books/mayring/ssoar-2014-mayring-Qualitative_content_analysis_theoretical_foundation.pdf.

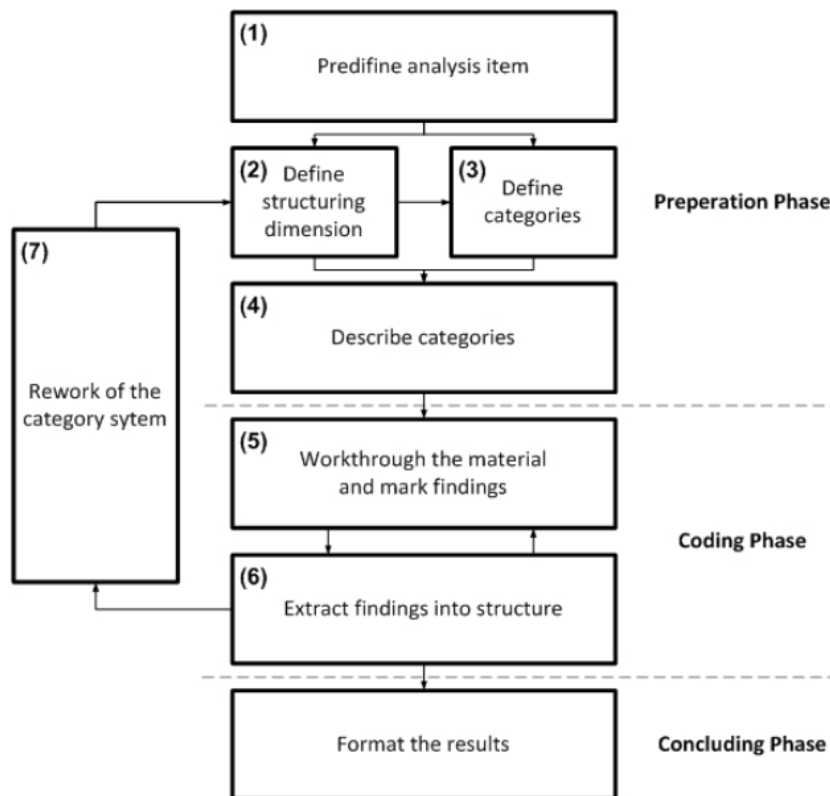


Figure 6 Process flow of structured content analysis.¹³¹

The employment of the structured content analysis began with *predefining analysis item (1)* which was the six interviews with students from Taiwan studying in Poland. Next, the research question “*Why are there more and more students from Taiwan studying in Poland?*” was *defined as the structured dimension (2)*. After *defining (3)* and *describing the categories (4)* (*the time before students’ enrolment, the time during students’ enrolment and the time after students’ enrolment*), all six interviews were *worked through and findings were marked (5)* in the MAXQDA software. Later, the findings were *extracted into the structure (6)* and *the category system was reworked (7)*. Next, steps 2-6 were repeated which caused the number of codes to decrease and in the last phase, *the results were formatted*.

¹³¹ Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse: Grundlagen und Techniken* (Weinheim: Beltz, 2008), 84 quoted in Michael Kohlegger, Ronald Maier and Stefan Thalmann, Understanding Maturity Models Results of a Structured Content Analysis, *Proceedings of I-KNOW '09 and I-SEMANTICS '09* (2009): 53, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=d4bbb80e3abd240a3a617a6f27fcd68d87e65f99>.

6 International students in Poland

6.1 Internationalisation of Poland's higher education

Poland's academic population has been one of the least internationalised in Europe¹³² which is the result of HEIs' close links with the nation-state during the communist regime when the focus was laid on domestic students.¹³³ Even though the communist regime in Poland collapsed in 1989, the internationalisation of Polish HEIs kept being neglected for the next two decades. However, already at the beginning of the 21st century, the country began to experience a stable and intense growth in the number of international students attending Polish universities.¹³⁴

The main incentives for the internationalisation of Polish HEIs have been the overall strengthening of Poland's role inside and outside Europe,¹³⁵ beneficial geopolitical location and the development of a knowledge economy.¹³⁶ Moreover, welcoming more international students should also save many private universities built after the 1990s, which otherwise would have to be closed due to the decreased birth rate. According to statistics, the number of domestic students at Polish universities may drop by 42%, from 1,788,000 students in 2005 to 1,034,000 students in 2025.¹³⁷ ¹³⁸ Internationalisation should also help Polish HEIs to receive more foreign financial support for research and be a remedy for the low position of Polish universities in global academic rankings.¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ The position of Polish universities within international rankings is not very visible and it creates a significant obstacle for domestic

¹³² Charlotte West, "Poland: An Emerging Hotspot for International Students," *International Educator* 25, no. 3 (2016): 18.

¹³³ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 9.

¹³⁴ "Higher Education. Students in Higher Education Institutions," SWAID, accessed 12 June 2020, http://swaid.stat.gov.pl/en/Edukacja_dashboards/Raporty_predefiniowane/RAP_DBD_EDU_12.aspx.

¹³⁵ Ministry of Science and Higher Education, *Program Umieędzynarodowienia Szkolnictwa Wyższego [The Higher Education Internationalisation Program]*, Warsaw: MNiSW, 2015 quoted in Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 11.

¹³⁶ Ministry of Science and Higher Education, *Program Umieędzynarodowienia Szkolnictwa Wyższego [The Higher Education Internationalisation Program]* quoted in Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 11.

¹³⁷ Tomasz Domański, Alicja Stępień-Kuczyńska and Agata Włodarska-Frykowska, "Internacjonalizacja Polskich Uczelni Wyższych" [The Internationalisation of Polish Higher Education Institutions], *Internacjonalizacja Polskich Ośrodków Politologicznych*, (2017): 67, <https://doi.org/10.18778/8088-741-1.05>.

¹³⁸ "Strategia Rozwoju Szkolnictwa Wyższego w Polsce do 2020 Roku" [Strategy for the Development of Poland's Higher Education until 2020], European Social Fund Plus, accessed 30 March 2022, https://cpp.amu.edu.pl/pdf/SSW2020_strategia.pdf.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 308.

HEIs to attract students from leading sending Asian countries.¹⁴¹ It is important to note, as East Asia accounted for approximately 20.4% of all international students in 2010.¹⁴²

Poland also needs to face the problem of being a “latecomer” on the market for international education, meaning that it cannot enjoy the advantages available to countries like the UK, the USA, Australia or Canada, who have been active in this field for many decades. Another problem Poland might be facing is the limited financial resources, stopping the country from investing in infrastructure and marketing strategies as well as human resources.¹⁴³

6.2 Polish government’s initiatives to internationalise the HE system

6.2.1 The Study in Poland program

One of the first steps in the internationalising process of Polish HEIs was the introduction of a program for the promotion of Polish universities abroad called *Study in Poland* in 2005. The program was created by an independent, non-profit national organisation “Perspektywy” Education Foundation. The organisation was established in 1998 by the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP).¹⁴⁴ The cooperation resulted in the signing of the *Agreement on Establishing a Strategic Partnership in the Field of Foreign Promotion of Polish Universities* in 2007. The document regulated goals and financial aspects and entrusted the supervision of the *Study in Poland* program to the International Cooperation Committee of the CRASP. The program is managed by the system of the *agency consortium*, meaning that independent non-governmental and non-profit organisations support universities in some activities. The decision on whether to join the program is up to each university and since its introduction, there have been between 50-60 participating HEIs.¹⁴⁵

To convince more international students to select Poland as their study abroad destination, the Polish government introduced student visas, softened regulations for students living in

¹⁴¹ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, “Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal”, 19.

¹⁴² UNESCO, *Global Education Digest 2009. Comparing Education Statistics across the World* (Montreal: UNESCO Institute for statistics, 2009) quoted in Ghazarian, “Country Image and the Study Abroad Destination Choice of Students from Mainland China”, 700.

¹⁴³ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, “Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal”, 2.

¹⁴⁴ “Who We Are - Education Foundation PERSPEKTYWY,” Perspektywy Foundation, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://perspektywy.org/fundacja/about-foundation/who-we-are>.

¹⁴⁵ Waldemar Siwiński, “»Study in Poland« to już 15 lat!” [»Study in Poland« It’s Been 15 Years!], Perspektywy, accessed 29 June 2022, http://perspektywy.pl/portal/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5003&catid=16&Itemid=119.

bordering regions¹⁴⁶ and gave up on the requirement to cover tuition fees upfront for the entire period of studies.¹⁴⁷

6.2.2 The number of international students starts rising

Soon, the first outcomes of the newly implemented changes started emerging. Only between 2005-2011, did the number of students from Saudi Arabia increase by 1036.7%, which is the highest increase among all foreigners undertaking education in Poland. The second fastest-growing group of international students in Poland came from Spain, with an increase of 903%. Spain was followed by Turkey (increase by 286,6%) and the fourth group most interested in studying in Poland turned out to come from Taiwan (increase by 199.4%). Other students with the fastest-growing numbers reported in Poland came from Sweden (increase by 242%), Ukraine (increase by 145%), the Czech Republic (increase by 121%), Germany (increase by 106%), Belarus (increase by 100%), Lithuania (increase by 92%), Norway (increase by 90%), Russia (increase by 35%) and the USA (increase by 34%).¹⁴⁸ It is worth noticing that already in 2010 students from Taiwan were the sixth most numerous group of international students in Poland.¹⁴⁹

Within ten years after Poland became a member state of EU in 2004, the number of international students undertaking education at Polish universities rose more than six times, reaching 57,119 students in 2015. This notion has been accompanied by a falling number of domestic students within the same period.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, "Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal", 15.

¹⁴⁷ West, "Poland: An Emerging Hotspot for International Students", 19.

¹⁴⁸ "Saudyjki w Polsce" [Saudi Women in Poland], Study in Poland, accessed 17 September 2020, http://www.studyinpoland.pl/konsorcjum/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2113%3Asaudyjki-w-polsce&catid=164%3A78-newsletter-2012&Itemid=20.

¹⁴⁹ "Studenci Zagraniczni w Polsce 2011" [Foreign Students in Poland 2011], Perspektywy Foundation, accessed 6 June 2020, <https://docplayer.pl/4363667-Studenci-zagraniczni-w-polsce-2011.html>

¹⁵⁰ "Higher Education. Students in Higher Education Institutions," SWAID.

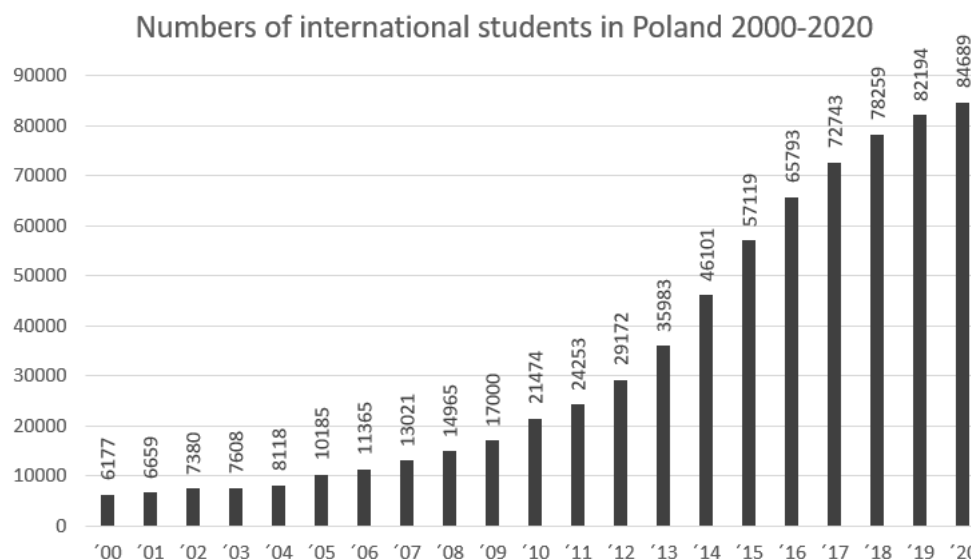


Figure 7 Numbers of international students in Poland 2000-2020.^{151 152 153 154 155 156}

The efforts to popularise Poland as a host country continued. During 2014-2020, thanks to EU funding, Poland invested 85 million EUR in its internationalisation activities.¹⁵⁷

Due to the changes, currently there are more than 500 degree programs in foreign languages offered at HEIs in Poland.¹⁵⁸

When it comes to the nationalities of international students selecting Poland as their study abroad destination, an overwhelming majority, namely over 80%, came from other European countries in 2014-2015.¹⁵⁹ The highest number was reported among students from Ukraine.¹⁶⁰

6.2.3 Poland's low levels of internationalisation

Even though the number of international students has been rising, in 2015 Poland was still reported as one of the least internationalised member states of the Organisation for Economic

¹⁵¹ Jacek Witkoś, "Jak Nie Stracić Szansy na Internacjonalizację Polskich Uczelni? [How not to Lose the Opportunity to Internationalise Polish Universities?]," in *Debaty PAU. Tom II. Szkolnictwo wyższe w obliczu zmian*, ed. Szczepan Biliński (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2015), 21.

¹⁵² Central Statistical Office, *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2013 r. [Higher Education Institutions and their finances in 2013]* (Warsaw: Statistical Publishing Establishment, 2014), 37.

¹⁵³ Central Statistical Office, *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2014 r. [Higher Education Institutions and their finances in 2014]* (Warsaw: Statistical Publishing Establishment, 2015), 35.

¹⁵⁴ Statistics Poland, *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2018 r. [Higher Education Institutions and their finances in 2018]* (Gdańsk: Statistical Office, 2019), 22.

¹⁵⁵ Statistics Poland, *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2019 r. [Higher Education Institutions and their finances in 2019]* (Gdańsk: Statistical Office, 2020), 123.

¹⁵⁶ Statistics Poland, *Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2020 r. [Higher Education Institutions and their finances in 2020]* (Gdańsk: Statistical Office, 2021), 71.

¹⁵⁷ West, "Poland: An Emerging Hotspot for International Students", 18.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Co-operation and Development (OECD).¹⁶¹ Poland lagged far behind, as only 0.9% of all students studying in Poland constituted those coming from abroad. At the same time, the average number of international students studying in other OECD countries was 8%.¹⁶² In the same year, to improve the condition of the Polish HE sector, the government launched *the Higher Education Internationalisation Program*.¹⁶³

6.2.4 The Higher Education Internationalisation Program

In 2015, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education published a document called *“The Higher Education Internationalisation Program”* (Pl.: *“Program umiędzynarodowienia szkolnictwa wyższego”*).¹⁶⁴ ¹⁶⁵ The main goal of the initiative was to attract 100,000 international students to study in Poland. The way to do that included, among many others, developing an English-speaking curriculum and language training for the academic staff as well as providing financial assistance for international researchers.¹⁶⁶

6.2.5 The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA)

The next important step for the internationalisation of Polish HEIs was the establishment of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) in 2017¹⁶⁷ which has been strongly supported by the authorities of the Study in Poland program.¹⁶⁸ This institution's responsibility is to improve scholarship opportunities to strengthen the mobility of Polish students wishing to study abroad and attract foreign students and researchers to study in Poland. NAWA's main goals which should be reached by 2027 are:

- enhancing international cooperation of scientists within the Polish system of science and higher education

¹⁶¹ Maia Chankseliani and Gianna Hessel, *Case Studies of the Most Popular European Destinations for Mobile Students from Russia, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia*, (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2016), 25, accessed 6 June 2020, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309195250>.

¹⁶² Witkoś, *Jak Nie Stracić Szansy na Internacjonalizację Polskich Uczelni?* [How not to Lose the Opportunity to Internationalise Polish Universities?], 20.

¹⁶³ “MNiSW Przyjęło »Program Umiędzynarodowienia Szkolnictwa Wyższego«” [The Ministry of Science and Higher Education Has Adopted the »Higher Education Internationalisation Program«], Europejska Sieć Migracyjna, accessed 5 July 2020, <https://emn.gov.pl/esm/aktualnosci/12986,MNiSW-przyjelo-quotProgram-Umiędzynarodowienia-Szkolnictwa-Wyższegoquot.html>.

¹⁶⁴ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, “Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal”, 311.

¹⁶⁵ Tomasz Domański, Alicja Stępień-Kuczyńska and Agata Włodarska-Frykowska, “Internacjonalizacja Polskich Uczelni Wyższych” [The Internationalisation of Polish Higher Education Institutions], 69.

¹⁶⁶ Maia Chankseliani and Gianna Hessel, *Case Studies of the Most Popular European Destinations for Mobile Students from Russia, Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia*, 25.

¹⁶⁷ Sin, Antonowicz and Wiers-Jenssen, “Attracting International Students to Semi-Peripheral Countries: A Comparative Study of Norway, Poland and Portugal”, 312.

¹⁶⁸ Waldemar Siwiński, “»Study in Poland« to już 15 lat!” [»Study in Poland« It's Been 15 Years!].

- enhancing international cooperation between Polish universities and scientific institutions
- increasing the number of outstanding foreign students at Polish universities
- spread information about the Polish system of tertiary education and science
- expanding the international community of people familiar with the Polish language and culture.^{169 170}

6.2.6 NAWA scholarships

International students interested in pursuing higher education in Poland can apply for following scholarships offered by NAWA:

- *the gen. Anders Programme*¹⁷¹
- *Poland My First Choice Programme*¹⁷²
- *Exchange Programme for students and scientists as part of bilateral cooperation - offer for incoming students and scientists*¹⁷³
- *NAWA Summer Courses*¹⁷⁴
- *the Banach Scholarship Programme*¹⁷⁵
- *Polish Language Programme – POLONISTA*.¹⁷⁶

Moreover, it is important to note that all scholarship recipients who participated in the interviews for this research finance their education through the *Exchange Programme for*

¹⁶⁹ “The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange,” NAWA, accessed 20 January 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/nawa>.

¹⁷⁰ “Guiding Roadmap for the Period 2021-2027,” NAWA, accessed 20 March 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/images/users/629/GUIDING-ROADMAP-FOR-THE-PERIOD-20212027.pdf>.

¹⁷¹ “Call for Applications under the Gen. Anders Programme is Now Open!,” NAWA, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/nawa/news/call-for-applications-under-the-gen-anders-programme-is-now-open>.

¹⁷² “Poland My First Choice Programme,” NAWA, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/students/foreign-students/poland-my-first-choice-programme>.

¹⁷³ “Exchange programme for students and scientists as part of bilateral cooperation - offer for incoming students and scientists,” NAWA, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/students/foreign-students/exchange-programme-for-students-and-scientists-as-part-of-bilateral-cooperation-offer-for-incoming-students-and-scientists>.

¹⁷⁴ “NAWA Summer Courses 2021,” NAWA, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/the-polish-language/nawa-summer-courses/nawa-summer-courses-2021>.

¹⁷⁵ “FAQ: The Stefan Banach Scholarship Programme,” Study, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://study.gov.pl/news/faq-stefan-banach-scholarship-programme#:~:text=The%20scholarship%20shall%20amount%20to,month%20during%20second%2Dcycle%20studies>.

¹⁷⁶ “POLONISTA – Scholarship and Fellowship Programme,” NAWA, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://nawa.gov.pl/en/the-polish-language/programme-for-students-of-polish-studies>.

students and scientists as part of bilateral cooperation - offer for incoming students and scientists.

6.3 The impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic on Polish HEIs and international students

The number of international students kept rising also after the outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, reaching a new record of 84,689 international students at Polish HEIs. However, the new situation challenged Poland's system of higher education. According to the report *"Internationalisation during the pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 on the international students in Poland and the academic recruitment in 2020/21"*, 27% of HEIs reported being left by 20%-50% of international students.¹⁷⁷ 51% of HEIs declared that none of their international students gave up their studies, 27% of HEIs reported 1%-3%, 7% of HEIs reported 3%-10% and 4% of HEIs reported 15%-25% of international students quitting.¹⁷⁸ When it comes to forecasting whether these international students would be likely to come back to study in Poland, 49% of Polish HEIs were positive, however, 42% of HEIs found it difficult to predict. Also, due to the lockdown of educational institutions, remote learning became the new reality. 52% of HEIs admitted to being very well prepared for remote teaching generally and 52% and 49% of HEIs declared being very well prepared for teaching remotely in Polish and English respectively.¹⁷⁹ The pandemic was also a reason for some social challenges, as due to its origin in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the virus caused a wave of negative feelings towards Asians all over the world. In Poland, 67% of HEIs were free from cases of discrimination, but 6% declared being faced with such instances.¹⁸⁰ When it comes to the marketing, advertising and promotion of Polish HEIs during the pandemic, the institutions transformed their tactics into more digitalised ones. 53% of HEIs post advertisements on social media, the same number turned to send newsletters and advertising emails, 44% of HEIs set up online open days for potential future students, 42% of HEIs participate in online meetings engaging recruiting agencies, 33% of HEIs cooperate with their alumni on social

¹⁷⁷ „Internacjonalizacja w Czasach Pandemii. Wpływ COVID-19 na Studentów Zagranicznych w Polsce i Rekrutację na Studia w Roku Akad. 2020/21” [Internationalisation in Times of a Pandemic. The Impact of COVID-19 on Foreign Students in Poland and Enrollment in the Academic Year 2020/21], Perspektywy Foundation, accessed 25 March 2022, <https://perspektywy.pl/raport/#page1>.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

media, 31% of HEIs use contextual advertising, 27% of HEIs welcome youth at digital education fairs and 9% of HEIs ask online influencers to promote their schools.¹⁸¹

To keep the interest of potential and current international students, the report recommends that the Polish government provides additional scholarships, direct funding, support in building online learning platforms, financial help and more training for the academic as well as administrative staff.¹⁸²

6.4 Requirements for international students to study in Poland

International students can access first-, second- and long-cycle studies as well as doctoral programs at Polish HEIs. The main requirement is a secondary school graduation certificate or another document proving that the candidate is eligible for admission to higher education in the country where they completed secondary education. In the case of enrolling in first- and long-cycle studies, a candidate might be required to take additional entrance examinations. The second-cycle studies can be attended by candidates who already hold a Bachelor's, Engineer's, Master's or the equivalent of the Polish higher education diploma. Candidates who would like to continue their education in doctoral programs need to hold a Master's degree or its equivalent recognised in Poland and must meet the admission conditions of respective HEIs.¹⁸³

6.5 Studying medicine in Poland

In 2017-2018, there were 1,29 million students in Poland, including 72,000 international students coming from 170 countries. 64,000 of all students studied medicine and over 10% of them were foreigners. The most interested in medical studies were students coming from Norway, Sweden, Germany, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, the USA, and Canada.¹⁸⁴ Diplomas obtained from Polish universities are recognised in EU as well as by many non-EU countries.¹⁸⁵ Moreover, since Polish medical programs taught in English became compatible with the US requirements for medical education, their students can pursue education overseas. The high mobility offered by medical universities in Poland makes it possible to apply for residency and postgraduate training programs also at university teaching hospitals in Canada and Australia.¹⁸⁶ Another practical reason that lures international medical students to Poland

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ "Admission Requirements," Study, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://study.gov.pl/admission-requirements>

¹⁸⁴ NAWA, *Medical Universities in Poland* (Warsaw: Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange, 2019), 2-3.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 4.

is affordable study costs, oftentimes much lower than in other European countries.¹⁸⁷ So far, 15 Polish universities offer medical studies in English: Medical University of Bialystok, Nicolaus Copernicus University–Collegium Medicum in Bydgoszcz, Medical University of Gdansk, the Medical University of Silesia in Katowice, Jan Kochanowski University School of Medicine in Kielce, Jagiellonian University Medical College in Krakow, Medical University of Lublin, Medical University of Lodz, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, School of Medicine, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, School of Medicine, Poznan University of Medical Sciences, University of Rzeszow, Faculty of Medicine, Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, Medical University of Warsaw and Wroclaw Medical University.¹⁸⁸

To study medicine in Poland, international students need to fulfil three requirements: have good grades in high school, especially in physics, chemistry, and biology; pass English proficiency tests such as IELTS or TOEFL; and participate in entrance exams and/or interviews organised by universities.¹⁸⁹

6.6 Study costs in Poland

In Poland, domestic students and those coming from EU or the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as students who hold the Pole's Card (*Pl.: Karta Polaka*) can attend full-time studies taught in Polish for free. Otherwise, the tuition fees for international students cost on average 2,000 Euro per year for the first-, second- and long-cycle studies. Tuition fees at private HEIs are usually more expensive than at public ones. In the case of PhD students, full-time studies are free of charge.¹⁹⁰

As the interview partners for this research have been representing a group of scholarship recipients and a group of medical students paying tuition fees, the table below displays the tuition fees required by each medical university offering six years-long medical studies in English.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ NAWA, *Medical Universities in Poland*, 13.

¹⁸⁹ "How to Apply to Medical Universities in Poland: Admission & Entry Requirements," Gyanberry, accessed 20 December 2021, <https://gyanberry.com/how-to-apply-to-medical-universities-in-poland-admission-entry-requirements>.

¹⁹⁰ "Tuition Fees," Study, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://study.gov.pl/tuition-fees>.

University	The average price in Euro per semester (as for currency exchange rate on 2.04.2022)
Medical University of Białystok	5,750 EUR
Nicolaus Copernicus University – Collegium Medicum in Bydgoszcz	4,903 EUR
Medical University of Gdańsk	4,741 EUR
Medical University of Silesia	5,388 EUR
Jan Kochanowski University School of Medicine in Kielce	6,000 EUR
Jagiellonian University Medical College in Krakow	7,500 EUR
Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University	7,500 EUR
Medical University of Lublin (international program)	7,000 EUR
Medical University of Lodz	5,817 EUR
University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, School of Medicine	5,029 EUR
Poznan University of Medical Sciences	6,974 - 8,190 EUR
University of Rzeszów, Faculty of Medicine	6,250 EUR
Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin	5,833 EUR
Medical University of Warsaw	6,867 EUR
Wroclaw Medical University	5,603 EUR

Figure 8 Tuition fees for medical studies taught in English at Polish HEIs.^{191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205}

¹⁹¹ “Tuition,” Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, accessed 29 June 2022, https://www.umk.pl/en/admissions/in_english/tuition/.

¹⁹² “Disposition No. 26/2021,” Medical University of Gdańsk, accessed 5 March 2022, https://admission.mug.edu.pl/attachment/attachment/77251/Disposition_No_26_2021.pdf.

¹⁹³ “Tuition Fees for English Language Program and Fees for Repeating Classes due to Unsatisfactory Academic Progress Commencing from the Academic Year 2021/2022,” Medical University of Silesia in Katowice, accessed 29 June 2022, https://smk.sum.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Amounts-of-fees_2021_08.pdf.

¹⁹⁴ “Payments,” Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce. School of Medicine, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://medicineschool.ujk.edu.pl/payments.php>.

¹⁹⁵ “MD Program in English,” Jagiellonian University in Kraków, accessed 29 June 2022, https://irk.uj.edu.pl/en-gb/offer/SMO_PC_22/programme/medica.doct_sjm_PC_en/.

¹⁹⁶ “Medicine,” Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://en.ka.edu.pl/medicine/>.

¹⁹⁷ “Payment Schedule For AY 2021/2022,” Medical University of Lublin, accessed 29 June 2022, http://md_int_payment_schedule_students_admitted_in_21-22.doc.

¹⁹⁸ “Tuition and Other Fees,” Medical University of Lodz, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://studymed.umed.pl/admission/tuition-and-other-fees/>.

¹⁹⁹ “School of Medicine. Study Fees,” University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://wl.uwm.edu.pl/en/students/study-fees>.

²⁰⁰ “Tuition and Costs of Living,” Poznan University of Medical Sciences, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://pums.ump.edu.pl/admissions/dentistry/dentistry-tuition-and-costs-of-living.html#tuition-fee>.

6.7 Living costs as a student in Poland

Living costs in Poland are considered relatively affordable when compared to other EU member states. An average student's expense is about 350-550 EUR per month in smaller cities or 500-850 EUR per month in Poland's biggest cities such as Warsaw and Krakow. Prices for dormitories range from 60-150 EUR per month, a shared flat costs about 80-150 EUR per month and the rent for a single apartment in big cities require about 300-650 EUR per month. Food costs amount to 100-150 EUR per month. A semester pass for public transport is 50 EUR.²⁰⁶

6.8 Salaries in Poland

The minimum average salary in Poland is around 1,910 PLN (416 EUR) per month and the maximum average salary is about 33,800 PLN (7,368 EUR). On average, an employee in Poland makes 7,560 PLN (1,648 EUR) per month.²⁰⁷

7 Students from Taiwan in Poland

7.1 Historical ties between Poland and the Republic of China

The official start of diplomatic relations between Poland and the Republic of China (ROC) dates back to 18th September 1929, when both parties signed *the Treaty on Friendship, Trade and Navigation*²⁰⁸ in Nanjing. Poland and ROC were represented by Jerzy Barthel de

²⁰¹ "Wysokość Opłat za Usługi Edukacyjne na Studiach Stacjonarnych Pobierane od Roku Akademickiego 2020/2021" [University Of Rzeszów. The Amount of Fees for Educational Services in Full-Time Studies Charged from the Academic Year 2020/2021], University of Rzeszów, accessed 20 March 2022, https://www.ur.edu.pl/storage/file/core_files/2020/6/15/e4ba69736b924ead680a5699de051b2b/za%C5%82%20nr%201%20wysoko%C5%9B%C4%87%20op%C5%82at%20za%20us%C5%82ugi%20edukacyjne%20na%20st.%20stacjonarnych.pdf.

²⁰² "Wysokość Opłat za Usługi Edukacyjne na Studiach Stacjonarnych Pobierane od Roku Akademickiego 2020/2021" [University Of Rzeszów. The Amount of Fees for Educational Services in Full-Time Studies Charged from the Academic Year 2020/2021], University of Rzeszów, accessed 20 March 2022, https://www.ur.edu.pl/storage/file/core_files/2020/6/15/e4ba69736b924ead680a5699de051b2b/za%C5%82%20nr%201%20wysoko%C5%9B%C4%87%20op%C5%82at%20za%20us%C5%82ugi%20edukacyjne%20na%20st.%20stacjonarnych.pdf.

²⁰³ "Fees," Pomeranian Medical University in Szczecin, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://apply.pum.edu.pl/contents/content/62-fees>.

²⁰⁴ "Candidates," Medical University of Warsaw, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://ed.wum.edu.pl/candidates/>.

²⁰⁵ "Tuition Fee from the Academic Year 2022 / 2023," Wrocław Medical University, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://ed.umw.edu.pl/medicine-payments>.

²⁰⁶ "Study in Poland: Fees and Living Costs," Mastersportal, accessed 20 March 2022, <https://www.mastersportal.com/articles/1709/study-in-poland-fees-and-living-costs.html>.

²⁰⁷ "Average Salary in Poland 2022," Salary Explorer, accessed 29 June 2022, <http://www.salaryexplorer.com/salary-survey.php?loc=173&loctype=1#:~:text=A%20person%20working%20in%20Poland%20typically%20earns%20around%207%2C560%20PLN,%2C%20transport%2C%20and%20other%20benefits>.

²⁰⁸ "Traktat Przyjaźni, Handlowy i Nawigacyjny Pomiędzy Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Republiką Chińską, Podpisany w Nankinie Dnia 18 Września 1929 R." [Treaty of Friendship, Trade and Navigation Between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of China, Signed at Nanjing on September 18, 1929], Ratified 17 March

Weydenthal and Chenting T. Wang, respectively. This international exchange was short-lived, as World War II interrupted political and economic cooperation.²⁰⁹ Later on, pressured by the communist influence of the USSR, Poland broke its relations with the ROC. The ROC's loss of international supporters was preceded by its re-positioning on the world map, as at the end of the 1940s, due to Mao Zedong's increasing power over Mainland China, the nationalist government led by Chiang Kai-shek decided to move to the island of Taiwan. Even though due to the political circumstances of the 20th century the development of Polish-Taiwanese relations could not come into full bloom, the cooperation has been revitalised along with the political liberalisation emerging on both sides.²¹⁰ The turning point for the cooperation between Taiwan and Poland as well as other Central and Eastern European countries (CEE) was a series of political changes on both ends: the democratisation of Taiwan during the late 1980s and early 1990s combined with its rapid economic development, as well as the collapse of communist regimes in Europe, resulting in the launching of mutual economic relations in the 1990s.²¹¹ Major steps in strengthening the cooperation were the establishment of the Taipei Economic and the Cultural Office in Warsaw (also known as the Taipei Representative Office in Poland) in 1992 and the Warsaw Trade Office in Taipei two years later (today called the Polish Office in Taipei).²¹² As a result of the renewed ties, Poland became the 9th biggest EU trade partner of the Republic of China in 2014 and it kept the same position until at least 2018.²¹³

Nowadays, just like most countries, Poland does not maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Instead, Poland recognises the One China Policy and hence sees Xi Jinping's administration as the only representative of China.²¹⁴ Nonetheless, Poland perceives the island

1931, *Dziennik Ustaw* 62 pos. 499 (1931): 1040-1049,

<https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU19310620499>.

²⁰⁹ Marian Tadeusz Mencil, „Czynniki Kształtowania Relacji Polsko-Tajwańskich” [Forming Factors of the Polish-Taiwanese Relations], *Studia Gdańskie. Wzję i rzeczywistość* 12 (2015): 379, <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.desklight-6f1316dc-bf8a-4856-8afd-69bc9b9e042b>.

²¹⁰ “Informator Ekonomiczny. Gospodarka” [Economic Directory. Economy], Polish Office in Taipei, accessed 14 July 2020, <https://poland.tw/web/tajwan/informator-ekonomiczny>.

²¹¹ Justyna Szczudlik-Tatar, “The Unexploited Potential of Poland's Cooperation with Taiwan,” *PISM Strategic File* 5, no. 32 (2013): 1, https://pism.pl/publikacje/PISM_Strategic_File_no_5_32_The_Unexploited_Potential_of_Poland_s_Cooperation_with_Taiwan.

²¹² Ibid., 2.

²¹³ Polish Office in Taipei, “Informator Ekonomiczny. Gospodarka” [Economic Directory. Economy].

²¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, „Wspólny Komunikat Chińskiej Republiki Ludowej i Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej” [“Joint Communication of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Poland”], accessed 8 June 2020, <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cepl/pol/zbqx/t129135.htm>.

as an economic entity and cultivates relations with Taiwan in non-political areas such as education, culture, science and many more.^{215 216}

7.2 Polish-Taiwanese relations in the 21st century

7.2.1 Educational cooperation

One of the steps to strengthen the educational collaboration between Poland and Taiwan was the signing of *the Working Holiday Scheme Agreement* in 2014.²¹⁷ The point of the Agreement was to promote the exchange of young people from Poland and Taiwan and to enable them to take up jobs in both locations for up to one year. Annually the program can serve 200 persons from each side.²¹⁸

Another opportunity for Poland to present its educational offer appears during *the European Educational Fair Taiwan*, which the Polish Office in Taipei participates in and invites Polish universities to join. Most of the time the Fair is joined by: Wrocław Medical University, Poznań University of Medical Sciences, Medical University of Lublin, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and Poznań University of Life Sciences. The event is held each year in Taipei and has about 30,000 visitors. The Polish Office in Taipei, as the host of the stand, has been participating in the European Educational Fair Taiwan since 2015.²¹⁹

Another way of promoting Polish HEIs is the *educational seminar*, which has been organised by the Polish Office in Taipei since 2016. The seminar is addressed to the representatives of academia, secondary schools in Taiwan and the local Ministry of Education. The event enables the representatives of Polish universities to contact local academic and administrative staff related to the educational sector. Previously, the seminar was held in Taipei and Taichung but since 2017 it has moved entirely to Taipei. Usually, it hosts about 50 guests.²²⁰

Another event organised during the European Educational Fair Taiwan is *the Polish Medical Universities' Graduates Ball*. It aims to bring together graduates to protect their common interests, as well as to transfer knowledge about medical studies in Poland to younger

²¹⁵ Justyna Szczudlik-Tatar, "The Unexploited Potential of Poland's Cooperation with Taiwan," 1.

²¹⁶ Marian Tadeusz Mencil, "Czynniki Kształtowania Relacji Polsko-Tajwańskich" [Forming Factors of the Polish-Taiwanese Relations], 387.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ "Taiwan and Poland Have Signed an Agreement on the Program on Cultural and Educational Exchanges for Youth," Taipei Representative Office in Poland, accessed 14 July 2020, <https://www.roc-taiwan.org/pl/post/55.html>.

²¹⁹ Polish Office in Taipei, email message to author, 18 January 2021.

²²⁰ Ibid.

generations. The Ball has been held in Taipei since 2016 and is visited each year by about 100 graduates and representatives of Polish HEIs. Moreover, Polish universities and scholarship programs are promoted on the Facebook page of the Polish Office in Taipei.²²¹

7.2.2 Cultural cooperation

The Polish Office in Taipei also plays an important role in the promotion of cultural relations between Poland and Taiwan. It does so by organising various events where visitors have the chance to learn about Poland through exhibitions of graphics and posters, photographs, film festivals, classical music concerts, especially Chopin's, and the promotion of book translations written by Polish authors. The Office is also engaged in organising law-, society- and history-related matters in the form of such events as “*European Children's Rights. Polish Heritage*”, “*Women of Independence*” or “*Fathers of Independence*”. Moreover, not only does the Office organise special events on its own but it also participates in numerous activities, such as Taipei International Book Exhibition, Visegrád Group Film Festival (V4 Film Festival), Invention Fair (Taiwan Innotech Expo), International Travel Fair and Taiwan European Film Festival where the country can be introduced to an even bigger audience.²²²

7.2.3 Scientific cooperation

The relations got even stronger in 2018 when Poland and Taiwan signed *the Agreement on Scientific Cooperation*. The main goals of the Agreement are the development of academic exchange programs and more intense support of the cooperation between universities in the fields of science and research. Moreover, the document should also help companies that are oriented towards the creation of new technologies. The Polish government hopes mostly to strengthen the areas of biotechnology, information and communication technologies and issues related to the production of semiconductors.²²³

7.3 Numbers of students from Taiwan studying in Poland

According to the data released by the Taiwanese Ministry of Education, the last years have experienced a growing number of students from Taiwan studying in Poland.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² “Bilateral Relations,” Polish Office in Taipei, accessed 29 June 2022, <https://poland.tw/web/taiwan/taiwan#:~:text=Currently%2C%20about%201%2C000%20Taiwanese%20citizens,of%20science%20and%20higher%20education>.

²²³ Ludwika Tomala, “Podpisano Porozumienie Między Polską a Tajwanem o Współpracy Naukowej” [The Agreement Between Poland and Taiwan on Scientific Cooperation Was Signed], *Nauka w Polsce*. Polska Agencja Prasowa, accessed 17 July 2020, <https://naukawpolsce.pap.pl/aktualnosci/news%2C30437%2Cpodpisano-porozumienie-miedzy-polska-tajwanem-o-wspolpracy-naukowej.html>.

Currently, there are about 1000 Taiwanese studying at Polish universities, which, unofficially, allows the Polish State Treasury to earn about 6 million USD annually.²²⁴ However, compared to the most popular study abroad destinations, there are still not many Asian students studying in Poland.²²⁵

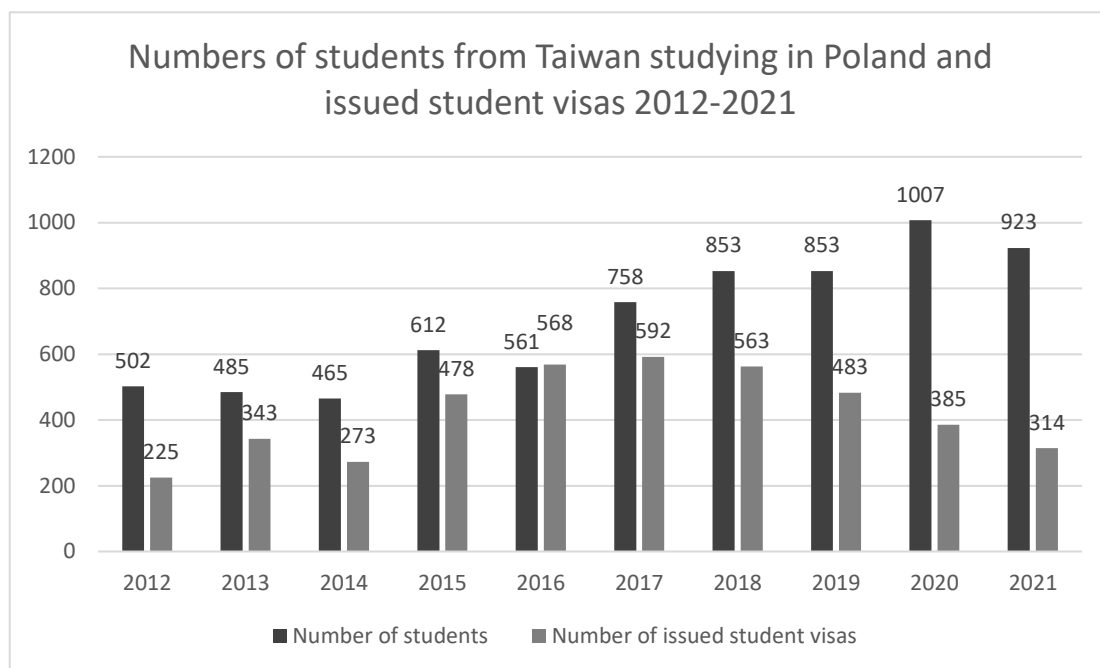


Figure 9 Numbers of students from Taiwan studying in Poland and visas 2012-2021. ^{226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245}

²²⁴ “Informator Ekonomiczny. Dwustronna Współpraca Gospodarcza” [Economic Directory. Bilateral Economic Cooperation], Polish Office in Taipei, accessed 14 July 2020, <https://poland.tw/web/taiwan/informator-ekonomiczny>.

²²⁵ Robert Majkut, Jacek Pluta and Radosław Rybczyński, “A Socio-Economic Portrait of Foreign Students in Poland – as Exemplified by Students from Former CIS Studying at WSB University in Wrocław,” *Management* 20, no. 2 (2016): 389, <https://doi.org/10.1515/manment-2015-0071>.

²²⁶ Ministry of Education 教育部, “101 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 101 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2012].

²²⁷ “Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao (1998-2012) 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表 (1998-2012)” [Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan (1998-2012)], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=2&PageSize=20>

²²⁸ Ministry of Education 教育部, “102 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 102 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2013].

²²⁹ “1998-2013 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 1998-2013 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [1998-2013 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=2&PageSize=20>.

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- ²³⁰ Ministry of Education 教育部, “103 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 103 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2014].
- ²³¹ “1998-2014 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 1998-2014 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [1998-2014 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=2&PageSize=20>.
- ²³² Ministry of Education 教育部, “104 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 104 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2015].
- ²³³ “1998-2015 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 1998-2015 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [1998-2015 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²³⁴ Ministry of Education 教育部, “105 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 105 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2016].
- ²³⁵ “2006-2016 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2006-2016 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2006-2016 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²³⁶ Ministry of Education 教育部, “106 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 106 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2017].
- ²³⁷ “2007-2017 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2007-2017 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2007-2017 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²³⁸ Ministry of Education 教育部, “107 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 107 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2018].
- ²³⁹ “2008-2018 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2008-2018 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2008-2018 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²⁴⁰ Ministry of Education 教育部, “108 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 108 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2019].
- ²⁴¹ “2009-2019 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2009-2019 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2009-2019 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²⁴² Ministry of Education 教育部, “109 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 109 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2020].
- ²⁴³ “2011-2020 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2011-2020 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2011-2020 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.
- ²⁴⁴ Ministry of Education 教育部, “110 Niandu shijie ge zhuyao guojia zhi wo liuxuesheng renshu tongji 110 年度世界各主要国家之我留学生人数统计” [Statistics on the Number of Students from Taiwan Studying in Major Countries in the World in 2021].
- ²⁴⁵ “2012-2021 Ge niandu woguo xuesheng fu zhuyao liuxue guojia liuxue qianzheng renshutongji biao 2012-2021 各年度我国学生赴主要留学国家留学签证人数统计表” [2012-2021 Statistics Regarding the Number of Student Visas to Major Countries Issued for Students from Taiwan], accessed 18 June 2020, <https://depart.moe.edu.tw/ED2500/News.aspx?n=2D25F01E87D6EE17&page=1&PageSize=20>.

7.4 Students from Taiwan at Polish medical universities

Those students from Taiwan who decide to study in Poland oftentimes choose medical fields as their majors. It is a very popular choice, as Taiwanese who graduated from Polish medical schools constitute the second-largest group of international medical graduates in Taiwan.²⁴⁶

7.4.1 Medical studies in Taiwan

To understand the willingness of students from Taiwan to study medicine abroad, it is important to know that there are twelve medical schools in Taiwan, four public and eight private, with the capacity to enrol 1450 students per year. The final supply of physicians is regulated by the government. The competition to get enrolled is fierce, as compared with the number of high school graduates, only the top 1% is going to be accepted by medical universities.²⁴⁷

In recent years, 3.7% (which accounts for 1,733 doctors) of Taiwan's workforce were international medical graduates.²⁴⁸ The Philippines has been the most popular medical study abroad destination, gathering 31.7% of students from Taiwan, followed by Poland hosting 24.2% of students and Myanmar with 21% of students. The Philippines has a long history of educating Taiwan's medical students, while Poland has been on Taiwan's medical map only for the last 20 years.²⁴⁹

7.4.2 Medical studies in Poland

Since 2002, the international medical graduates from the USA, Japan, Europe, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong have had the right to bypass the Degree-Verification Exam (DVE) and take only the National Licensing Examination (NLE) like graduates from Taiwan's medical universities.²⁵⁰ Consequently, after Poland became a member state of EU in 2004, medical students coming from Taiwan were also able to graduate from Polish universities without taking the DVE.²⁵¹ The incentive of not being

²⁴⁶ Tzu-Ling Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19, no. 6 (2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063727>.

²⁴⁷ Jen-Yu Chou et al., "Medical Education in Taiwan," *Medical Teacher* 34, no. 3 (2012): 188-190, <https://doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2012.652238>.

²⁴⁸ Feng-Yuan Chu et al., "Natives as International Medical Graduates: A Nationwide Analysis in Taiwan," *The International Journal of Health Planning and Management* 34, no. 1 (2019): 293, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hpm.2647>.

²⁴⁹ Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools", 2.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

required to take DVE after graduating from Poland was so strong that even medical students from Taiwan studying in the Philippines relocated to Poland.²⁵²

Except for DVE waiver, there have been other factors attracting international students to study medicine in Poland. For example, Poland offers 15 medical schools with English medical programs.^{253 254} The most popular Polish medical universities among students from Taiwan are the Medical University of Lublin²⁵⁵, the Medical University of Lodz (with a Dentistry major including "Taiwanese" curricular pathway)²⁵⁶, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn School of Medicine Collegium Medicum UWM,²⁵⁷ and Poznan University of Medical Sciences (also with Dentistry major including "Taiwanese" curricular pathway)²⁵⁸. On top of teaching medicine in English, Polish medical universities have relatively low entrance requirements when compared with the USA and some European countries.²⁵⁹ Additionally, the financial aspect of studying in Poland may be very attractive, as even though the tuition fees at Polish medical universities offering English programs are higher than tuition fees in at medical universities in Taiwan, the prices are still much lower than in most destinations offering similar education. Moreover, the cost of living in Poland is very affordable in comparison to other European and English-speaking countries.²⁶⁰

7.4.3 Medical students' protest and the tightening of law

A turning point in the history of students from Taiwan studying medicine in Poland was the 31st of May 2009 when a street protest joined by 2000 medical students from Taiwan's universities took place. The participants accused medical graduates from Poland of insufficient clinical experience resulting from lacking internship experience offered by Polish medical universities.²⁶¹ The protesters were also against exempting Poland's medical

²⁵² Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools", 2.

²⁵³ NAWA, *Medical Universities in Poland*, 3.

²⁵⁴ NAWA, *Medical Universities in Poland*, 5.

²⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 28

²⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 30

²⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 32

²⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 34

²⁵⁹ Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools", 2.

²⁶⁰ Michał Machul et al., "Lifestyle Practices, Satisfaction with Life and the Level of Perceived Stress of Polish and Foreign Medical Students Studying in Poland," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17, no. 12 (2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17124445> quoted in Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools", 3.

²⁶¹ Weng et al., "Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools", 2.

graduates from DVE.²⁶² In 2010, the alteration of the law was proposed. Those studying on the island required the government to introduce internships, recognition of diplomas and exams under the supervision of the Examination Yuan for those who graduated in medicine in Poland. The protesters argued that Polish universities treat foreign students too leniently.²⁶³ Before 2010, the graduates of Polish medical universities coming from Taiwan were able to start working right after returning to Taiwan.²⁶⁴ Currently, according to the law, all international medical graduates are required to pass DVE and have one year of internship in Taiwan before taking NLE. The information has been confirmed by the Taipei Representative Office in Poland: “*All students studying medicine, wherever they finish their studies, must pass the National Examination. They can practice medicine only after receiving a Doctor’s licence.*”²⁶⁵ However, if a medical graduate from one of EU countries has at least three years of local practical experience, they are allowed to take NLE right after coming back to Taiwan.^{266 267}

Currently, the regulations aimed at graduates of foreign medical schools are about to change once again. The new rule states that after taking DVE, a one-year internship is required which can be followed by taking NLE. An exception can be applied to graduates who gained five years of practical experience abroad – in this scenario they will be allowed to take the national license exam right away.²⁶⁸

²⁶² Ming-Jung Ho et al., “Equal, Global, Local: Discourses in Taiwan's International Medical Graduate Debate,” *Medical Education* 49, no. 1 (2015): 49, <https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.12619> quoted in Weng et al., “Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools”, 3.

²⁶³ Hanna Shen, “Na Tajwanie wraca sprawa polskich uczelni medycznych” [The case of Polish medical universities returns in Taiwan], Hania Shen, accessed 8 June 2020, <http://haniashen.blogspot.com/2010/06/na-tajwanie-wraca-sprawa-polskich.html>.

²⁶⁴ Hanna Shen, “Tajwańscy lekarze z polskim dyplomem” [Taiwanese doctors with Polish diploma], *Nasze blogi*, accessed 7 June 2020, <https://naszeblogi.pl/358-tajwanscy-lekarze-z-polskim-dyplomem>.

²⁶⁵ Taipei Representative Office in Poland, email message to author, 11 August 2020.

²⁶⁶ “Weifu bu yugao yishi fa xiufa yan guan chi guo wai yixue xueli kao zhao guiding 卫福部预告医师法修法 严管持国外医学学历考照规定” [Ministry of Health and Welfare Announces the Revision of the Physician Law to Strictly Control the Requirements for Foreign Medical Qualifications], last modified 2 October 2019, <https://www.mohw.gov.tw/cp-16-49490-1.html>. (accessed 20 June 2022) quoted in Weng et al., “Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools”, 3.

²⁶⁷ Weng et al., “Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools”, 3.

²⁶⁸ “Li yuan san du tongguo »yishi fa« zhengyi 12 nian de bo bo yishi jinnian di luori 立院三读通过《医师法》 争议 12 年的波波医师今年底落日” [The Legislative Yuan passed the "Physician Law" in the third reading, the case of students studying medicine in Poland, which has been controversial for 12 years, will set the sun at the end of this year], last modified 30 May 2022, https://tw.news.yahoo.com/%E7%AB%8B%E9%99%A2%E4%B8%89%E8%AE%80%E9%80%9A%E9%81%8E-%E9%86%AB%E5%B8%AB%E6%B3%95-%E7%88%AD%E8%AD%B012%E5%B9%B4%E7%9A%84%E6%B3%A2%E6%B3%A2%E9%86%AB%E5%B8%AB%E4%BB%8A%E5%B9%B4%E5%BA%95%E8%90%BD%E6%97%A5-150200159.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9sLmZhY2Vib29rLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_si g=AQAAAFziX5fLN4blz967a3mzfddyi5gcyElBsY97A-

7.4.4 Discrimination of medical graduates from Poland in Taiwan

Even though the protest took place over a decade ago, the medical graduates from Poland still face discrimination and their education is being criticised by Taiwan's general public and doctors.²⁶⁹ Also, it has been discovered that medical graduates from Poland tend to choose specialities in the fields of internal medicine, surgery, emergency medicine, paediatrics and obstetrics/gynaecology which are regarded in Taiwan as less attractive among medics than specialities such as dermatology, plastic surgery, ophthalmology and rehabilitation.²⁷⁰ A possible reason for that may be the relatively bad reputation of Polish medical studies in Taiwan, hindering these graduates from competing with graduates from local universities.²⁷¹

An aspect characteristic for medical students from Taiwan who graduate from Polish universities is that they tend to go back to Taiwan to practice medicine there. Meanwhile, those medical graduates who studied in Western Europe, Canada and the USA oftentimes decide to work in their host countries.²⁷²

8 Outcomes of interviews' analysis

8.1 The time before students' enrolment at Polish HEIs

As already stated in the introduction of this chapter, the first part of the interview intends to find out respondents' attitudes, opinions of students' social circles and elements which according to students should either help them fulfil the goal of studying in Poland or become an obstacle. Moreover, the questions should help understand the reasons for choosing education in Poland instead of Taiwan as well as explain where the students got the information about the possibility of studying over the Vistula River.

12.: “来波兰上大学前，你对在波兰念书的看法是什么？” (“What was your opinion about studying in Poland before you began attending a Polish university?”)

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²⁶⁹ Weng et al., “Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools”, 8.

²⁷⁰ “Si da yike gongshou rang wei wuguan ke 四大医科拱手让位五官科” [Four major medical departments give way to ENT], last modified 10 September 2012, <https://blog.udn.com/nicholeann/6839325>. (accessed 13 May 2022)

²⁷¹ Weng et al., “Choices of Specialties and Training Sites Among Taiwanese Physicians Graduating from Polish Medical Schools”, 7.

²⁷² Feng-Yuan Chu et al., “Natives as International Medical Graduates: A Nationwide Analysis in Taiwan,” 296

According to the theory of planned behaviour, one of the three main factors that have the biggest impact on whether an individual will decide to conduct a behaviour is his/her attitude towards the given behaviour.^{273 274} Hence, the more positive the attitude, the higher the chance of an individual conducting the behaviour. Analogically, the more negative the attitude, the lower the chance of one deciding to enact the behaviour.^{275 276}

- When asked the above question, five of the six respondents reported being optimistic about the idea of studying in Poland:

“I always knew I wanted to study in Europe, so when I passed this university’s entrance exam I was looking forward to coming here and studying. At the same time, I thought that studying in Poland would be a very cool experience.”

“我一直知道我很想要来欧洲念书，所以我当时我考上这个大学我很期待来这里看，来这里念书，然后当时觉得来波兰念书是一个很酷的经验。” – M4²⁷⁷

- Previously, Taiwanese who graduated in medicine in Poland were able to start working in medical fields right after returning to Taiwan. The lack of additional requirements at that time resulted in a belief according to which education in Poland was a way to avoid the difficult requirements set by the medical universities in Taiwan. However, it is important to note that such a lack of additional requirements could have been a sign of mutual recognition of educational standards. Either way, the below statement indicates that even though currently doctors who graduated from foreign universities are obliged to fulfil numerous requirements to be allowed to work in Taiwan, the previous circumstances negatively influenced Taiwan’s perception of medical studies in Poland:

“Have you ever heard the term 波波医生 while you were in Taiwan? Due to the system back then students were coming here to study (...) and since it is in the European Union, they didn’t have to take exams after returning to Taiwan. It was like that before. So, you could have become a doctor right away. Medical exams in Taiwan are very difficult and the Taiwanese thought it (studying medicine in Poland) was a bit of cheating, (they thought) you were actually not that diligent. So that was the opinion a long time ago.”

²⁷³ Icek Ajzen, “The Theory of Planned Behavior”, 189.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 191.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 188.

²⁷⁶ Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 118.

²⁷⁷ F1, M1, M2 and F2 expressed similar opinions

“你在台湾有听过别人说 ‘波波医生’ 吗？那个时候的制度就是他们来这边念了，念完之后，……因为是在欧盟，所以你回台湾你不用考试。那时候是这样。所以你就可以变成一个医生。台湾的医学系非常难考，然后因为台湾人觉得这就是一点 *cheating*，你其实没有那么认真；所以很久以前的看法就是这样。” – M2

13.: “对你最重要的人（父母，家人，男/女朋友，朋友，同学，老师，教授 等）对于你要来波兰念书的看法是什么？” ((*“What was the opinion of people that were important to you (parents, family members, boyfriend, girlfriend, friends, classmates, teachers, professor, etc.), about your wish to study in Poland before your arrival?”*))

Another factor that, according to the theory of planned behaviour, influences the decision-making process is the opinion of the decision-maker’s social circle on the given behaviour.²⁷⁸ Hence, the more favourable the opinions expressed by the individual’s most significant people, the higher the chance of him/her engaging in the behaviour. Again, analogically, the less favourable the opinions, the lower the chance of one conducting the behaviour in question. The answers revealed that the most significant people within interview partners’ social circles included teachers, parents, and peers, as those groups were mentioned most frequently.

- The research revealed that teachers were frequently asked by the interview partners about their views on the possibility of studying in Poland and most of the teachers recommended this choice:

“From what I’ve heard, the majority of professors who had been to Poland and Russia were more favourable of Poland, all of them had gone to Poland and said that Poland is alright and it is generally safe there; everything they said was positive.”

“大部分听到曾经待过波兰和俄罗斯的教授，都说波兰比俄罗斯好，他们都去过，他们都是说波兰不错，波兰整体比较安全，都是讲好的。” – F1²⁷⁹

- Also, parents, who were the most mentioned group during this question, reported their favourable opinions on studies in Poland:

²⁷⁸ Icek Ajzen, “The Theory of Planned Behavior”, 195.

²⁷⁹ M1 expressed a similar opinion

„When it comes to my family my parents support me a lot. They thought that coming to Poland was a very cool, very special experience. Moreover, you can learn another language and your English can get better.”²⁸⁰ And it is a member state of the European Union, so it is a great, precious experience.”

“我的家人，我的父母他们都非常支持我，他们都想来波兰是一个很棒的经验，很特别。然后你可以学另一个语言，英文可以更好。然后是一个欧盟的国家，所以是一个很棒的，很难得经验。” – M4²⁸¹

● Even though most quoted teachers and parents supported the idea of studies in Poland, the reactions of students’ peers – whilst positive – indicated low levels of familiarity with Poland among this group, as the peers could only associate Poland with being in Europe:

„Friends didn’t know what kind of country Poland was, but as soon as they heard it is in Europe, they thought it’s fine.”

“朋友不知道波兰是个怎么样的国家，所以他们听到波兰是欧洲就 OK。” – M2²⁸²

14.: “在你来波兰上大学之前，你是否认识目前正在波兰念书或从波兰大学毕业的人？” (“Did you know anybody who had been already studying in Poland or who had graduated from a Polish university before you attended the university in Poland?”)

Another aspect that influences the decision to conduct a certain behaviour is the question whether there are individuals in the decision-maker’s social circle who themselves are willing to or who conduct or already conducted the given behaviour.²⁸³

● All interviewees admitted to knowing other people who had attended universities in Poland before the respondents decided to follow in their footsteps. Most of the respondents indicated that the people they knew of were also from Taiwan and included professors from the Department of Slavic Languages, fellow students who had participated in language exchanges in Poland, acquaintances and family members who had graduated from medical universities in Poland:

²⁸⁰ Author’s note: English proficiency of the interview partner could get better due to the English program offered to foreign students by the medical universities in Poland

²⁸¹ F2 and M1 expressed similar opinions

²⁸² M1 expression had a similar opinion

²⁸³ Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 124.

“My Polish language teacher had also applied for this scholarship many years ago and then he graduated in Poland; now he is in Taiwan. He recommends students to apply for this scholarship very much.”

“我的波兰语老师很久很久以前也是申请这个奖学金，在波兰毕业，然后他现在在台湾。他也很推荐学生去申请这个奖学金。” – F1²⁸⁴

● Other people known to the respondents and who influenced their decisions were Polish high school pupils and university students whom the interviewees had met during language exchange programs in Taiwan:

“My high school and a high school from here, from Poznan, are sister high schools, so previously we had a group of Polish pupils, who came to Taiwan for a language exchange. Since they were from Poznan I learned about the culture, conditions, and life in Poznan while talking to them.”

“我高中和这里波兹南的高中是一个姐妹校，所以当时有一群波兰人来我们台湾做交换学生，然后刚好是波兹南，所以我有跟他们聊天，就是了解波兹南的文化或是状况，在波兹南生活他们觉得如何。” – M4²⁸⁵

15.: “是否有任何因素让你认为，在波兰大学完成学业是一个你可以实现的目标？这些因素是什么？” (*“Were there any factors that made you believe studying in Poland was an achievable goal? What were those factors?”*)

The third major factor that impacts the decision on whether to conduct a behaviour is the decision-maker's belief that he/she has sufficient means to make him/her capable of conducting the behaviour.²⁸⁶ The belief is based on the considerations for such aspects as cost, time, and competitiveness that are associated with the conduct of the behaviour.²⁸⁷ To comprehend the reasons behind choosing Poland as a study destination, the interview partners were asked which factors they found especially encouraging before making the decision.

²⁸⁴ M1, F2, M3 and M4 expressed similar opinions

²⁸⁵ M2 expressed a similar opinion

²⁸⁶ Ajzen, *Attitudes, Personality and Behavior*, 125.

²⁸⁷ Terry Gatfield and Ching-huei Chen, “Measuring Student Choice Criteria Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour: The Case of Taiwan, Australia, UK, and USA”, 81.

- The respondents reported that one of the major factors that convinced them to apply for study programs in Poland was the opportunity of receiving scholarships:

“Since I found a scholarship offering master’s studies here without any tuition fees and covering some living expenses, I wanted to apply for a university and see what it is like.”

“因为我看到一个奖学金可以提供我在这里读硕士，不用付学费，然后会给一些生活上的补助，所以我就想申请这里的大学看看。” – F1²⁸⁸

- As the medical students are not provided with any financial aid offered by the Polish government, one of the decisive factors for choosing studies in Poland was the possibility of attending study programs run entirely in English:

“Since everything is in English, there shouldn’t be any problems.”

“因为都是英文的话，所以应该没有什么问题。” – M3

16.: “是否有任何因素让你认为，在波兰大学完成学业是一个你难以实现的目标？这些因素是什么？” (“Were there any factors that made you doubt whether studying in Poland was an achievable goal? What were those factors?”)

The other question based on the theory of planned behaviour’s perceived behavioural control was one asking students which factors were discouraging them from believing that studying in Poland could be within their reach.

- While the language of the study program may be the main motivator for medical students, as they attend classes run entirely in English, the situation of scholarship recipients is reversed, as all of them reported that the scholarship’s requirement to use Polish in class and for writing master theses was the most worrisome factor:

“I thought that writing the thesis in Polish would be very difficult, so I didn’t know whether I could graduate.”

“我觉得要用波兰文写论文应该很困难，所以我不知道能不能毕业。” – F1²⁸⁹

- Another issue reported as an obstacle was the difficult process of obtaining the residence card:

²⁸⁸ M1 expressed a similar opinion

²⁸⁹ M1, F2 and M2 expressed similar opinions

„I think handling the residence card is a very difficult aspect of the Polish administration.”

“我觉得很困难的是行政方面波兰的 *Karta Pobytu* (Eng. : *residence card*),²⁹⁰ 非常难办。” – M2

1.: “你为什么想要来波兰上大学?” (“Why did you want to study in Poland?”)

To better comprehend the motivations of students from Taiwan leading them to choose Poland as their study destination, the theory-based questions were extended by questions directly asking about the reasons for such a decision.

- The interviewees once again mentioned the scholarship as one of the most decisive factors:

“If I was in Taiwan, I wouldn’t like to attend master’s studies. Only because I got this opportunity was I able to come to Poland and continue studying. If I was in Taiwan, I would go look for a job, I wouldn’t keep studying.”

“如果是在台湾我反而没有想要念硕士。因为我有这个机会我才会来波兰继续就读。如果是在台湾我会可能去找工作，就不会继续念书。” – F2²⁹¹

- The motivations to choose Poland in the case of medical students who finance their education with private funds are more diverse, as the decision is based not only on low study costs (in comparison to the majority of countries offering medical studies in English) but also on the possibility of studying medicine entirely in English, the comparatively easier enrolment process than the one in the USA and lower enrolment requirements than those demanded by universities in Taiwan:

“I checked medical universities in other countries, and none offered English programs. The UK and the USA do, but tuition fees and other costs are very high. (...) Medical universities in the USA involve the problem of the residence permit, so after taking all aspects under consideration, I thought Poland is a good choice. (...) the score threshold at Taiwan’s

²⁹⁰ “The residence card, within its validity period, confirms foreigner’s identity during their stay on the territory of the Republic of Poland, and authorizes them, along with a travel document, to cross the border multiple times without the need to obtain visa. Additionally, the residence card is a residence document which, apart from a valid Polish national visa, shall authorize its holder, to travels within the territories of other member states of the Schengen area for the period not exceeding 90 days within each 180-day period (...).” Source: Urząd do Spraw Cudzoziemców, “Information about the document,” accessed 28 June 2022, <http://archiwalna.udsc.gov.pl/en/cudzoziemcy/obywatele-panstw-trzecich/karta-pobytu/informacje-o-dokumentach/>.

²⁹¹ F1 and M1 expressed similar opinions

medical universities is very high, approximately only one per cent can get in. At that time, I heard that Polish medical universities' do not require such high scores and the requirements are more lenient."

“我看过其他国家的医学院，没什么提供 English program，有提供英国跟美国，就是学费跟各种学杂费都非常的高。……美国的医学院牵扯到居留证的问题，所以说当时在各方面的考量，我觉得波兰的医学院是一个比较好的选项。……因为台湾医学院的分数是非常高的，大概百分之一的人才可以上医学院。当时听说波兰医学院的分数不需要那么高，条件也比较宽松。” – M3

● The low recognition of Polish universities, which has been complained about several times in the span of six interviews, turned out to be a double-edged sword, as the lower popularity of Poland's HEIs among students from all around the world compared to universities in Western European or English-speaking countries results in a lower number of potential competitors during the academic enrolment processes:

*"A regular Taiwanese would choose the UK or the USA due to the language issue. If it comes to selecting other countries, then it would be southwestern countries or countries of Western Europe, such as France, Germany, or Spain. They are mainstream, these markets are big, but there are also many applicants, so the competition is fierce (...). Poland is a **niche country**."*

“因为语言的关系一般台湾人比较会选英国还是美国，然后如果是其他的国家大概也比较会选西南国家还是西欧国家：法国、德国、西班牙；他们比较主流，市场比较大，但也代表申请的人也比较多，竞争比较激烈……。波兰是一个小众的国家。” – M1

2.: “你为什么没有选择在台湾念大学？” (“Why didn't you choose to study in Taiwan?”)

While the previous question intended to recognise what encourages students from Taiwan to study in Poland, this question aimed at finding out what discourages young people from studying in Taiwan.

● Just like in the case of encouraging factors, some of the discouraging factors were different for scholarship recipients and for students who do not obtain any financial support from the

Polish government. Students who received scholarships reported that the decisive aspect was the high cost of studies in Taiwan:

“The first reason why I don’t attend master’s studies in Taiwan is the tuition fee. The tuition fees of private and public universities are not the same. Because I graduated in bachelor’s studies from a private university, I can only get enrolled at a private university for master’s studies, which in my opinion is a bit expensive (...).”

“没有在台湾读研究所的第一个原因是学费，私立和国立的大学生学费不一样；因为我是私立大学毕业，所以读研究所也可能或只能读私立的；觉得费用对我来说有点贵……。” – F1²⁹²

● In the case of medical students, the biggest obstacle hindering them from studying in Taiwan was the high enrolment requirements set by medical universities:

“Going to a medical school in Taiwan is very difficult, so this is a very significant reason why you can see many Taiwanese studying in Poland.”

“在台湾上医学院很困难，所以这是其中一个很大的原因你会看到很多台湾人在波兰念书。” – M4²⁹³

● The belief that studying abroad is more valuable than studying at a domestic university closed the list of encouraging factors:

“Foreign degrees are better than degrees from Taiwan. To some extent, there is a gap between having a foreign degree or a domestic one.”

“外国的学历比台湾的学历好，某个程度上你有外国学历还是跟本国学历有落差。” – M1

6.: “你从何处得知可以来波兰就读大学的相关资讯？” (“Where did you find the information about the possibility of studying in Poland?”)

According to the literature on the academic migration, access to information and advertising practices are factors that significantly impact students’ decisions on whether to choose a particular country as their study destination. The above question was intended to find out the

²⁹² F2 expressed a similar opinion

²⁹³ M3 expressed a similar opinion

information sources regarding studies in Poland that are available for university- and high school students in Taiwan.²⁹⁴

- The interview participants who were enrolled in bachelor programs at the Department of Slavic Languages in Taiwan indicated that teachers and fellow students were their main sources of information about the possibility of studying in Poland:

“Previously I studied Slavic languages, but actually the main part was the Russian language as Polish and Czech courses were elective; there were many students and teachers who shared their experiences of coming over here to study, so I heard about it quite often.”

“因为我之前是学斯拉夫语，但其实主要是我们学俄文，然后波兰文跟捷克文比较像是选修；也有很多学长还是学姐分享他们来这边念书的经验，老师也会讲，所以是满常听到的。” – M2²⁹⁵

- On the other hand, the medical students made their decisions due to the recommendations of family members and acquaintances who had graduated from Polish universities:

“There was a relative, who introduced to me (the idea of studying in Poland).”

“那时候是亲戚介绍的。” – M3²⁹⁶

- Except for the word-of-mouth marketing, the medical studies in Poland seem to encourage potential students through advertisement campaigns of services dedicated exclusively to international students published in medical magazines:

“There is a company that helps students get to Polish universities. This company (...) has good connections with universities in Lublin, Warsaw, and Poznan. If you are a foreigner applying for a university in Poland, they will help you prepare for the entrance exams and give you the necessary information, (...) it is a relocating company. In case there are any problems, they have Polish employees who learn Chinese, so they can all speak English, Chinese, and Polish. The company helps students to deal with things like visas and resident permits, so we don't have to worry about it... The biggest company of this kind takes responsibility for foreign students in Poland and Spain, but mainly in Poland. There is a

²⁹⁴ Author's note: the scholarship is available only for master's studies, however those students who do not receive this kind of financial aid (like the medical students) are able to attend Polish universities already after graduating high schools.

²⁹⁵ M1 and F2 expressed similar opinions

²⁹⁶ M4 expressed a similar opinion

medical magazine in Taiwan, the company oftentimes advertises the advantages of studying in Poland on the last page.”

“有一个公司，它帮助你考上波兰的学校。这个公司……跟卢布林、华沙、波兹南有很好的关系。如果你是国外的学生申请波兰的学校，他们帮你准备入学考和一些相关资讯，……就是代办公司。有出现问题的话，他们也有一些员工在学中文的波兰人，所以都会英文、中文、波文；还帮忙申请比如说签证、居留证，所以我们不太需要担心这些事情。最大的这类公司负责波兰还有西班牙的外国留学生，主要就是波兰。台湾有一个医学院杂志，它通常都会在杂志后面广告来波兰念的一些优惠。” – M4

● Potential medical students and students studying majors related to Eastern Europe at undergraduate programs in Taiwan can follow the recommendations of their social circles and additionally can come across advertisements in medical magazines. However, other students may have more difficult access to information about the academic opportunities offered by Poland:

„When I applied for the first Polish scholarship, I had to go through an interview. While waiting for the interview we bumped into other students and I realised there are two scholarship interviews: one was for master’s studies at Polish universities and the other one was for the Polish language summer course I was applying for.”

“我申请第一个波兰语奖学金的时候要面试；我们在等面试的时候遇到其他的一些同学，我发现不是只有我们这个波兰语的夏日奖学金面试，还是有两个：一个是波兰大学硕士奖学金，另外一个就是我在申请的波兰语暑假的奖学金。” – F1

7.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于你在波兰的生活有什么样的期待？” (“What were your expectations towards your life in Poland before attending a Polish university?”)

To better understand the reasons leading students from Taiwan to choose Poland as their study destination, the interview partners were asked to talk about how they had imagined their lives, universities, and study programs before coming to Poland.

● Students shared that they were curious about Poland’s culture:

„I wished to learn about Polish posters and see some folklore.”

“我想研究波兰的海报，还想要看看一些 *folklore* 的东西。” – M2²⁹⁷

- Students also expected to live in a safe, racism-free environment:

“Some countries can be not safe for Asians or people of Chinese origin, but from what I’ve heard, the situation in Poland is alright.”

“有的国家可能对亚洲人或是对华人来说会比较不安全，但是我听到的消息都说波兰还不错。” – M1

- What was concerning was the fact that the respondents lacked information on the overall living circumstances of the country they were about to move to:

„I assumed Poland would be very spacious, the distances would be so big that one always needs a car and it would be impossible to get anywhere on foot. I was very surprised when I arrived: first of all, Europeans like to walk a lot; also, in Taiwan, you need to carry cash, but I found out that in Poland you can use cash, credit cards or stored-value cards. Actually, I realised that while leaving the house all I need to take with me is a card or a mobile phone and just like that I can pay with a credit card; the public transport in Poznan is very convenient, I can get everywhere by train or bus.”

“我以为欧洲很宽广，然后距离都很远，都需要开车，走路到不太了。我到的时候很惊讶：第一个是欧洲人很喜欢走路；然后在台湾你要带现金，但是在波兰的可以用现金或信用卡或是储值卡比较多，我发现其实出门只要带着一张卡或是用手机就可以用信用卡付钱；波兹南的大众运输很方便，我到哪里都可以搭 *train* 或是公车。” – M4²⁹⁸

8.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于大学有什么样的期待？” (“What were your expectations towards your Polish university before you arrived in Poland?”)

- While discussing the expectations towards their Polish universities, the students made it clear that the academic goals were their priority:

“To understand the basics of medicine, more or less; back then I hoped I could get the medical license before graduating.”

²⁹⁷ M3 expressed a similar opinion

²⁹⁸ F2 expressed a similar opinion

“把医学的基础学科弄懂，差不多就这样；我那时就是希望在毕业前考过相关的执照。” – M3²⁹⁹

- An unsettling statement was expressed by a student, who – even though enrolled in a bachelor’s program at the Department of Slavic Languages in Taiwan closely related to Poland and the Polish language – was only familiar with two universities in Poland, the University of Warsaw, and the Jagiellonian University:

“In the beginning, I didn’t know which university I should attend. Back in Taiwan, I knew there was UW, the University of Warsaw; I also heard that people were studying at the Jagiellonian University; I really wasn’t familiar with other universities.”

“我一开始也没有设定要念哪一间学校，在台湾我会比较知道有 UW，就是华沙大学。雅盖隆大学我之前就听过有人在这里念。其他的学校我真的不熟悉。” – M1

- The discussion divulged another factor convincing students to choose Poland as their study destination, namely a comparably uncomplicated academic enrolment process:

“I was looking for master’s programs in many countries, in Estonia, the Netherlands, the UK... I also checked their courses. Every school had a different curriculum, there were many special requirements. Then I wondered whether Poland would also have any special demands but I figured out there were none.”

“那时候我去找很多国家的研究所：爱沙尼亚、荷兰、英国，然后去看他们的课程怎么样安排；每个学校有不同的课程，有很多特色。那时候我在想波兰会不会有比较特色的东西，但我没有发现。” – M2

9.: “你来波兰念大学前，对于大学课程有什么样的期待？” (“What were your expectations towards classes at your Polish university before you arrived in Poland?”)

- In the case of expectations towards the study programs, the scholarship recipients admitted that the requirement to use Polish during class worried them a lot:

“At that time (I thought that) it would be great if teachers could understand English as my Polish wasn’t good.”

²⁹⁹ F1 and F2 expressed similar opinions

“那个时候老师如果能够听得懂英文就太好了，因为我的波兰语不好。” – F1³⁰⁰

● Also, the widely differing opinions on the course scheduling and the workload indicated that the international students put a lot of attention to a well-planned curriculum and a reasonable workload:

"At the beginning, I didn't expect that there would be so many courses. I knew it would be very hard to study history in Polish; like last semester I had three courses and I also had to write a thesis at the same time (...); I cannot handle it."

“一开始我没有预期课程会这么多，我知道用波兰语念历史会很辛苦，像我上个学期有三堂课，然后我还要一边写论文……；负荷不了。” – F2

"I assumed we could arrange classes on our own, like in Taiwan. (...) (but) it seems like my classes have already been arranged."

“我原本以为是课程可以自己安排，像台湾一样。……好像我的课程都是已经安排好的。” – M3

On the other hand, there was also a voice expressing appreciation for the class- and exam schedules offered by the university, enabling students to handle the required amount of work:

"There is a big difference between medical universities in Taiwan and Poland. In Taiwan, you have a mid-term exam and a final exam. There's a timeframe of one or two weeks, during which you have to submit reports and take many exams. Here it is completely different. Here, we have short tests before class. (...) you need to study hard constantly to collect points. At the end of the course, there will be a final exam, but the exams aren't taking place within one week. (...) Previously (in Taiwan) it was possible to have classes the whole time from 8 a.m. until the afternoon, but it is different here. Today I may have classes only from 8 a.m. until 10 a.m., and in the afternoon I won't have classes at all, so I can learn or prepare for an exam. I can arrange the time to do the things I want to do."

“在台湾的医学院跟波兰的医学院有蛮大的差别；在台湾的话，你有期中考，然后期末考，你会有一个时段那一周或那两周你要交报告，要考很多考试。这里完全不一样；这里课前就会给一个小考，……你平常就要认真念书累积分数，最后还会有一个 course 结束的考试但是那个考试并不是集中在一个礼拜。……以前你可以从八点到下

³⁰⁰ M1 expressed a similar opinion

午都一直在上课，可是在这里变化很多；今天我可以只有八点到十点的课，然后下午完全没有课程，我就可以念书或者准备考试。我就可以安排我自己想要做的事情。”

– M4

8.2 The time during students' enrolment at Polish HEIs

To attract even more students from Taiwan and other international students to Poland, the interview partners were asked to share their views and experiences gained after becoming enrolled at Polish universities. The answers should help to recognise aspects of the Polish HEIs that are worth developing, elements that need to be revised by the authorities, and bring about new ideas on how to improve the quality of international students' stay in Poland.

3.: “你对在波兰生活有什么看法？” (“What is your opinion about living in Poland?”)

Firstly, the respondents talked about positive and negative aspects related to their everyday lives in Poland.

- The most discussed attribute of Poland, as mentioned by three out of four scholarship recipients, was the affordability of living over the Vistula River compared to Taiwan:

“(...) the overall prices of goods are lower than in Taiwan.”

“……然后整体物价跟台湾比是低的。” – M1³⁰¹

- The issue talked about by not only scholarship recipients who are required to use Polish during classes, but also medical students whose entire study programs are run in English, was the influence of Polish proficiency on one's life quality in Poland:

“Since I first came back to Taiwan in 2014, I started learning Polish right away, so when I came to Poland for the second time for a language exchange my Polish already reached at least the B1 proficiency level; so, it is not like in the case of most Taiwanese. (...) I don't have bigger problems in the everyday life.”

“因为我当初 2014 年回台湾之后我就开始学波兰语，所以我第二次来波兰来交换的时候我的波兰语已经又到至少 B1 的程度，所以跟其他台湾人不一样。……生活上没有太大的问题。” – F2³⁰²

³⁰¹ F1 and F2 expressed similar opinions

³⁰² M3 expressed a similar opinion

- Even though students from Taiwan appreciate Poland's comparably lower living costs, the quality of their stay may be compromised by the slow handling of administrative tasks directly related to foreigners' matters, such as the issuing of the residence card:

"The officials are rather slow; for example, when we came here, we had to apply the residence cards and other documents and it took a lot of time."

“公务员比较慢。像我们来这边要申请居留卡或是其他文件，感觉处理比较慢一点。” – M3

4.: “你对你的波兰大学有什么看法？” (“What is your opinion about your university in Poland?”)

The goal of asking this question was to find out which aspects of Polish universities the international students are particularly fond of and which aspects should be reconsidered by the authorities, as they may be negatively perceived by foreign students.

- The most popular opinion related to a good learning environment including competent teachers and sufficient study resources:

"Teachers are quite good, very professional. (...) I think there are quite many resources at the University of Warsaw."

“老师都蛮好的，老师都很专业的。……我觉得华沙大学资源满多的。” – M2³⁰³

- The second frequently mentioned characteristic of Polish universities was the diverse methods of examining students' knowledge:

"The curricula of master's programs in Poland and Taiwan differ. In the Taiwanese system, you need to constantly write reports (...), but in Poland, there are many ways of earning points. The systems are different and I cannot say which one is better, but the current one is good for me, I don't have that much pressure."

³⁰³ M1, F2 and M3 expressed similar opinions

“研究所的课程对我来说会跟我们台湾的制度是不太一样；台湾的制度比较是你要一直写报告 ……，这里有很多细的分类。制度上不太一样，我不会说哪个比较好，但是只就方式来说现在对我比较好，我的压力没有那么重。” – M1³⁰⁴

● A problematic issue related to the Polish universities was the English proficiency of some teachers working in study programs where English is used as the main language:

“Some professors speak English (...) well, the others not so.”

“老师的英文……有些人好，有些人还好。” – M3

5.: “你对于现有的大学课程有什么看法？” (“What is your opinion about the study program?”)

This question intended to recognise which aspects of study programs the students are keen on and which require some revision.

● One of the features discussed by the respondents was the different teaching styles. The teaching style the students got used to in Taiwan is characterised by teachers leading students through the study material, while in Poland students are oftentimes required to learn independently, without the supervision of teachers. This difference was reported to create some obstacles for international students who are not used to learning based on self-study:

„In Taiwan, teachers are entrusted (with teaching), here it is more like trying out on your own, it feels like you learn on your own.”

“台湾比较相信老师带着，在这边比较像你自己去看，然后自己去学的感觉。” – M2³⁰⁵

● While talking about students’ opinions on study programs, the necessity of classes based on practicality and the possibility of internships was stressed:

“The Jagiellonian University offers classes that will be useful for the future job-hunting (...). We are required to get 60 hours of internships, so I think (the university) (...) wants to gradually help history students find good jobs.”

³⁰⁴ F2 expressed a similar opinion

³⁰⁵ M4 expressed a similar opinion

“在雅盖隆大学有一个特色，对于未来求职的工作会有帮助的课。……我们还要做 60 个小时的实习，所以我觉得……越来越想要帮助历史系毕业的学生能够找到好的工作。” – F2³⁰⁶

10.: “在波兰就读大学期间，你所获得最正面的体验是什么？” (“What is the most positive experience you have made since you have been studying in Poland?)

● When asked about the most positive experiences gained during their enrolment at Polish universities, most students gave examples of teachers who not only contributed to students' educational progress but also paid attention to the mental well-being of their course-takers:

“The teachers know that there is a big difference between Polish and my mother tongue, so they tolerate to some extent that sometimes I cannot join the situation during class; they consider students' circumstances.”

“因为老师知道波兰语跟我的母语差距很大，所以某种程度也包容我有时候上课没办法进入状况；老师会考量到学生的情形。” – M1³⁰⁷

● Another aspect that students from Taiwan particularly appreciated was the chance to develop the skill of critical thinking:

“Polish students are pretty good at expressing, sharing their ideas. I really learned a lot just from listening to their feedback. You can have different viewpoints, there's a lot of critical thinking.”

“波兰的学生都蛮会表达自己的，会分享自己的意见。从听到他们的 *feedback*，我真的学到了很多。你会有不一样的想法，有 *critical thinking* 的感觉。” – M2³⁰⁸

11.: “在波兰就读大学期间，你所获得最负面的体验是什么？” (“What is the most negative experience you have made since you have been studying in Poland?)

● Half of the six respondents reported discrimination as the most negative experience they have gained since studying in Poland. However, it is important to note that two out of three

³⁰⁶ M2 expressed a similar opinion

³⁰⁷ F1, F2 and M3 expressed similar opinions

³⁰⁸ F1 expressed a similar opinion

reporting interview partners have not been targets of discriminatory actions, as their statements were based on the experiences heard from other international students. According to the commentary of a directly targeted student, the discriminatory behaviour was present mostly at the start of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic outbreak:

„Them shouting “coronavirus” was kind of negative. That was a very intensive experience, it seems that it happened three times within one weekend. I felt some strong emotions, but it never happened again.”

“他们会讲 ‘coronavirus!’ 比较负面的。那个是一个很密集的经验，好像是在一个周末发生了三次，我的感觉会很强烈；之后再也没有遇到了。” – M1³⁰⁹

- Students, who due to the fact of receiving scholarships, are required to use Polish during class reported an overwhelming pressure caused by the study workload:

“Although I do have setbacks in my studies, for example, I cannot remember so many things for the oral exam.”

“我在学业上虽然有挫折，比如说我的口试我没办法记那么多东西。” – F2³¹⁰

- While exploring the negative sides of studying in Poland, one of the respondents talked about a dissonance between the image of Poland displayed by the state media and the reality. According to the interview partner, the conservative views shared by the currently ruling political party and broadcasted by the state media create a picture of the country that may discourage international students from visiting Poland. The respondent added that such an image is not a true reflection of Poland, which does encourage a change in a more liberal direction:

“I know that the majority of Poland’s population supports PiS, which doesn’t represent my values. I know that Poland is a conservative country, but I haven’t received (the conservative impact), it is mainly spread by the media. (...) because Jagiellonian University is a rather liberal place, it did not impact me directly. Professors support you if you go protesting, I think it’s very good and positive; but generally, this country is rather conservative, which is negative.”

³⁰⁹ M3 and M4 expressed similar opinions

³¹⁰ F1 expressed a similar opinion

“我就会知道波兰整体的主流意见会比较偏PiS³¹¹，跟我自己个人的心眼是不太一样。我还是知道波兰是一个保守的国家，但我个人在生活上没有感受到，主要是看媒体的呈现。……因为UJ³¹²也是相对比较 liberalny (Eng.: liberal) 地方，所以我不会有直接的感受。老师支持你去抗议，我觉得这个很好啊，正面的；但是负面的其实这个国家整体的情况应该还是偏保守。” – M1

17.: “你对于在波兰念书的相关期待，是否已经获得实现？” (“Have your expectations related to studying in Poland already been fulfilled?)

- When asked about the expectations’ fulfilment, students admitted to being satisfied with their progress, concentrating on their academic, linguistic and cultural growth:

“I learned a lot, there are many onsite and anatomy classes. The anatomy classes in Taiwan have more than 100 students within one group and there’s a study corpse, you may not have a chance to approach the corpse, not to mention operating to analyse it. But here we are divided, 15 students can use one corpse, a small group may have two teachers; teachers are very inviting, you can analyse, you can touch, see the location of every organ (...). Teachers want you to be active during class, to ask them questions and you need to answer when teachers ask you something, so there are many interactions.”

“我学到很多东西，有很多实体课，很多解剖课。解剖课在台湾的话，解剖课团全班一百多个人可以用一个大体老师，你可能没有办法有一个尸体去很靠近甚至可以去动手术解剖大体；但是在这里的话，我们是分成，十五个人会用一个身体，一个小组会配两个老师；老师很邀请，你可以解剖，你可以动手，看每个身体部位……。老师都很希望你可以比较活泼，在课堂中有发问，老师也会问你问题，你就要回答，所以互动比较多。” – M4³¹³

- Another observation related to different perceptions of Poland depending on students’ place of origin and the environments they have been raised in. Those students coming from well-developed and urban sites may have higher demands and less favourable views of Poland,

³¹¹ PiS – Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Eng.: Law and Justice) – national conservatist ruling party in Poland. Source: Parties and Elections, “Poland,” accessed 25 June 2022, <http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/poland.html>.

³¹² UJ – Uniwersytet Jagielloński (Eng.: Jagiellonian University)

³¹³ M1 and M3 expressed similar opinions

while those coming from less developed rural areas enjoy the lifestyle available over the Vistula River:

“Taiwanese coming from the northern part of Taiwan or big cities may not be accustomed to the life in Poland, they think that it is inconvenient here and that the food in Taiwan is better; but those coming from the southern part or villages (...) think that the life in Poznan is very cool, this is the life that they want; we like to walk and the parks here are very big, the streets are wide, we like old towns; (...) the life here is better, more convenient, public transportation in Eastern Europe is very convenient, the food is cool and special. We are pretty open-minded.”

“北部人还是大城市的人可能不太习惯这里的生活，他们就觉得不方便啊，台湾的食物比较好吃啊；但是南部的人还是乡下的人……觉得波兹南的生活非常的棒，这个生活是他们很想要的；我们都喜欢走路，在这里的公园好大，那个路都很宽广，我们也非常喜欢老城，……这里的生活更好，更方便，大众捷运东欧很方便，食物也很酷，很特别，我们比较 open-minded。” – M4

19.: “你会推荐别人来波兰念大学吗？” (“Can you recommend studying in Poland to others?”)

● Five out of six interview partners admitted that they would recommend studies in Poland to others, basing their answers on such aspects as high teaching quality, safety, and affordability:

“I think the teaching level is high (...). In my opinion (Poland) is a cheap and safe place.”

“学习品质我都觉得是好的……对我来说（波兰）还是一个便宜和安全的地方。” – M1³¹⁴

● However, several respondents added that students who plan to enrol in programs run in Polish should consider their Polish proficiency levels, as it would have an enormous impact on their study process:

“For those who just like me received the scholarship it is important to consider whether they learned Polish back in Taiwan and to which level; in the end, there is only one year to learn Polish and then one needs to attend master’s studies. So, I think one year to learn Polish

³¹⁴ F1, F2, M3 and M4 expressed similar opinions

properly is impossible for an average Taiwanese. But if one's English is good enough to read materials in English, studying at a department where English program is offered would be easier."

“跟我一样的奖学金生的话要考虑他在台湾有没有学过波兰语，学到什么程度；要不然我们就只有一年能够花在语言课程，之后就要念硕士；所以如果是只能花一年的时间就要学好波兰语，我觉得就是不太可能的事情，对于一般台湾人太难。但是如果是比较能够英文看资料，能够用英文科系的话就会比较容易一点。” – F2³¹⁵

● Also, the interview partners touched upon the subject of the low recognition of Polish HEIs among Taiwan's employers, which could weaken the employment chances of graduates from Polish universities back home:

“Actually, it wouldn't be very useful if you studied business and then came back to Taiwan to look for a job, it wouldn't be a sign of some particular diligence because many companies in Taiwan prefer EMBA or MBA graduates from the National Chengchi University or the University of Taiwan. Especially when it comes to Poland, they are not familiar with it, they wouldn't know if your Polish university was good.”

“如果你是念 business 的话，你回台湾工作其实没有比较有用，没有特别厉害，因为很多台湾的公司还是会有一些在政治大学念的学生啊，EMBA、MBA 还是台大的学生。尤其是波兰他们不认识，所以他们可能就会觉得不知道这所学校是好还是不好。” – M2

8.3 The time after students' enrolment at Polish HEIs

The last part of the interview was dedicated to subjects related to students' future, such as their plans regarding their place of residence as well as educational, career, and personal aspirations. Additionally, the respondents discussed topics they felt needed to be explored deeper while researching the subject of international students studying in Poland.

18.: “你觉得在波兰念书的经验会如何影响你日后的职涯发展？” (“How will studying in Poland influence your future career development?”)

While discussing possible outcomes resulting from studies in Poland, most students anticipated a positive influence on their career development.

³¹⁵ M1 and M2 expressed similar opinions

- Several students who, due to the fact of receiving scholarships, attend classes run entirely in Polish hope to find jobs requiring them to speak Polish once they return to Taiwan:

“I hope to have a job related to the Polish language in the future.”

“未来希望可以作跟波兰语有相关的工作。” – M1³¹⁶

- Similarly, students whose study programs’ main language is English may benefit from advanced English proficiency:

“The biggest aspect is English. In the case of Taiwan, not many people can use English during all classes at the university. Also, there aren’t many chances to interact with foreigners.”

“最大的方面应该是英文方面吧。如果是在台湾的话，比较少人可以在大学全部学程可以用英文上课，然后也有比较少机会跟外国人交流。” – M3

- Respondents also hope to increase their employment opportunities due to a common belief existing in Taiwan, according to which a degree earned at a foreign university is proof of one’s exceptional abilities:

“There is a stereotype in Taiwan according to which a foreign degree makes one appear as very hard-working. So, I think it could be helpful if I really went back to Taiwan.”

“在台湾会有一个刻板印象觉得国外的学历比较厉害的感觉，所以我会觉得会是一个帮助，如果真的回台湾的话会是一个帮助。” – F1³¹⁷

- On the other hand, the medical students studying in Poland worry about hostile attitudes coming from graduates from Taiwan’s medical universities towards them as well as rising legal requirements towards doctors returning to Taiwan after studying abroad:

“The downside is that if you are a Taiwanese student but graduated in Poland and you go back to Taiwan to apply (for a job) at a hospital, (...) the examiners who themselves graduated in Taiwan may be doubtful: ‘Since you haven’t graduated in Taiwan, but instead in Poland, does it mean that your grades were not so good? Were the things you learned the same as here?’ For example, there is an exam that students like us need to take when

³¹⁶ F2 expressed a similar opinion

³¹⁷ M4 expressed a similar opinion

returning to Taiwan, this exam certifies that the things you learned in Poland are the same as in Taiwan.”

“但是缺点的话，如果你是台湾的学生不过是在波兰毕业的，你回去台湾申请医院的话，……因为毕竟那些考官他们也是医生，台湾毕业的医学生，他们可能怀疑：‘你的程度没有那么好，因为不是在台湾念的，那你学的东西是不是跟我们一模一样？’；比如说，我们这些学生回去还要考一个试，这个考试要认证你在这里学的东西是不是跟台湾一模一样。” – M4

20.: “你大学毕业以后打算生活在哪个国家?” (“Which country are you planning to live in after graduating?”)

and

21.: “你大学毕业以后会打算回去台湾吗?” (“Are you planning to go back to Taiwan after graduating?”)

● The interview partners have not set their minds on particular places they would like to live in in the future yet, as each of them listed several options. The most mentioned locations were Europe,³¹⁸ followed by Taiwan,³¹⁹ then Poland³²⁰ as well as English speaking-countries³²¹ ex aequo:

“(I will go back to) Taiwan. (...) the main reason is the relationship with my boyfriend. (...) and the salaries in Poland are also not that good. Even though my requirement to stay in Poland would be finding a good job, I actually enjoy life in Taiwan: besides the food, I also got used to the convenient ways of dealing with certain things; however, in Poland, in Europe, everybody needs to take a lot of breaks, they don’t need to work all the time, so handling matters requires a lot of time; but I already got used to the fact that in Asia you can deal with everything very quickly.”

“在台湾。……主要的是男朋友的关系。……波兰的薪水也不一定会比较好。虽然我的条件应该是在波兰找到蛮好的工作，可是在台湾的生活是我比较喜欢的：除了饮食

³¹⁸ F1, M2, M3 and M4

³¹⁹ M1, F2 and M4

³²⁰ F1 and M4

³²¹ M3 and M4

之外，我很习惯在台湾做什么事情都太方便了；但在波兰，在欧洲，大家都真的需要休息放假，不用一直工作，所以事情处理得比较慢一点；但是我已经习惯在亚洲什么事情都要处理得很快。” – F2

“The main consideration is the salary. Polish salary is not that high yet, but maybe it will change in the long run; personally, I can’t get out of my comfort zone; I don’t know how the job-hunting situation in Poland will turn out, but if suddenly there is a job in Poland and the salary is acceptable then I can also be fine with working in Poland. However, for now, the plan is to go back to Taiwan.”

“主要是薪水的考量；波兰的薪水还没有到这么高，但就长远来看可能波兰是比较高的；我个人比较没有办法跨出舒适圈；我今天不知道在波兰找工作的情况会是什么样，但是如果今天波兰突然有个工作，然后薪水我也可以接受，那在波兰工作我也是可以接受的。但是目前的考量还是会回台湾。” – M1

“Either Poland or Europe. I like Europe, but unless (you find employment in) a multinational company, it seems that after graduating in Poland you are only allowed to work in Poland. Otherwise, there may be problems related to the identity, visa or work permit will be required; I think it is rather difficult for foreigners here.”

“波兰或者是欧洲吧。我喜欢欧洲，但是因为好像在波兰大学毕业的话只能在波兰工作，除非是一些跨国公司不然会有身份的问题，VISA 或者需要有居留证；我觉得是外国人比较困难的一点在这个地方。” – F1

“I would like to stay in a European country, like Denmark, Germany, Northern Europe or Poland; the USA is also an option. I might like to stay in an English-speaking country.”

“我想要留在欧洲的国家，丹麦、德国、北欧或者波兰、美国也可能；我会想要待在说英文的国家。” – M4

“I would like to stay in Western Europe, in the Netherlands or France, something like that. But it’s just an idea because I am not sure about the environment there.”

“我想要待在西欧吧，荷兰、法国之类的；可是这只是一个想法，因为我不太清楚那边的环境怎么样。” – M2

“First, I’ll go back to Taiwan. I am considering passing either the US or the British medical license, so I haven’t decided which country (I am going to stay in) after all; but first, I’m

going back to Taiwan to pass the medical license there. (...) the US medical license is generally recognized by English-speaking countries. After passing it, the US medical license is recognised by Australia, New Zealand and apparently also by the UK.”

“应该先回台湾。我有考虑要去考美国或英国的医师执照，所以也不太确定到底会在哪个国家；不过应该还是会先回台湾把，台湾的医师执照考过。……因为美国的医师执照只要考过以后，只要是英语系的国家都基本承认。美国的医师执照只要考过以后，他们的成绩像澳洲、纽西兰、英国好像都会承认。” – M3

● While sharing plans regarding the preferable places to live in, an observation depicting profiles of typical medical graduates who decide to go back and work in Taiwan was presented. According to the respondent, most of the time those graduates are females, who either should overtake families’ clinics or watch after elderly parents. Another reason to return to Taiwan was the graduates’ preference to live in a familiar environment:

“I have a lot of friends, actually all of them are women, whose parents say: “come back to Taiwan to work”. Also, there are many friends, whose parents opened a clinic and need someone to overtake it; of course, the parents say: “come back, in the end, you are the one who will run the clinic”. Some must go back to Taiwan, some have elderly parents and they need to return to Taiwan to take care of their parents. (...) some people aren’t used to life here, so they prefer to go back and work in Taiwan, (...) (some) are used to speaking Chinese (in the everyday life) (...).

“我有很多朋友，尤其是女生的话，爸爸妈妈说：‘你回来台湾工作’，然后好多朋友的爸爸妈妈有开诊所，需要有人接诊所那当然他们说：‘那你回来，毕竟你就是要接那个诊所’，有些是不得已回去台湾，有些他们（爸爸妈妈）的年纪比较大，会想要回去台湾因为照顾爸爸妈妈；……有些人是不习惯在这里生活，所以他们想要回去台湾工作，……习惯用中文讲话……。” – M4

22.: “你未来有什么计划?” (“What are your plans for the future?”)

● When asked about the aspirations the students plan to fulfil in the future, most admitted that the career start³²² is currently one of their main goals. Two other common intentions were the continuation of one's education³²³ and graduation:³²⁴

“(I plan to) finish writing the thesis, then go back to Taiwan and if I am lucky, I will find a job with Polish.”

“把我的论文完成，然后回台湾找工，作运的话找到跟波兰语相关的工作。” – F2

23.: “还有什么你想要说?” (*“Is there anything you would like to add?”*)

At the end of each interview, respondents were asked whether there was anything else they would like to share. The question's role was to collect additional information and to find out which topics were particularly relevant for the students.

● One of the recurring subjects was the faulty coordination of the scholarship program's procedures, as their lack of clarity could result in serious complications for students from Taiwan:

“At that time, we thought it has all been prepared; that after one year of attending a language school in Poland we could smoothly move to a university and department that I originally indicated; I assumed it has all been already arranged. (I thought) after passing the interview (in Taiwan) I would not need any other interviews. After we passed the interview in Taiwan, arrived in Poland, and had been attending the language school for six months, we realised that the university application is something we need to deal with on our own. All the things we indicated before had no relevance, (...) it made absolutely no sense. We had to start from scratch, look for a university, get informed about what is required, check how to take exams, learn whether the exams are in the written form or are they in the form of interviews.”

“当时我们以为已经很完善，准备很好；我们到波兰读完一年语言学校之后就可以顺利进到那个当初我写的那个学校那个科系，以为他们安排好了，我面试那个通过就不需要任何的面试了。我通过台湾的面试到波兰，开始一年的语言学校，读了半年才知道申请大学这个事要靠我们自己，而且和一开始写的那些东西完全没有关系，……完

³²² F1, M1, F2, M3 and M4

³²³ M1 and M2

³²⁴ F2 and M4

全没有任何的意义。这边就是要从头开始，然后你自己需要去看哪个学校，需要什么东西，自己去看要怎么去考试，是笔试还是需要面试？” – F1

- The low recognition of Polish HEIs in Taiwan, which could discourage potential students from applying for study programs in Poland, was also stressed once again:

“She³²⁵ thought that if you studied at a Polish university other than the University of Warsaw then it would be useless because nobody would know it.”

“她觉得你如果在波兰的话，除非你是在华沙大学毕业，不然其他不管什么学校都没什么用，大家都不会知道。” – F1

- The factor that has a tremendous influence on the situation of medical students from Taiwan in Poland are strict regulations introduced by the authorities in Taiwan towards medical graduates who return to Taiwan to look for employment after studying abroad:

“Many people came to Poland to study medicine because of the legal situation, as at that time Taiwan recognised medical degrees from Poland. I think this is the reason why a lot of people who wanted to study medicine came to Poland. Taiwan passed several bills, some of them say that those who went to Poland or another country to study medicine and return to Taiwan to work as doctors need to pass an additional exam before taking the national exam for the Taiwanese medical license. Lately, I heard that there was another bill that apparently got passed. According to the bill, those doctors who want to return to Taiwan and who studied medicine abroad need to practice medicine for three years outside Taiwan before coming back and taking the National Exam. The requirements are getting more and more strict, so I want to say that there will be fewer medical students studying abroad. It is mostly because of the legal circumstances.”

“很多来波兰念医学的人，很多人都是因为法规上的关系，因为那个时候台湾有承认波兰的医学学历；我觉得很多人都是因为这样，所以很多想念医学系的人才会来波兰。台湾通过了几项法案，有一些法案好像是说：之后来波兰念书或者是从外国念医学系，然后回台湾当医生的医学生都要考过一个额外的考试才能再去考国考台湾的医师执照。最近我有听说，有另外的一个法案好像也有通过了是说：之后要回台湾执业

³²⁵ Author's note: a diplomat who used to work in Poland and Russia.

的医生要在国外执业三年才可以回台湾考国考的样子。条件越来越严格，所以我想说，来国外念医学系的学生会越来越少；很多是因为法规的关系。” – M3

● A medical student also once again expressed his worries regarding the potential unfavourable attitudes of those doctors who graduated from Taiwan, which could impede the recruiting processes while applying for jobs back home:

“They³²⁶ do not like those coming back from studies abroad, as the competition rises along with the increasing number of doctors.”

“他们应该不喜欢外国学生；多一个来竞争不喜欢医生越来越多。” – M3

9 Conclusion

The collapse of communism in Poland and the country becoming a part of the globalisation process challenged Polish authorities with the necessity to strengthen its position in various fields. Political and economic transformations revealed the need to internationalise the system of higher education. Hence, the inspiration to write this thesis was the potential to combine Poland's wish to welcome more international students with students' from Taiwan search for new study abroad destinations. Therefore, the research was dedicated to fulfil two objectives: firstly, to recognise why students from Taiwan choose to study in Poland and secondly, to explore methods which would improve the quality of international students' stay over the Vistula River. The outcomes should support the Polish government in reaching its goal to increase the number of international students at Polish universities.

Sources used in this research included governmental data, websites and articles related to such subjects as the academic migration, international students studying in Poland as well as students from Taiwan studying in Poland and other countries. Since currently the information on students from Taiwan studying in Poland is very limited, a big part of the research constitute Chinese-speaking interviews with six students from Taiwan attending Polish universities.

The interview partners consisted of two male and two female students who receive scholarships from the Polish government and study linguistics, cultural studies, history as well as administration and management in Polish. The other two interview partners were male, enrolled in medical studies at English programs and their education was financed from private

³²⁶ Author's note: doctors who graduated from universities in Taiwan.

funds. The conversations were later coded according to the structured content analysis, dividing the interviews into times before, during and after students' enrolment at Polish universities.

The theory of planned behaviour was found to be the most suitable theoretical framework, as it keeps being employed by similar studies. Once compared with the interviews, the three factors influencing human behaviour (ATB, SN and PBC) were tested from the perspective of students from Taiwan studying in Poland.

The first factor, ATB, which indicates whether the decision-maker has a positive or negative attitude towards given behaviour was mostly described as positive. Five interview partners admitted to be positive about studying in Poland, either due to them previously visiting Poland, being interested in Polish history, being excited about studying at a particular university or having good experiences gained while studying in other countries. The one interview partner having neither a positive nor negative attitude towards studying in Poland based his neutrality on the lack of knowledge about the country.

The second factor, SN, stating that the decision-maker is influenced by the opinions of their social circles and pays attention to those who had themselves engaged in given behaviour was confirmed by all six interview partner. In the case of scholarship recipients, all people included in the social circles were positive about the idea of them studying in Poland. In the case of medical students, those social circles' members without medical backgrounds tended to have positive views but those engaged in medical fields would not support the plan of studying medicine at Polish HEIs. Another difference between the scholarship recipients and medical students was the groups of people they consulted their intention with. Scholarship recipients asked for advice mostly professors teaching at the Department for Slavic Languages, fellow students as well as Polish university students participating in exchange programs at universities in Taiwan. The medical students would take the advice from family members and acquaintances. It is important to notice that both, scholarship recipients and medical students, took under consideration mostly the opinions of people who had personally attended HEIs in Poland.

In the case of students from Taiwan planning to study in Poland, the means that according to PBC allow the decision-maker to conduct a given behaviour could be divided into issues related to finances, language proficiency and support they expect to receive in the host country. The financial aspect for scholarship recipients was not problematic, as the aid was

reported to be sufficient to cover students' expenses. However, the requirement to use Polish during class was a serious source of worry. Moreover, the scholarship program disappointed the expectations with its problematic coordination and communication. When it comes to medical students, even though medical studies offered to foreigners by Polish HEIs are more affordable than in English-speaking countries and most countries also offering a similar type of courses, the tuition fees are still higher than at medical schools in Taiwan. While regarding the aspects of the language proficiency, medical students admitted to be content with being able to use only English at the university. Getting support from companies specialised in services for international medical students coming to Poland was also reported as positive.

The analysis of the interviews recognised several challenges which should be tackled to improve the situation of international students studying in Poland and raise the country's attractiveness as a study abroad destination. Hence, the research recommends to:

- use scholarships to finance more future-oriented education.

The research found that the biggest reason to choose Poland as a study destination for students from Taiwan who receive scholarships was the financial aid provided by the Polish government.

“Since I got the scholarship from the Polish government, I decided I wanted to study (in Poland). I was really interested in studying in Poland, but if I didn't get the scholarship, I probably wouldn't dare to pursue my dream.”

“后来，因为有波兰政府奖学金，所以我决定想要来念；自己真的有兴趣来波兰念书，可是没有这个奖学金我可能不敢来追求的梦想。” – F2

However, even though the scholarships raise the number of international students, the outcomes revealed that many scholarship recipients use the money to finance humanities-related majors, which are not in demand by the job market. Additionally, to be eligible for the scholarship, students are required to learn and use the Polish language, which is rarely needed by companies outside Poland. Moreover, learning Polish requires a lot of time and may lower the English proficiency of the scholarship recipients. Hence, it is worth analysing whether funding scholarships which result in gaining hardly applicable knowledge is beneficial for students and for the international reputation of Poland as the provider of higher education.

- provide students with work experience

It is recommendable to require international students to attend obligatory internships or work in Poland for one-two years after graduation as one of the scholarship's eligibility requirements. Additionally, the creation of internship- or workplaces at companies from Taiwan operating in Poland or Polish companies operating in Taiwan could be a remedy for the low recognisability of Polish HEIs among employers in Taiwan. The possibility of gaining work experience would not only benefit graduates' employment chances but also familiarise Taiwan's employers with Polish HEIs, as currently, Poland's reputation as a study abroad destination is very low.

"(...) Especially when it comes to Poland, they are not familiar with it, they wouldn't know if your Polish university was good."

".....尤其是波兰他们不认识，所以他们可能会觉得不知道这所学校是好还是不好。 ” – M2

- increase the number of exchanges and partner schools.

In the span of six interviews, none of the participants mentioned any of the events organised or participated in by the Polish Office in Taipei, which indicates that the promotion strategy needs some changes. On top of that, the outcomes revealed two more issues: firstly, the decision of students from Taiwan whether and where to attend foreign universities is impacted by their social circles' opinions, especially of people who had personally attended HEIs in a given country. Secondly, students who had neither been enrolled in Slavic-related bachelor programs in Taiwan nor planned to study medicine, have limited access to the opinions of Polish HEIs' alumni. These findings indicate that one of the most effective methods to attract students from Taiwan to Poland is to raise the number of partner schools and exchanges between high schools and HEIs in Poland and Taiwan. Moreover, organising more short-term exchanges and summer schools would allow international students to have a glimpse of what Poland really is like and consider it as a potential host country.

"My high school and a high school from here, from Poznan, are sister high schools, so previously we had a group of Polish pupils, who came to Taiwan for a language exchange. Since they were from Poznan I learned about the culture, conditions, and life in Poznan while talking to them."

“我高中和这里波兹南的高中是一个姐妹校，所以当时有一群波兰人来我们台湾做交换学生，然后刚好是波兹南，所以我有跟他们聊天，就是了解波兹南的文化或是状况，在波兹南生活他们觉得如何。” – M4³²⁷

- provide medical graduates with internships.

In the case of medical students, the factors that made them choose Polish universities were the English program, lower tuition fees than in most countries offering medical studies in English, easier enrolment process than in the USA and most importantly lower enrolment requirements than those demanded by medical schools in Taiwan.

“A very significant reason was that the medical universities in Taiwan are very difficult to get in, that’s why you can see many Taiwanese studying in Poland.”

“在台湾上医学院很困难，所以这是其中一个很大的原因；你会看到很多台湾人在波兰念书。” – M4

However, due to Polish medical graduates’ lacking clinical experience, their skills as well as the reputation of Polish medical studies are considered to be of low quality among the medical society in Taiwan. To change it, it is highly recommended that Poland provides its medical students from Taiwan with internships. By offering students from Taiwan the same amount of internship hours as required from their colleagues studying in Taiwan, Poland will provide its graduates with equal employment chances against graduates from Taiwan’s universities. On top of strengthening the reputation and raising graduates’ employment chances, Poland many attract more students and enjoy financial benefits, as medical studies require international students to cover tuition fees.

- improve the organisation of the scholarship program.

One more aspect that needs to be improved is the scholarship and its enrolment process.

According to one of the interviewees, the preferences for HEIs the students are asked to list when applying for the scholarship while still being in Taiwan are not taken under consideration by the organisers in Poland. Instead, the scholarship recipients need to fulfil requirements they claim not to be informed about. The lack of proper communication between the scholarship program and its participants may deprive the students of their right to continue the education in Poland. This issue needs to be handled by the NAWA program, as it not only

³²⁷ M2 expressed a similar opinion

may disadvantage international students studying in Poland but it is another factor damaging the image of Poland as a study abroad destination.

“At that time, we thought it has all been prepared; that after one year of attending a language school in Poland we could smoothly move to a university and department that I originally indicated; I assumed it has all been already arranged. (I thought) after passing the interview (in Taiwan) I wouldn't need any other interviews. After we passed the interview in Taiwan, arrived in Poland, and have been attending the language school for six months, we realised that the university application is something we need to deal with on our own. All the things we indicated before had no relevance, (...) it made absolutely no sense. We had to start from scratch, look for a university, get informed about what is required, check how to take exams, learn whether the exams are in the written form or are they in the form of interviews.”

“当时我们以为已经很完善，准备很好；我们到波兰读完一年语言学校之后就可以顺利进到那个当初我写的那个学校那个科系，以为他们安排好了，我面试那个通过就不需要任何的面试了。我通过台湾的面试到波兰，开始一年的语言学校，读了半年才知道申请大学这个事要靠我们自己，而且和一开始写的那些东西完全没有关系，……完全没有任何的意义。这边就是要从头开始，然后你自己需要去看哪个学校，需要什么东西，自己去看要怎么去考试，是笔试还是需要面试？” – F1

- increase the English proficiency of teachers.

The perception of teachers also varies between students attending classes in Polish and English. Scholarship recipients were very positive about their teachers and described them as not only competent but also caring. On the other hand, the interview with one of the medical students indicated that the English proficiency of some teachers teaching at English programs is insufficient. Hence, what needs to be reconsidered by HEIs offering education in English is the English proficiency of their teachers.

“Some professors speak English (...) well, the others not so.”

“老师的英文……有些人好，有些人还好。” – M3

- provide medical students with the opportunity to attend Polish classes.

Attracting more international students to pursue higher education in Poland is an important agenda of the Polish government. However, it is also worth analysing why those students are reluctant to stay over the Vistula River after graduation, as only one out of six interview partners was sure about remaining in Poland. Some of the interview partners indeed took

Poland under consideration but it was only one of many options, not a definite choice. Again, the reasoning differed between scholarship recipients and medical students. The scholarship recipients argued that the salaries in Poland are lower than they could accept, and the main obstacle for medical students was the lack of Polish proficiency, which is a requirement to practice medicine in Poland.

“The main consideration is the salary. Polish salary is not that high yet, but maybe it will change in the long run; personally, I can’t get out of my comfort zone; I don’t know how the job-hunting situation in Poland will turn out, but if suddenly there is a job in Poland and the salary is acceptable then I can also be fine with working in Poland. However, for now, the plan is to go back to Taiwan.”

“主要是薪水的考量；波兰的薪水还没有到这么高，但就长远来看可能波兰是比较高的；我个人比较没有办法跨出舒适圈；我今天不知道在波兰找工作的情况会是什么样，但是如果今天波兰突然有个工作，然后薪水我也可以接受，那在波兰工作我也是可以接受的。但是目前的考量还是会回台湾。” – M1

Hence, offering medical students Polish classes could allow them to enter the Polish medical job market, as speaking the local language is one of the main requirements to be eligible for work as a doctor in Poland.

- familiarise incoming students with the Polish teaching style.

The experiences of students from Taiwan proved that it is necessary to explain and help those students adjust to the teaching style present at Polish HEIs. The teaching style practised in Poland is very different from the one in Taiwan, where the learning progress is led to a high degree by teachers.

“In Taiwan, it is customary that classes are led by teachers, but here it seems the learning is completely up to you.”

“台湾比较相信老师带着，在这边比较像你自己去看，然后自己去学的感觉。” – M2³²⁸

- speed up the administration.

³²⁸ M4 expressed a similar opinion

Another issue that lowers the quality of the stay in Poland for international students is the slow administration resulting in the unnecessarily long and nerve-wracking process of issuing the residence card.

“The officials are rather slow; for example, when we came here, we had to apply the residence cards and other documents and it took a lot of time.”

“公务员比较慢。像我们来这边要申请居留卡或是其他文件，感觉处理比较慢一点。” – M3

It is recommended to raise the effectiveness of the Polish administration system handling issues related to international students. Another solution would be to organise fairs at HEIs before the beginning of each academic year, where international students could deal with all administrative affairs at one place, accompanied by qualified officials.

- build a more open society.

The interviews revealed a saddening finding regarding racial discrimination. Even though cases described by the interview partners were rare and mostly not experienced but heard from other international students, they are damaging to the image of Poland. During the outbreak of the SARS-COV-2 pandemic which generated a lot of hatred towards Asians worldwide, only 6% of Polish HEIs reported cases of discrimination. However, the interviews revealed that students come to Poland believing it to be a safe and racism-free place and actions need to be taken to eliminate discriminatory behaviour within the Polish society.

“I have not experienced it myself, but many of my friends who study in Poland told me that they encountered some discrimination, some problems because they look Asian.”

“我自己没有这个经验，可是我很多的朋友跟我说在波兰念书，因为他们是亚洲人的脸谱，他们有受到一些歧视，一些问题。” – M4

This research explored the motivations behind the decision of students from Taiwan to pursue higher education over the Vistula River. Moreover, the outcomes revealed which elements need to be continued, developed, changed or eliminated to improve the situation of international students studying in Poland and at the same time to raise the attractiveness of Poland as a study abroad destination.

The author hopes that this introduction to the motivations and the reality of studying and living in Poland from the perspective of students from Taiwan will inspire relevant authorities

to initiate changes which will ultimately allow Poland to become a highly attractive host country, benefitting the incoming students and the country itself.

To further develop the research on academic migration from Asia to Europe, it would be of great meaning to collect data from a higher number of students who are enrolled also in majors other than medicine and humanities, as well as employ different interview types. It is also recommended to invite students from other parts of East Asia, as that region is especially keen on providing its students with international education.

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