

## Metadata for Other Policy Relevant Indicators

### Net flow of internationally mobile students

#### Definition

Number of inbound internationally mobile students minus the corresponding number of outbound internationally mobile students.

#### Purpose

To measure the net flow of students mobility across countries for academic reasons.

#### Calculation method

$$NFIMS_{5t8,t} = IIMS_{5t8,t} - OIMS_{5t8,t}$$

where:

$NFIMS_{5t8,t}$  = Net flow of internationally mobile students in tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8), in academic year  $t$

$IIMS_{5t8,t}$  = Inbound internationally mobile students in tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8), in academic year  $t$

$OIMS_{5t8,t}$  = Outbound internationally mobile students in tertiary education (ISCED 5 to 8), in academic year  $t$

## **Interpretation**

The indicator describes the extent of the internationalization of higher education. Positive values of the indicator express higher inflow of students from abroad, while negative values depict the opposite.

## **Type of data source**

Administrative registries, including national (Higher) Education Management Information Systems; and surveys.

## **Disaggregation**

By sex and ISCED level.

## **Data required**

Inbound and outbound internationally mobile students in tertiary education.

## **Data sources**

UIS survey of formal education and the joint UNESCO-OECD-EUROSTAT (UOE) survey.

## **Quality assurance**

Inbound and outbound international students mobility indicators should be calculated based on accurate and comprehensive enrolment data from all types of tertiary education institutions, including public and private.

The UIS sets standards, develops questionnaires and quality control protocols for country data reporting, and maintains the global database on the structure of education and enrolment data in tertiary education by students' country of origin and sex.

## **Limitations and comments**

The accuracy of this indicator may be affected by a number of considerations. For example, a comprehensive enumeration of outbound mobile students may be challenging task if there is no systemic mechanism to track outbound students by country of destination, or if the host countries (universities abroad) do not report data on the international students by country of origin. Furthermore, the criteria used to define mobile students may vary from one country to another, which may affect the cross-country comparability of this indicator.