

February 2019

# Education on the Belt and Road

The British Chamber of Commerce in China



# **Education on the Belt and Road**

**The British Chamber of Commerce in China**



“

The ancient silk routes  
were not for trade only,  
they boosted flow of  
knowledge as well...

Through these routes, Buddhism, Islam and Arab astronomy, calendar and medicine found their way to China, while China's four great inventions and silkworm breeding spread to other parts of the world. More importantly, the exchange of goods and know-how spurred new ideas. For example, Buddhism originated in India, blossomed in China and was enriched in Southeast Asia. Confucianism, which was born in China, gained appreciation by European thinkers such as Leibniz and Voltaire. Herein lies the appeal of mutual learning.

Excerpt from President Xi Jinping's keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum, 14th May, 2017.



“ Education has the power to change lives. It opens doors to better employment, more active citizenship and well-informed health choices which benefit future generations. At its best, it transforms the prospects of poor and marginalised children and builds more meritocratic societies.

(...)

Business as usual will not achieve the transformative change that is needed. We must join forces to drive a new approach to fundamental education challenges. As a global leader on education, Britain will throw the full weight of its support behind this effort, bringing our influence, expertise and finance to the table.

- Penny Mordaunt, Secretary of State for International Development, February 2018



# Foreword

We are excited to present Education on the Belt and Road, an in-depth look at education cooperation throughout the Belt and Road Initiative. This report is the result of extensive research and consultation with Education Forum members, as well as British Chambers and British Councils around the world.

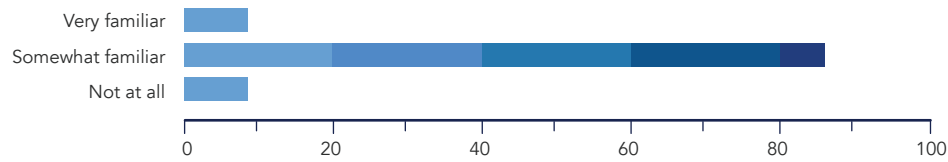
Over the past year we have received numerous questions from British Chamber members about what China's Belt and Road Initiative means for education. While the BRI has received considerable media attention, information about possible opportunities in education and the role the UK might have to play are extremely scarce.

The aim of this report is twofold: firstly, we hope to demystify the Belt and Road Initiative and the multitude of education projects which have already taken place in China and other BRI countries. Secondly, we hope to shed a light on the exciting opportunities in countries where China and the UK could collaborate in new BRI education projects. As this report will demonstrate, no country is better prepared than the UK to deliver education to BRI countries. The UK is home to one of the most prestigious education systems in the world and British education providers are frequently lauded for their commitment to high quality and innovative education. 2018 showed that there is no end in sight to the 'golden-age' of UK-China relations, with new education deals signed across a multitude of sectors including TVET, higher education, early-years education and British-style K-12 education (with school numbers increasing by 40% in 2019 alone).

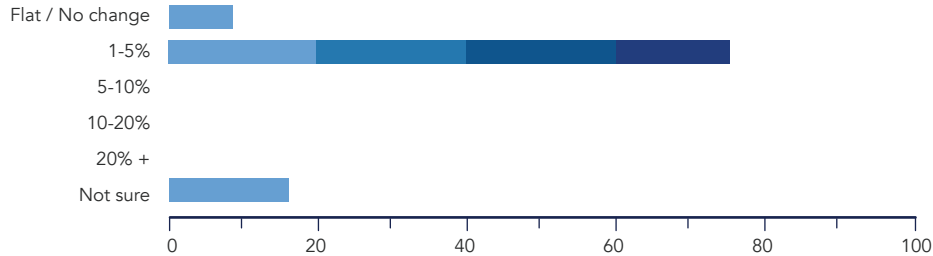
Our report ends with the BritCham BRI Benchmarks, a set of tangible standards that are designed to be used by education organisations participating in BRI education cooperation projects. These benchmarks will ensure the BRI will deliver sustainable, responsible and far-reaching change with and in the countries involved in the Initiative.

-Julian Fisher, Education Forum Chair, British Chamber of Commerce in China

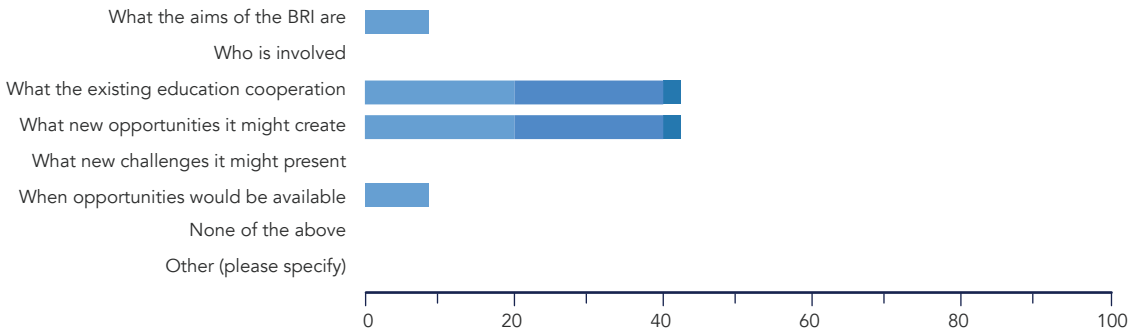
**How familiar are you with what is happening in education in China's Belt and Road Initiative?**



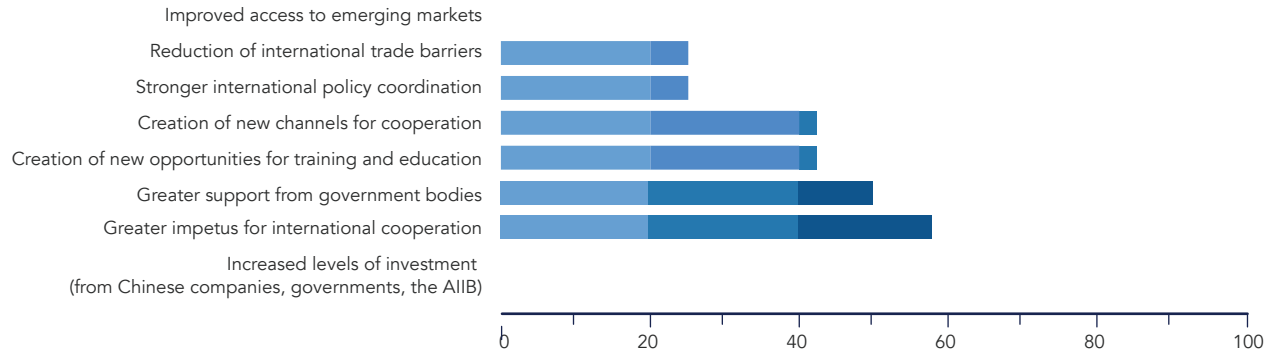
**How much, if at all, has the Belt and Road Initiative boosted your global revenues?**



**Where do you feel your knowledge about the Belt and Road Initiative is missing?**



**How could the Belt and Road Initiative improve your business operations?**



# Executive summary

## People-to-people bonds

The Chinese government first laid out the role education could play in the Belt and Road Initiative with its release of 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road'. In this document, the five major goals of the BRI were listed as policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds. In this last goal, the document made repeated references to education, hailing the potential of academic exchanges, BRI scholarships, collaboration in jointly running schools, research cooperation, entrepreneurship training and skills development.

The role of education in the Initiative was further clarified in 2017, when China's Ministry of Education published 'The Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative'. This document provided an in-depth framework of what kind of education projects could be carried out as part of the BRI. The document outlined three main visions for education partnerships to adhere to, namely 'promoting people-to-people bonds', 'cultivating supporting talent' and 'achieving common development'.

Over the past several years, education projects have begun and been carried out around BRI countries in line with these guiding visions. Activity has primarily been concentrated in Southeast Asia, Southern Asia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe, with recent growth in the Southern Europe, Northern Europe and the Middle East and Northern Africa. These projects have stretched across a variety of sectors, ranging from language and cultural education, student exchanges, technical and vocational education and training, research partnerships, capacity building, international schools, entrepreneurship education and girls' and women's education.

## Diverse array of opportunities around regions involved in the BRI

A careful analysis of the countries involved in the BRI has revealed myriad opportunities for education projects in BRI regions. These exist in a diverse array of sectors, including English language training, transnational education partnerships, K-12 education, early-years education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), entrepreneurship education, teacher training, EdTech and girls' and women's education. The UK has demonstrated a reputation for excellence in each of these sectors. British education enjoys high levels of prestige around the world: as of 2016, British universities had established transnational education (TNE) partnerships in all but 15 countries, while 3,586 international schools around the world use British curriculums, more than any other education system. The UK has already demonstrated a commitment to developing education systems in countries around the world, particularly in the area of girls' and women's education, where the UK government has helped 5.6 million girls gain access to education in developing countries since 2015.

Although there are few striking patterns to be observed in specific regions, we have found general trends across countries with similar levels of human development and economic strength. Opportunities for international schools and higher education collaboration were most prominent in countries with strong economies and well-developed education systems. Developing countries who have seen recent economic growth have often demonstrated a willingness to improve their education systems but are being hindered by less focused and strategic spending. These countries present numerous opportunities for curriculum development and training. Countries facing economic setbacks and instability were also often seen to be the countries where a gender gap in education was most prevalent and a number of countries in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have shown a strong need for development in this area.

## Delivering responsible and sustainable change

As BRI education projects have grown in scale and scope, the need for a set of standards for such projects has become increasingly expedient. These would act as guiding principles for new and established BRI partnerships, clarifying best practice and upholding the ideals laid out in 'The Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative'.

The BritCham Education Forum has outlined nine benchmarks that are divided into three broad areas. Benchmarks for knowledge exchange, quality and congruence will ensure high standards and rigour in the education delivered by BRI partnerships. Benchmarks for transparency and accountability, reciprocity and diversity of involvement will ensure projects are carried out in the spirit of fiscal responsibility and opportunity. Benchmarks for local engagement and empowerment, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability will ensure the outcomes of BRI partnerships are both ethical and sustainable. We believe that incorporating these benchmarks will support businesses in delivering projects with a far-reaching and lastingly-positive impact on the countries involved.

# Contents

## 11

### Introduction to the Belt and Road Initiative

- 12 What is the Belt and Road Initiative?
- 13 Where is the Belt and Road Initiative?
- 16 Timeline
- 18 Key Takeaways

## 21

### Education on the Belt and Road

- 22 People-to-people: The role of education in the BRI
- 24 Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative
- 26 Promoting closer people-to-people ties
  - 27 Scholarships and exchanges
  - 28 Mutual recognition of qualifications
  - 29 Language and cultural education
- 31 Cultivating supporting talent
  - 32 International education
  - 34 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
  - 36 Entrepreneurship education
- 37 Achieving common development
  - 38 Capacity building
  - 40 Joint research
  - 42 Girls' and women's education
- 44 Key Takeaways

# 47

## Region Profiles

- 48 Southeast Asia
- 50 Southern Asia
- 52 Central Asia
- 54 The Middle East and Northern Africa
- 56 Europe
- 58 Sub-Saharan Africa
- 59 The Caribbean and Latin America
- 60 Key Takeaways

# 63

## Opportunities

- 64 Natural partners in education
- 66 Areas of cooperation
- 73 Southeast Asia
- 77 Southern Asia
- 80 Central Asia
- 82 The Middle East and Northern Africa
- 84 Europe
- 88 Sub-Saharan Africa
- 92 Latin America and the Caribbean
- 94 Key Takeaways

# 96

## BritCham BRI Benchmarks

- 98 High standards and rigour
- 101 Fiscal responsibility and opportunity
- 104 Sustainability and ethics
- 107 Key Takeaways



# Introduction to the Belt and Road Initiative

# What is the Belt and Road Initiative?

In September 2013, during a state visit to Kazakhstan, President Xi Jinping announced the creation of an 'economic belt along the Silk Road', which would 'forge closer economic ties, deepen cooperation and expand development space in the Eurasian region'. A month later, this was followed by a proposal in an address to Indonesia's People's Consultative Assembly for a 'Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century' that would 'bring tangible benefits to neighbours along the route, and be a new driving force for the prosperity of the entire East Asian region'. These two proposals soon gave way to the establishment of the 'Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-century Maritime Silk Road', or 'The Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI) as it is more commonly referred. It is an ambitious infrastructure and development initiative that has become one of the defining features of the Xi-Li Administration.

Initially conceived as a collection of six economic belts and corridors that would run throughout much of Asia, Eastern Europe and North Africa, the BRI's stated aims are to recreate the historic routes of the Silk Road and the exchange in goods and ideas which came from it. The proposal consisted of major investment and infrastructure projects across these regions which would promote 'regional economic cooperation, strengthen exchanges and mutual learning between different civilisations, and promote world peace and development'. The Chinese government encourages active participation from all actors, including NGOs, private corporations or government bodies.

Since its proposal, the Initiative has grown in scope and ambition, moving beyond the more rigid definition of a collection of geographical belts and roads and is evolving into the guiding principle behind China's foreign policy as a whole. BRI has expanded beyond the original 65 countries which fell across the original economic corridors, growing to include regions such as South and Central America and Western Africa, with 2018 seeing the inclusion of countries such as Greece, Uruguay and Senegal.

In short, the BRI can be seen as an international strategy that calls for collaborative ties between governments, business and non-governmental

organisations around the world in areas such as transportation, trade, logistics, culture, science and education. Its 5 stated goals are:

**The BRI ultimately aims to achieve 5 major goals**



**POLICY COORDINATION**



**FACILITIES CONNECTIVITY**



**UNIMPEDED TRADE**



**FINANCIAL INTEGRATION**



**PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE BONDS**

In its realisation of these goals, the Initiative aims to stimulate the global economy and promote sharing and dialogue between all countries, all while adhering to the spirit of the original silk road, namely 'peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, and mutual learning and mutual benefit'.



## Where is the Belt and Road Initiative?

In its early days, the BRI was often depicted as a geographical set of countries, connected by a number of economic corridors and maritime belts that gave the Initiative its name. Media on the BRI frequently referred to the initial 65 countries involved in the Initiative, with Xinhua publishing a number of maps allegedly depicting the trade routes connecting the countries involved in the Initiative.

However, the BRI has since spread far beyond the initial 65 countries concentrated around the site of the original Silk Road. BRI cooperation deals have been signed across the globe in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Panama and a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South America. What's more, the definition of a BRI country is not always clear-cut and cooperation has not been limited to countries that have signed MoUs around the Initiative. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), who as of July 2018 had exclusively invested in projects in or associated with countries and regions along the BRI, includes a number of countries not otherwise associated with the BRI in its membership. Furthermore, numerous countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa have received significant investment from China since before the conception of

the BRI. Though these countries themselves have not signed onto the Initiative, the continued investment they receive often mirrors the investment happening in countries along the BRI. In addition to these investments, many of these sub-Saharan countries will enjoy increased connectivity as a result of BRI railway projects that pass through their countries.

The vagueness of what constitutes a BRI country, as well as the ever-expanding nature of the Initiative, has unsurprisingly led to many inconsistencies between lists attempting to quantify the countries involved. In 2015, the China International Trade Institute identified 65 countries that fell along the Belt and Road and despite the significant changes to the initiative since then, this figure has continued to be cited in recent articles and reports on the Initiative. A Fung Business Intelligence Centre report released in 2015 built upon this original figure, identifying a further 48 countries which they believed demonstrated potential to be involved in the Initiative. In September 2018, the Belt and Road Initiative's official online portal published an article reporting that 105 countries had already signed agreements related to the BRI, but the same portal only lists 84 countries in its 'international collaboration' page.

Below is a number of categorizations that hope to illustrate the complexity of the Belt and Road and the difficulty in quantifying involvement.

**84 countries are listed in the 'International Collaboration' section of the Belt and Road online portal**

Afghanistan	Georgia	Maldives	Serbia
Albania	Greece	Moldova	Singapore
Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana	Mongolia	Slovakia
Armenia	Hungary	Montenegro	Slovenia
Austria	India	Morocco	South Africa
Azerbaijan	Indonesia	Myanmar	South Korea
Bahrain	Iran	Nepal	Sri Lanka
Bangladesh	Iraq	New Zealand	Syria
Belarus	Israel	Niue	Tajikistan
Bhutan	Jordan	Oman	Thailand
Bolivia	Kazakhstan	Pakistan	Timor-Leste
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kuwait	Palestine	Trinidad and Tobago
Brunei	Kyrgyzstan	Panama	Tunisia
Bulgaria	Laos	Papua New Guinea	Turkey
Cambodia	Latvia	Philippines	Turkmenistan
Croatia	Lebanon	Poland	Ukraine
Czech Republic	Libya	Qatar	United Arab Emirates
Dominica	Lithuania	Romania	Uruguay
Egypt	Macedonia	Russia	Uzbekistan
Estonia	Madagascar	Saudi Arabia	Vietnam
Ethiopia	Malaysia	Senegal	Yemen

**However, a further 23 have signed MoUs on BRI cooperation.**

Algeria	Cyprus	Mauritius	Somalia
Belgium	Gambia	Micronesia	Sudan
Cameroon	Ghana	Nigeria	Tonga
Chile	Liberia	Portugal	Vanuatu
Comoros	Malta	Rwanda	Zambia
Costa Rica	Mauritania	Seychelles	

**11 more have signed BRI infrastructure construction MoUs or are hosting BRI construction projects.**

Argentina	Guinea	Peru	Uganda
Brazil	Kenya	South Sudan	Zimbabwe
Burundi	Mozambique	Tanzania	

**An additional 8 have expressed willingness to participate.**

Cape Verde	Côte d'Ivoire	Namibia	Republic of Congo
Central African Republic	Djibouti	Portugal	Sierra Leone

**The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has 69 members**

Afghanistan	Georgia	Malaysia	Russia
Australia	Germany	Maldives	Samoa
Austria	Hong Kong	Malta	Saudi Arabia
Azerbaijan	Hungary	Mongolia	Singapore
Bahrain	Iceland	Myanmar	South Korea
Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Spain
Belarus	Indonesia	Netherlands	Sri Lanka
Brunei	Iran	New Zealand	Sudan
Canada	Ireland	Norway	Sweden
Cyprus	Israel	Oman	Switzerland
Denmark	Italy	Pakistan	Tajikistan
East Timor	Jordan	People's Republic of China	Thailand
Egypt	Kazakhstan	Philippines	Turkey
Ethiopia	Kyrgyzstan	Poland	United Arab Emirates
Fiji	Laos	Portugal	United Kingdom
Finland	Luxembourg	Qatar	Uzbekistan
France	Madagascar	Romania	Vanuatu
			Vietnam

**and an additional 19 prospective members.**

Argentina	Brazil	Kenya	Romania
Armenia	Chile	Kuwait	South Africa
Belarus	Cook Islands	Lebanon	Tonga
Belgium	Ecuador	Papua New Guinea	Venezuela
Bolivia	Greece	Peru	

.....

The nebulous nature of the BRI has made precisely identifying which countries are 'Belt and Road' countries a near impossible task. Rather than making an arbitrary list of countries based on subjective criteria, we have taken a broader approach which outlines involvement on a regional basis. This report will focus on the regions of Eurasia, which has seen ongoing projects since the BRI's inception, as well as sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean & Latin America where a flurry of new activity has been taking place.

# Timeline

**7 September, 2013**

Xi Jinping first spoke of building a Silk Road Economic Belt at Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev University.

**2 October, 2013**

Xi Jinping first proposes the building of a 'Maritime Silk Road of the 21st Century' during an address to Indonesia's People's Consultative Assembly.

**8 November, 2014**

Xi Jinping announced China would contribute \$40 billion to set up a Silk Road infrastructure fund to boost connectivity across Asia.



**28 March, 2015**

NDRC, MoFA, MoC and State Council release the 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road'.

**22 May, 2015**

The University Alliance of the Silk Road, initiated by Xi'an Jiaotong University, was created.



**14-15 May, 2017**

Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing. Leaders from 29 countries attended. Overall more than 1600 participants came from over 140 countries and 80 international organisations.

**24 October, 2017**

The Belt and Road Initiative was written into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China.

**22 January, 2018**

China invites Latin American and Caribbean countries to take part in the BRI Initiative.

**23 July, 2018**

Senegal joins the BRI, becoming the first West African country to do so.



**15 July, 2017**

The MoE Releases Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative.

**17 March, 2018**

The Chinese concept of building "a human community with shared destiny" was incorporated into a UN Security Council resolution for the first time.




# Introduction to the Belt and Road Initiative:

## Key Takeaways

- ● The BRI was conceived in 2013 as a means of boosting investment and infrastructure throughout Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East and North Africa.
- ● The BRI aims to achieve 5 major goals:
  - Policy coordination
  - Facilities connectivity
  - Unimpeded trade
  - Financial integration
  - People-to-people bonds
- ● The BRI has continued to grow in scope and ambition and should be seen more as an international strategy of collaboration as opposed to a geographically defined collection of 'belts' and 'roads'.
- ● The number of countries participating in the Initiative is difficult to quantify and involvement has taken shape in a number of different ways.





## SECTOR PERFORMANCE

HEALTH SERVICES		+6.67%
RETAIL TRADE		+4.41%
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES		+4.24%
FINANCE		+4.18%
ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY		+4.09%
UTILITIES		+3.67%
CONSUMER DURABLES		+2.90%
COMMERCIAL SERVICES		+1.96%
COMMUNICATIONS		+0.21%
TRANSPORTATION		+0.17%
CONSUMER NON-DURABLES		-1.65%
ENERGY MINERALS		-4.40%



# Education on the Belt and Road

# People-to-people: The role of education in the BRI



In the advancement of 'people-to-people bonds', tourism and cultural exchanges at best count as 'fast food culture', providing a shallow and superficial experience. It is only through education and skills training that we can achieve deeper cultural understanding and carry out a long-term and meaningful strategy.

- Ling Shengli, Associate Professor, Institute of International Relations, China Foreign Affairs University, China

In March 2015, China's National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce jointly released the 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road'.

This was a major milestone in the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, explicitly setting out a framework for the Initiative and its implementation, as well as its principles, priorities and goals.

The five major goals outlined by 'Visions and Actions'



**POLICY COORDINATION**



**FACILITIES CONNECTIVITY**



**UNIMPEDED TRADE**



**FINANCIAL INTEGRATION**



**PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE BONDS**

In this fifth goal of 'people-to-people bonds', the Chinese government clearly states the potential role which education can play in the Belt and Road, calling for:

**ACADEMIC EXCHANGES**

**BRI SCHOLARSHIPS**

**COOPERATION IN JOINTLY RUNNING SCHOOLS**

**JOINT LABS AND RESEARCH COOPERATION**

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**



## The Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative

The role of education in the Belt and Road Initiative was laid out in further detail in 2017 by the MoE's publication of the 'Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative'. The plan reiterated the importance of education in carrying out the BRI's goal of 'people-to-people bonds', while exploring in greater detail what tangible action could be carried out to promote educational exchange along the Belt and Road.



Educational exchange can serve as a bridge to closer people-to-people ties, whereas the cultivation of talent can buttress the efforts of these countries toward policy coordination, connectivity of infrastructure, unimpeded trade, and financial integration along the routes.

*from 'Mission of Education' in The Education Action Plan*

## Visions

**1** People-to-people Ties

**2** Cultivate Supporting Talent

**3** Achieve Common Development

## Principles

**1** Promote people-to-people exchanges

**2** Government guidance combined with social involvement

**3** Shared growth through consultation, collaboration and coordination

**4** Harmony, inclusiveness, mutual benefit and win-win outcomes

## Priorities for Cooperation

**1** Cooperation to Improve Interconnectivity

- Coordinating education policies
- Creating channels for cooperation (partnerships, exchange platforms and joint labs)
- People-to-people
- Mutual recognition of academic credentials

**2** Cultivation and Training of Talent

- Silk Road Two-Way Student Exchange Enhancement Programme
- Silk Road Co-operation in Running Educational Institutions and Programmes Enhancement Programme
- Silk Road Teacher Training Enhancement Programme
- Silk Road Joint Education and Training Enhancement Programme

**3** Setting Up Concrete Mechanisms of Cooperation

- Strengthen high-level consultations on people-to-people exchanges
- Give play to existing mechanisms of cooperation
- Implement the Silk Road Education Assistance Programme
- Implement the Silk Road Golden Camel and Golden Sail Awards Programme

## Going Global

In addition to the above visions, principles and priorities, the 'Education Action Plan' calls on China's education companies to 'go global' through a number of different means including:

**exporting resources**

.....  
**cooperating with foreign partners to run institutions and programmes**  
.....

**providing services to foreign customers**  
.....

**carrying out joint research projects**  
.....

**cooperating in technological innovation and technological transfer**  
.....

**working closely with enterprises in talent cultivation to serve the economic development and trade growth of BRI countries**



Carrying out vision 1:

## Promoting closer people-to-people ties

**We will broaden, elevate, and deepen people-to-people exchanges and promote ever-stronger understanding and bonds between the peoples along the routes.**

*Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative 2.1*

## Scholarships and Exchanges

The government has made concerted efforts to promote student exchanges in recent years. Initiatives include the 'The Plan for Promoting 'Belt and Road' Study Abroad' and the 'China-ASEAN 100,000 Two-Way Exchange' plan which aim to bring more international students into China. In 2016, the Chinese government also set up a 'Silk Road Scholarship' that is annually providing financial aid to 10,000 students from Belt and Road countries over a five year period. Universities and businesses have also been proactive in encouraging exchanges through the signing of student exchange agreements and new scholarship programmes.

**In 2017, the MoE published statistics that measured the flow of students both to and from BRI countries.**

### Inbound

**In 2016:**

64.85% of international students (310,720) came from BRI countries.

Students from BRI countries made up 61% of all scholarship sponsored students, an increase from 52.6% in 2012.

### Outbound

**In 2017:**

66,100 Chinese students studied in 37 BRI countries.

3,679 of these were government sponsored.



The growth rate of Chinese students in BRI countries was 15.7%, higher than the overall growth rate of Chinese students abroad which was 11.75%.

## Mutual Recognition of Qualifications

According to the MoE, since the implementation of the BRI Education Plan, China had signed agreements on the mutual recognition of academic credentials with 46 countries by 2018.

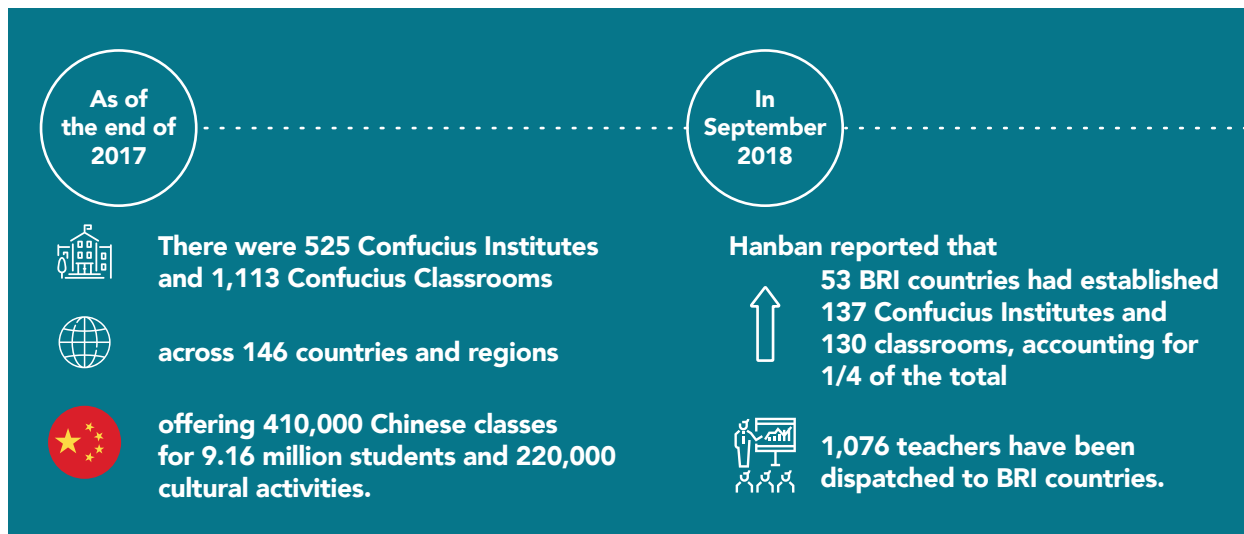
This includes 24 agreements connected to the Belt and Road Initiative in



## Language and Cultural Education

China's Confucius Institutes were established in 2004 as the primary governmental means of developing and disseminating Chinese language and culture internationally.

This includes 24 agreements connected to the Belt and Road Initiative in



Since the Belt and Road Initiative was first proposed, the Confucius Institutes have been hailed as a major driving force in promoting the 'people-to-people' goal of the Belt and Road Initiative. Through cultivating language talent, holding cultural events and promoting people exchanges, the Confucius Institutes have played an important role in realising the BRI's cooperation goal of creating people-to-people bonds.

### ● BRI Activities include

- 5,000 government officials, school principals and teachers from BRI countries have come to China to personally experience modern Chinese culture.
- Chinese Bridge Proficiency competitions have been held annually across institutes around the world.
- Centres have carried out BRI research with the aim of providing intellectual support to the BRI.
- The Confucius China Study Plan recruits 250+ young people each year to undertake PhDs or visit Chinese schools to carry out research on the BRI.
- Every year BRI academic lectures are held, forums and international conferences have been held in BRI countries.

In addition to Mandarin learning, the BRI has given rise to the study of foreign languages from countries across the Belt and Road. Foreign language study could act as a key driver for many of the BRI's goals, increasing empathy between people of different nationalities, improving cultural understanding and facilitating the sharing of resources and knowledge. Furthermore, the study of languages will assist the growing number of Chinese workers moving to Belt and Road countries to integrate into local culture.

### Language Degrees

As part of the BRI, China's Ministry of Education signed a cooperation agreement with Beijing's Foreign Studies University to increase the scope of languages offered by the university.

**As of 2018, BFSU offers courses in 98 languages, and is expecting to surpass 100 languages by 2020.**

### Country Centres

In order to stimulate foreign language studies, universities across China have established country centres on campus with the goal of increasing the number of language disciplines available. These centres offer universities the students to study the language and culture of a specific country.



Carrying out vision 2:

## Cultivating supporting talent

**We will spare no effort in cultivating the much-needed talent for the Belt and Road Initiative to support policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, and financial integration among the Belt and Road countries.**

*-Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative 2.2*

## International Education

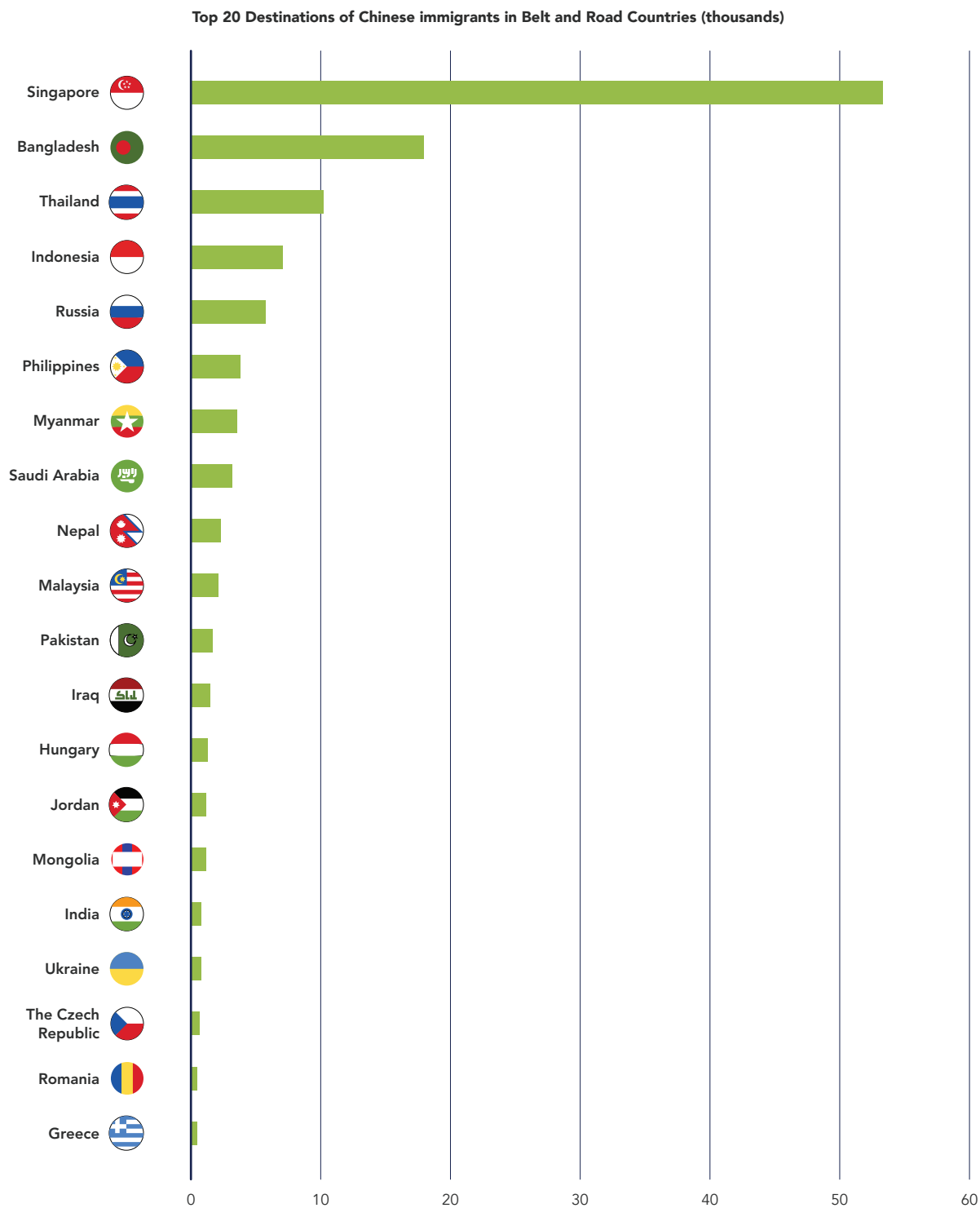
China has seen great growth domestically in terms of international K-12 education, with the number of international schools reaching 734 in 2017 and expected to reach 1,000 by 2020. At the time of the writing of this report, Chinese K-12 education abroad has seen limited development, although the increased number of Chinese citizens working abroad and the increased importance attached to learning Mandarin offer strong potential for the growth of Chinese international schools in the future.

In 2009, the number of workers sent abroad by the Foreign Ministry was a little over 2,500. As of 2017, this number had increased to 5,500-6,000. As the number of Chinese nationals abroad increases, so too will the demand for Chinese style international schools.



Source: China Blue Book of International Schools 2017

The number of Chinese workers abroad has largely been concentrated around Southern and Southeast Asia.



Source: CCG Blue Book of International Schools 2017

## Technical and Vocational Education and Training



China's construction and technical standards need to spread internationally as China's infrastructure construction companies spread around the world, and local construction practitioners need to know about China's techniques and standards.

*Chu Min, Party Secretary of the Shanghai Urban Construction Vocational College*

The importance of TVET in Belt and Road countries has been raised numerous times by the Chinese government in policies and initiatives

2015

- ● 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road' called for cooperation in developing TVET along the BRI.
- ● The MoE's 'Higher Vocational Educational Innovation Development Action Plan' stated an aim to build upon the role of vocational education providers in BRI cooperation.
- ● The MoE's 'Actions on Jointly Building Belt and Road Education' highlighted the need for high quality TVET providers to accompany industries in expanding abroad, establish training centres and cultivate skills urgently needed for BRI construction.

As of April 2018



more than **50 Chinese TVET institutions** had cooperated with foreign industries to jointly provide vocational skills training



**10,000 teachers** were trained

providing **dozens** of countries with vocational curriculums including

Source: The Belt and Road Initiative and China's Vocational Education Output



### Luban Workshops



In March 2016, China's Tianjin Bohai Vocational Technical College and Thailand's Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Technical College completed construction of the Luban Workshop, China's first overseas Confucius Institute in the field of vocational education. The Centre aimed to train local personnel so that they could work at Chinese enterprises, employing the 'Engineering Practice Innovation Project' education model that includes bilingual materials in English and Chinese. The centre also facilitates student exchanges, mutual recognition agreements and education-industry collaboration. In the two years following its establishment, over 2,000 students received education at the school.

As of September 2018,  
there are currently **5 Luban Workshops** in



Thailand



India



Indonesia



Pakistan



The UK

with plans for more to be built in Cambodia, Djibouti and 3 other countries by 2020.

## Entrepreneurship Education



We will continue to deepen international cooperation in innovation and entrepreneurship education, holding events..., establishing platforms for mutual learning, experience sharing, resource sharing and common process

- Chu Min, party secretary of the Shanghai Urban Construction Vocational College

The Chinese government's 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road' lists entrepreneurship training as one of the areas where they should 'integrate existing resources to expand and advance practical cooperation between countries along the Belt and Road'. A number of initiatives have since been launched to increase dialogue surrounding entrepreneurship, including international forums, competitions and centres.

### Forums

In 2017, the 'Belt and Road University Presidents' Forum on Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education' was held in Xi'an. The forum, which included discussions and speeches under the theme of 'Deepening Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education and Achieving Future Youth Dreams' was attended by 334 representatives from 172 universities in 42 countries and regions including Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Bulgaria, Egypt, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia and France.

### The Silk Road Entrepreneurship Education Network

The Silk-Road Entrepreneurship Education Network (SREEN) is centred around BRI construction and aims to unite top institutions from Belt and Road countries to jointly develop collaborative organisations in entrepreneurship education and innovation research.

SREEN has held workshops and conferences, staged global events with Alibaba cloud, put on digital learning and seasonal programmes, hosted global competitions and promoted global research initiatives.

### Competitions

The MoE and numerous universities have hosted a number of annual youth entrepreneurship and innovation competitions. These competitions have provided a platform for students around BRI countries to exchange innovative ideas and aim to encourage entrepreneurial projects that could serve the BRI. China's largest student entrepreneurship competition, the Internet+ Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition, which has attracted 2.25 million since its launch in 2015, has begun to be incorporated into the BRI, with the MoE concurrently holding '21st Century Maritime Silk Road' series events to 'actively serve BRI construction, propel education to the forefront, carry out innovation, (and) entrepreneurship education exchange'.



Carrying out vision 3:

## Achieving common development

**We will join hands in deepening educational cooperation and promoting mutual learning to boost the development of education in our countries and improve the overall leverage of the region's education.**

*-Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative 2.3*

## Capacity Building

The Ministry of Education's 'Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative' sets out achieving common development as one of its three visions for cooperation, specifically aiming to 'boost the development of education in countries and improve the overall leverage of the region's education.'

The action plan sets out tangible action to improve education development through the 'Silk Road Education Assistance Programme', which sets out to:

- educate and train teachers, scholars, and technicians with different specialisations for countries in the region
- actively undertake to provide education assistance packages that incorporate high-quality teaching equipment, teaching schemes, and teacher training
- encourage each country to establish mechanisms for diversified fundraising with a leading role by the governments and active involvement of social actors
- broaden the funding sources for education, enlarge the scope of education assistance, and achieve shared development in education

China has already done a large amount of work in educational assistance to developing countries through the construction and maintenance of schools, provision of educational equipment and resources, dispatch of qualified teachers, teacher training, scholarship programmes and TVET development. In addition, the China Africa Higher Education 20+20 Cooperation Plan has facilitated academic exchanges, teacher and student visits, jointly developed curriculums, joint research and development and teacher training. Between 2013, when the BRI was first conceived, and 2016 there were 31 Chinese education aid projects carried out in developing countries. Though not exclusively Belt and Road projects, these demonstrate the potential for further education development along the Belt and Road.

2013

- Construction of China Africa Friendship Primary School
  - 📍 Comoros
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Foreign Relations Centre
  - 📍 East Timor
  - 🏗️ Foreign Aid Training
- Construction of University of Kinshasa Faculty of Physics Computer Centre
  - 📍 DRC
  - 🏗️ Equipment

2014

- Mandarin Teacher Economic Skills Cooperation Project
  - 📍 Costa Rica
  - 🏗️ Foreign Aid Training
- New Campus Construction for the Yemen-China University of Technology
  - 📍 Yemen
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Foreign Aid Management Training Course
  - 📍 Angola
  - 🏗️ Foreign Aid Training
- Bamako University Cabala Campus
  - 📍 Mali
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Juba Primary School Project
  - 📍 South Sudan
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Ho Medical University Project
  - 📍 Ghana
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Cape Verde Comprehensive School Project
  - 📍 Cape Verde
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Confucius Centre Teaching Building Project
  - 📍 Senegal
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure
- Vocational Skills School Construction
  - 📍 Rwanda
  - 🏗️ Infrastructure

## 2015

- Anyama Secondary School Maintenance and Expansion Project  
 Cote D'Ivoire  Infrastructure
- Siumu Primary School Construction Project  
 Samoa  Infrastructure
- Togo Lomé–Tokoin Secondary School Expansion Project  
 Togo  Infrastructure
- University of Zimbabwe's Zimbabwe Centre for High Performance Computing  
 Zimbabwe  Equipment
- Construction of China-Africa Friendship Primary School  
 Mozambique  Infrastructure
- Construction of Ocean Institute at National University of Samoa  
 Samoa  Infrastructure
- Vanuatu Agricultural College Teacher Training and Teaching  
 Vanuatu  Foreign Aid Training
- Expansion of Technical Skills Training Centre  
 Liberia  Infrastructure
- Construction of Glacis Primary School  
 Seychelles  Infrastructure
- Construction of Zambia Confucius Institute  
 Zambia  Infrastructure
- Construction of Technical School  
 Benin  Infrastructure
- Djibouti Foundational Education School Construction Project  
 Djibouti  Infrastructure
- Administrative Staff and Technical Staff Training Project  
 Kenya  Foreign Aid Training

## 2016

- Construction of Faquer Primary School  
 Pakistan  Infrastructure
- University of Marien Ngouabi Extension Project  
 Congo  Infrastructure
- China-Africa Friendship Primary School Construction Project  
 Tanzania  Infrastructure
- Zimbabwe China-Africa Friendship Primary School Construction Project  
 Zimbabwe  Equipment
- Training Project  
 Tajikistan  Foreign Aid Training
- Education & Skills Cooperation Project  
 South Sudan  Comprehensive Assistance

## Joint Research

Increased connectivity between universities has allowed numerous new research collaborations to be formed, bringing together talents from around the world and allowing universities and researchers to share their expertise. The Belt and Road Education Action plan sets out to establish joint laboratories and research centres and set up academic exchange platforms that allow experts, researchers and students to undertake collaborative research.

Since the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, universities from all over China have established research partnerships with those in BRI countries, signing agreements to share resources and research outcomes, establishing research alliances and building dedicated research centres.



### Research Alliances

Chinese universities have established research partnerships and alliances with international universities, businesses and governments along BRI countries. Aimed at propelling research cooperation in fields such as medical science, innovative technologies, economic development and linguistics, these alliances provide universities with the mechanisms to mutually assist one another through resource sharing and staff exchanges.



### Research Partnerships

In addition to multilateral alliances, a number of bilateral research partnerships between HEIs, businesses and governments in China and BRI countries have been reached, propelling research cooperation in fields such as medical science, innovative technologies, economics and linguistics.

### Research Centres

China has worked with countries along the Belt and Road to set up research centres focusing on areas such as economic development, science and innovation, new technologies and medical science.

### Think Tanks

According to the MoE's 'Status of Education Action Plan for the Belt and Road Initiative', in order to better understand the cultural, economic, political and educational circumstances of each BRI country, 70 research projects involving 46 different BRI countries have been set up. This was accompanied by the creation of a series of think tank research reports for 66 BRI countries with each country having its own report.

## Girls' and Women's Education

Achieving equality in girls' and women's education is an essential component in reaching the Belt and Road's education goals of achieving common development and cultivating talent. With 50% of the world's population being women, ensuring girls and women have equal access to education and training will have a huge impact on the development of countries along the Belt and Road. A number of steps have started to be taken by BRI countries to address girls' and women's education, with numerous forums being held on areas such as women's entrepreneurship and innovation development, access to compulsory education and TVET. The role of early-years education in raising employment and entrepreneurship levels in women has also been highlighted.



China is willing to go to greater efforts to develop education exchange and cooperation and advance the development of girls' and women's education, providing more support and assistance to countries along the BRI. The women in all BRI countries have wisdom, and in areas such as traditional handicrafts, each has their own unique characteristics and advantages. China can dispatch workers to assist in setting up training, establishing schools, writing curriculums, teaching and interacting both on and offline and help these products spread the world through the medium of the internet.

*Pang Lijuan, China Soong Ching Ling Foundation at the 'BRI Women's Roundtable Forum'*



## Women's Forum of Countries Along the Silk Road

In September of 2016, the Women's Forum of Countries Along the Silk Road was hosted with the theme of 'Opportunities and Challenges in Promoting Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship'. The three main topics of discussion were:



**Internet-plus  
women's  
development**



**Women's  
leadership and  
economic benefits**



**Women's  
employment and  
entrepreneurship**

**Representatives from 19 countries attended the event, including female scholars, entrepreneurs and politicians, as well as officials from the All China Women's Federation.**

## Belt and Road Women's Roundtable Forum

The Belt and Road Women's Roundtable Forum was held during the annual meeting at Boao Forum for Asia 2017 Annual Conference.

The forum discussed areas such as:

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND  
INNOVATION EDUCATION**

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

**SKILLS TRAINING**

**COMPULSORY  
EDUCATION**



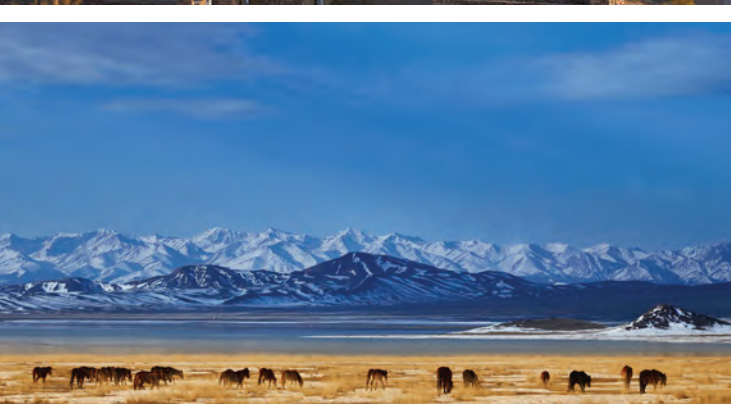
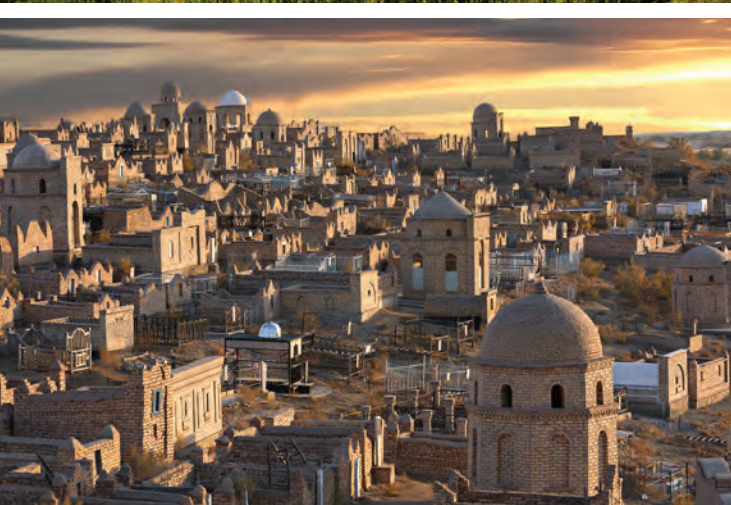
At the meeting, Shaanxi, Gansu, Sichuan and Inner Mongolia signed an MoU with Nepal and Spain on a BRI development strategy for women's handicrafts and women's entrepreneurship and innovation.

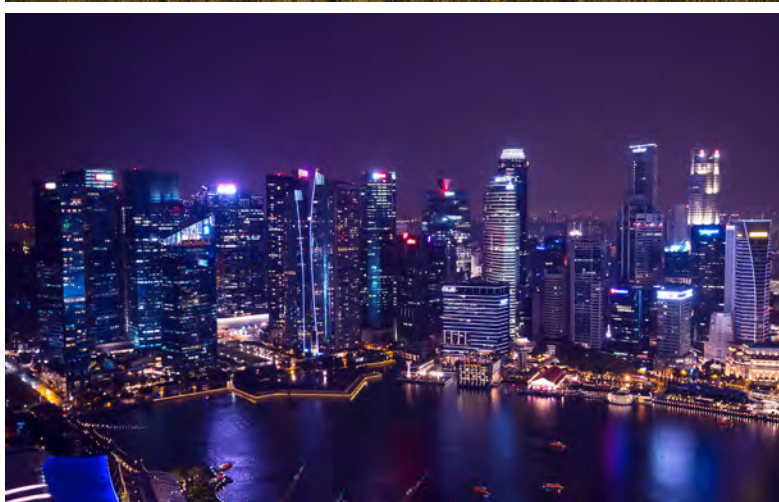
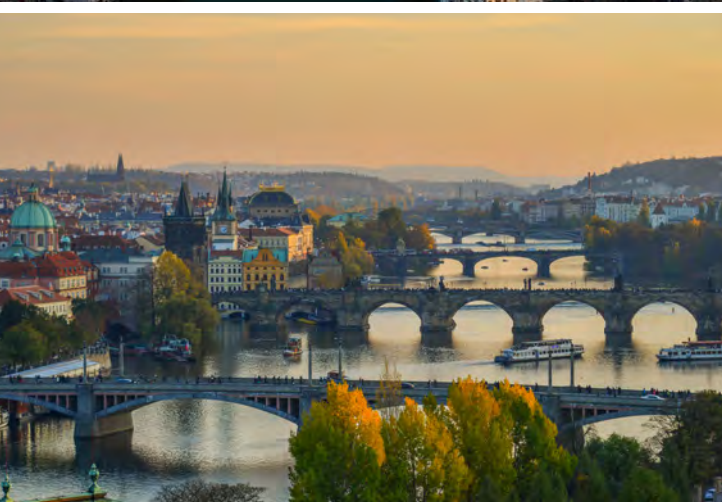
# Education on the Belt and Road:

## Key Takeaways

- Education is being used to carry out the BRI's goal to promote 'people-to-people' bonds.
- In 2017, the MoE published an 'Education Action Plan' that set out three visions to 'promote people-to-people ties', cultivate supporting talent' and 'achieve common development'.
- Vision 1 of 'Promoting people-to-people ties' has been carried out through:
  - Boosting student exchanges
  - Signing agreements on the mutual recognition of academic qualifications
  - Increasing language and cultural education, particularly through Confucius Institutes
- Vision 2 of 'Cultivating supporting talent' has been carried out through:
  - International education
  - Carrying out vocational training, particularly through the medium of Luban Workshops
  - The promotion of entrepreneurship education through forums, competitions and entrepreneurship networks
- Vision 3 of 'Achieving common development' has been carried out through:
  - Capacity building through the construction of schools and the training of local staff
  - The promotion of girls' and women's education and entrepreneurship
  - The promotion of research collaboration through alliances, partnerships, research centres and think tanks







# Region Profiles

The following profiles will look at the involvement of different regions within the Belt and Road Initiative. In addition, the region pages will provide closer analysis of the educational context of different regions so as to shine a light on the unique needs and potential of different education systems around the world.



# Southeast Asia

## Southeast Asia and the BRI

Southeast Asia is a hot-spot of BRI activity, with all 11 countries taking part in BRI infrastructure projects. Countries in the region have signed a number of memoranda of understanding with China, promising cooperation in areas including teacher training, the development of educational resources, joint research and student exchange. In 2016, Malaysia saw the first ever overseas campus from a renowned Chinese university, with the opening of Xiamen University Malaysia.

## Education in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia has seen impressive economic growth and IHS have predicted that the region will be the world's fourth-largest economy by 2050. This economic success has lifted a large proportion of the population out of poverty, opening up new pathways to education. Malaysia and Singapore lead the way in education within the region, and both countries have positioned themselves as regional education hubs with high enrolment rates, internationally recognised universities and a growing international student population. Vietnam too, has seen a rise in education quality, scoring competitively in OECD's PISA tests.

However, the transitional nature of Southeast Asia's economy has also brought with it an increasingly widening skills gap. There is a growing disconnect between subjects covered in school and skills required post-education, putting the region at risk of being unable to meet future skills demand. Stigmas around subjects perceived as less academic, such as TVET, risk exacerbating the problem.



## Examples of BRI Education Projects in Southeast Asia

### The Belt and Road Northern Thailand College Student Entrepreneurship and Innovation Competition



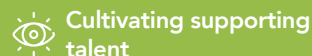
On September 14, 2018, the Confucius Institute at Chiang Mai University held a BRI Entrepreneurship and Innovation competition with 10 participating teams from 8 Thai universities. The competition focused on development trends in China's internet economy, with Thai and Chinese students working together to create business blueprints to bring local Thai products into the Chinese markets through O2O models. Students had to consider packaging, modes of marketing, pricing and sales platforms. The competition, held in Mandarin, encouraged students to put their academic knowledge to practical use and consider entrepreneurial activity that could bolster BRI construction.

### Malaysia Shanghai International School



January 2019 saw the opening of the Malaysia Shanghai International School in Kuala Lumpur. The bilingual boarding school was jointly established by China's Shanghai Rainbow Tree Education Group and the Malaysia's Cempaka School Group. It is the first of its kind to supplement the Cambridge IGCSE with the Chinese International Examination Curriculum.

### 51Talk



In a 2018 forum entitled 'Embracing the Belt and Road Initiative: Innovation and Responsibility in the Education Industry', the CEO and founder of China's online education company 51Talk delivered a speech concerning Chinese and Filipino education. Noting that the Chinese English training market still suffered from a shortage of high quality foreign teachers, he announced that over the next five years, 51Talk would hire 100,000 Filipino online foreign teachers and planned to set up centres in Cavite, Cagayan de Oro and Iloilo, with the intention of setting up 10 all together by March 2019.

# Southern Asia

## Southern Asia and the BRI

Southern Asia's position in the middle of major sea lanes between Asia and the Middle East and Europe has earned it a major role in China's plans for the BRI. The BRI has been enthusiastically received within Southern Asia by Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Maldives, Bangladesh and Nepal, though the initiative has thus far been treated less warmly by Bhutan and India, with the latter going as far as to boycott the 2017 Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

Education cooperation within Southern Asia has been particularly concentrated in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Throughout these countries, numerous universities have collaborated in research, teacher training and student exchanges. There has also been collaboration in vocational skills, such as textiles, technology and transport, especially in Pakistan where a 'Talent Corridor' scheme provides scholarships for 1,000 Pakistani students to study vocational education in China.



## Education in Southern Asia

The countries of Southern Asia vary widely in terms of economic and educational development. Sri Lanka, Iran and the Maldives are all considered to be highly developed countries by the UN and all three have achieved extremely high youth literacy rates. Sri Lanka and Iran are regional leaders in primary and secondary education enrolment, and the latter also has one of the highest tertiary enrolment rates in the world.

Despite having made good progress over recent decades, large parts of the region still lag behind in education development. Pakistan and Afghanistan remain significantly below the world average in youth literacy rates and, along with Bangladesh, Nepal and India, have problems with insufficient access to education and relatively high education dropout rates post primary education. Gender disparity in education attainment is high in parts of Southern Asia, particularly in Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as rural parts of Nepal.



## Examples of BRI Education Projects in Southern Asia

### Mandarin Scholarships for Nepalese Professionals



Promoting closer  
people-to-people ties

In March 2016, China and Nepal signed a series of agreements including a tourism agreement to promote 'people-to-people contacts'. The Chinese side agreed to provide Chinese language training for 200 Nepalese tourism professionals and offered to increase the number of government scholarships that would enable more Nepalese students to study higher education in China.

### Fashion and Technology Cooperation MoU



Cultivating supporting  
talent

Bangladesh's BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology has signed a number of cooperation agreements with Chinese universities over the past several years regarding textile and fashion design. In 2017, the University signed an MoU with Liaoning Communication University with the objective of setting up courses and cultivating talent. The two sides expressed desire to further collaborate in teaching, research as well as student and teacher exchanges.

### Pakistan's Faqeer Primary School



Achieving common  
development

As part of infrastructure development in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China constructed a primary school in the southwestern city of Gwadar. The school, which can hold 300 students, was the first of many projects aimed at improving the livelihood of people along the CPEC.

# Central Asia

## Central Asia and the BRI

Positioned at the crossroads between Asia and Europe, Central Asia's integral part of the original Silk Road has been revived with heavy involvement in China's Belt and Road Initiative. Major infrastructure projects have been carried out in all five countries in the region with Kazakhstan in particular often referred to as the 'buckle' of the BRI.

Since the launch of the Belt and Road Initiative, collaboration in education between China and Central Asia has increased dramatically. A number of HEI cooperation agreements have been signed, leading to an increase in student exchange programmes, research partnerships, training programmes and the construction of research and education centres in the region. A growing interest in Mandarin training has seen tens of thousands of students studying in China each year, boosted by BRI exchange programmes and scholarships. Kazakhstan alone had 13,000 students studying in China in 2017, making it the 9th largest source of international students in China.



## Education in Central Asia

The Central Asian economies have traditionally been agriculture based, but large reserves of oil and natural gas have stimulated the economy in recent years, particularly in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan which have seen striking GDP growth. However, the transition of Central Asian countries into service based economies has led to a skills deficit in young people, with demand outpacing supply. Students and businesses increasingly feel that the education systems do not adequately prepare students for future life, creating great potential for TVET, as well as capacity building within public schools.

Kazakhstan is a regional leader in education and the government has made developing its education system a priority, setting out goals to improve educational resources and raise standards across compulsory and higher education by 2020. The government's strategy hopes to incorporate international standards and best practice from abroad in order to make the country more globally competitive.



## Examples of BRI Education Projects in Central Asia

### The Turkmenistan Centre at Xi'an Shiyou University



Promoting closer  
people-to-people ties

In May 2017, Xi'an Shiyou University unveiled its Turkmenistan Centre. The Centre aims to provide a platform for education exchange between Turkmenistan and China and will develop the study of the Turkmen language as well as conduct research on Turkmen history and society.

### The Tajikistan International Student Joint Training Cooperation Agreement



Cultivating supporting  
talent

In 2018, the Hunan Institute of Nonferrous Metals, the Tajikistan - China Mining Limited Company and the Kunming University of Science and Technology jointly signed a student training cooperation agreement. Plans for future cooperation include organising joint talent training, constructing an international joint laboratory, and holding an international academic conference.

### Kazakhstan Economic Research Centre



Achieving common  
development

In May 2018, the Zhejiang University of Finance and the Kazakhstan Consulate General in Shanghai signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to build an Economic Research Centre. The Centre will focus on Kazakhstan's economy and aims to serve the Belt and Road Initiative.

# The Middle East and Northern Africa



## MENA and the BRI

A geographical link between Europe, Asia and Africa, the Middle East (here including Cyprus and the South Caucasus states of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia) has been included in the Belt and Road Initiative from its conception. Participation has gradually spread to the Northern African countries Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Algeria and as of 2018, the entirety of the MENA region is now involved in the Initiative. Cooperation has been most highly concentrated throughout the Arab states where a “1+2+3” cooperation framework” has stimulated cooperation in infrastructure, trade, finance and advanced technology. In 2016, China overtook the US and UAE to become the largest investor in the Arab region with investments worth \$29.5 billion.

Despite these investments and the region’s early inclusion into the BRI, education has played a fairly limited role in BRI cooperation within the MENA region. However, the region has seen a number of research related projects, including joint research institutes in Morocco and Azerbaijan and science and technology consultation in Egypt. With China’s prioritisation of new advanced technologies in China-MENA cooperation, there is potential for future development in this direction.

## Education in MENA

The Middle East and Northern Africa has seen significant progress in educational development over the past few decades, particularly in literacy and school enrolment rates. Strong economic development in gulf states like Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates has made these countries international education hubs that are home to a growing number of international schools and overseas university campuses.

However, despite strong economic growth and growing access to education, a World Bank report into MENA found that the region continues to achieve inadequate scores in international standardised tests. Youth unemployment also remains an issue, exacerbated in large part by a severe skills gap. A 2011 survey of employers in 22 countries within the Arab world found that only about one third of new graduates were ready for the workplace. This need for better skills education is all the clearer when considering the need for diversification in many of the oil rich economies throughout the region.



## Examples of BRI Education Projects in Mena

### China-Morocco Joint Research Institute



Achieving common development

In 2018, an unveiling ceremony for its China-Morocco Joint Research Institute at Morocco's Hassan Premier University. The Institute, which was jointly established by Hassan Premier University and Ningxia University aims to boost course construction, think tank development and joint research.

### Science and Technology Evaluation in Egypt



Achieving common development

China's National Centre for Science and Technology Evaluation (NCSTE) and Egypt's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research signed a memorandum of understanding regarding scientific evaluation at the 2017 China-Arab States Technology Transfer & Innovation Cooperation Conference. The NCSTE promised to provide technological support and its own experience to help Egypt set up a system for science and technology evaluation and a national evaluation centre.

### Qatar's Belt and Road International School



Cultivating supporting talent

The China Research Society of Urban Development and Qatar launched a 'Belt and Road International School' project. The two countries agreed to construct an international school in Chongqing and Doha with a curriculum that spans from primary to high school. The school, which claims to be the first international school based around the theme of merging cultures within the BRI, aims to cultivate talent in China and the Middle East and will encourage students to pursue employment in these areas after finishing their studies.

# Europe



## Europe and the BRI

In 2012, prior to the inception of the Belt and Road Initiative, China and 16 Eastern and Central European countries signed up to a number of mechanisms and arrangements under the 16+1 framework. The framework prioritised economic cooperation in three areas: infrastructure, high technologies, and green technologies.

The countries involved were:

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- The Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Poland
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

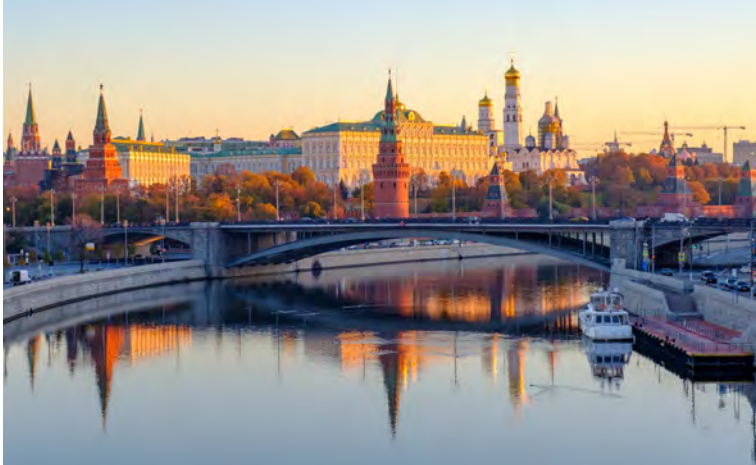
These 16 CEEC countries have since been incorporated into the BRI, along with Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Malta, Greece and Portugal.

Education cooperation projects have largely been centred around higher education cooperation with a number of European universities signing agreements for student and teacher exchanges and research collaboration. However, cooperation has still been fairly limited and there is still much potential for future expansion.

## Education in Europe

Europe is home to some of the most developed economies in the world. With the exception of 6 countries (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Ukraine and Moldova) all of the continent is considered to have 'very high' levels of development by the UN. Recent economic growth has been especially fast in Central and Eastern Europe, which is home to nine of Europe's fastest growing economies.

The continent's Northern and Western regions lead the way in education, scoring highly in the OECD's PISA tests for maths, science and reading. These regions are also home to a number of the world's top universities, particularly the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. In the East of the continent, Poland has also seen huge progress in educational development, having transformed its education system through a number of reforms. Europe's Southeast has seen slower development, with a number of countries in the Balkans suffering from skills mismatches and some of the highest youth unemployment globally.



## Examples of BRI Education Projects in Europe

### China-Romania Research Cooperation



Achieving common development

The China Academy of Forestry Sciences and the Transilvania University of Braşov in Romania signed an MoU, calling for cooperation in forestry technology. The two sides will promote research cooperation and propel technological development through mutually beneficial projects such as:

- Cooperation in research projects
- Joint seminars
- Research publication and Information exchanges
- Scientific research training programmes
- Personnel exchanges

### The Moscow Art Academy of Weinan Normal University



Cultivating supporting talent

In 2015, Moscow State Pedagogical University and Weinan Normal University agreed to establish the Moscow Art Academy of Weinan Normal University. The academy, whose first cohort of 300 students began in 2017, conducts training in English and Russian and offers undergraduate degrees in musicology, preschool education and fine arts. President of Weinan Normal University, Ding Deke hailed the role of the university would play in cultivating BRI talent by 'strengthening the foundations of Sino-Russian education and cooperation in teacher education'.

### BRI China-Latvia Centre for Academic Exchange



Promoting closer people-to-people ties

In September 2018, the BRI China-Latvia Centre for Academic Exchange was established at the North China Institute of Science and Technology. The Centre will play an important role in advancing staff and student exchanges. Latvian professionals and scholars will be invited to work at the university and professionals will be brought in from Latvia to carry out training in vocational health and safety. The centre will also encourage two-way student and staff exchanges and promote the study of Mandarin.



# Sub-Saharan Africa

## Sub-Saharan Africa and the BRI

China has long been a major investor in sub-Saharan Africa. Prior to the BRI, China had already contributed to major infrastructure projects in the region including the Mombasa–Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway and the Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway, linking the the capitals of Ethiopia and Kenya to maritime trade routes. However, despite China’s strong presence in the region, sub-Saharan Africa was not initially included in the Belt and Road Initiative, which only went as far as Egypt in the north of the continent. In August 2018, only 5 sub-Saharan African countries had signed MoUs concerning Belt and road, namely South Africa, Sudan, Madagascar, Senegal and Rwanda.

In 2018, Beijing held a Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCA) in which President Xi Jinping emphasised his vision for Africa to be more greatly involved with the Belt and Road Initiative. In his opening speech to the forum, he called on countries to ‘seize the opportunity created by...the Belt and Road Initiative’ and for the Belt and Road Initiative, African Union Agenda 2063 and UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to better complement each other. According to Xia Qing, Deputy Head of China’s NDRC international cooperation department, 28 African countries and the African Union signed MoUs on Belt and Road development during the summit, although a specific list of countries was not made available.

## Education in sub-Saharan Africa

High levels of poverty and economic disparity have posed significant challenges to the development of education in countries throughout sub-Saharan Africa. The region lags behind the rest of the world in a number of areas. A rise in enrolment rates has been offset by a lack of qualified teachers and external factors such as malnutrition, illness and income deprivation that hinder students’ ability to learn. The World Bank’s 2018 World Development Report found that less than 7% of late-primary school students in sub-Saharan Africa were proficient in reading, against 14% in mathematics. Data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Global Education Monitoring (GEM) found that 93 million children of primary and secondary school age are out of school throughout the region, around 15 million of whom will never set foot in a classroom. In addition, around half of 15-17 year olds in sub-Saharan Africa are out of school, higher than any other region.

The inability of the state sector to meet student educational needs has pushed private sector growth forward across sub-Saharan Africa. A Caerus Capital report analysing 15 countries across the region found that the share of private provision in education could be as high as 21, predicting this number would reach one in four by 2021.

# Latin America and the Caribbean

## Latin America & the Caribbean and the BRI

Far flung from China and the site of the historical silk road, Latin America and the Caribbean is the latest region to begin participating in the Belt and Road Initiative. The first country in the region, Panama, only joined the Initiative in the winter of 2017 and at the time of writing, the number of countries involved is still small, although has continued to grow over recent months. In January 2018, at the China-CELAC Forum, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi invited the Latin America and Caribbean countries to participate in the Initiative, saying the region was a 'natural fit' for the BRI.

Indeed, China is the largest trading partner of countries such as Brazil, Chile and Peru and the region as a whole has seen a trend of increased Chinese investment in the past few years. Considering these close ties, as well as the significant infrastructure gaps in many countries in the region, it seems likely that the BRI will play an increasingly central role in China's foreign policies with Latin America and the Caribbean.




## Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

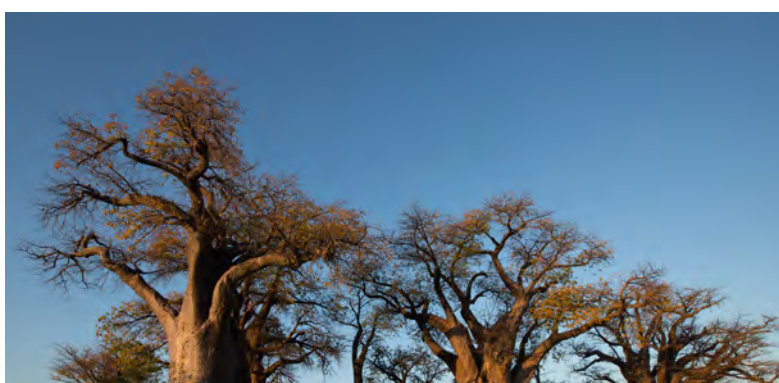
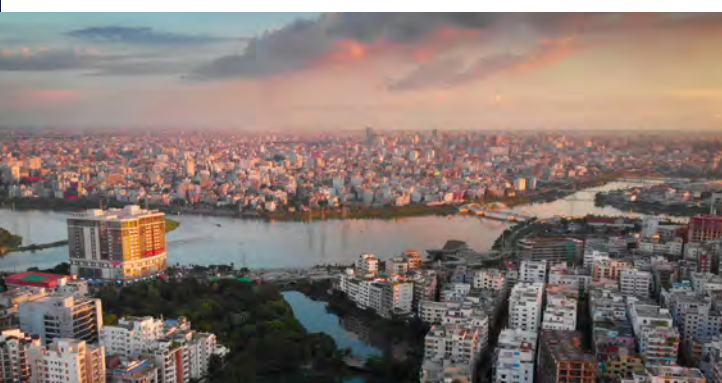
One of the biggest issues facing education in Latin America is social inequality. Despite significant government investment, many youth in this region still do not have access to high quality education. The region has seen a sharp rise in education spending as a percentage of GDP since the turn of the millennium but the pace of improvements has been slow. 2015 PISA test scores in the region found that participating countries universally scored below the OECD average in science, mathematics and regions. The pace of improvement in OECD scores has been so slow that it would take Peru two decades to reach the OECD average while economic powers such as Brazil, Mexico and Chile would still lag behind.

The Caribbean has similarly suffered from low standards in education. A World Bank report into the region found that though students spent an average of 11 years in education, they frequently struggled to find jobs due to a disconnect in skills learned and the general job market's needs. Furthermore, a shortage of qualified teachers has resulted in poor pass-rates in the region, with fewer than 50% of students region-wide passing the CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate) exams in English and Maths.

# Education on the Belt and Road:

## Key Takeaways

- 
- Belt and Road education cooperation has been most concentrated around Southern Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe.
  - Participation has increased among countries in the rest of Europe and MENA, many of which have now seen BRI education collaboration.
  - Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Latin America are the latest regions to participate in the BRI. Education projects have so far been limited, but these regions show strong potential.





# Opportunities

In the following pages, this report will take a closer look at the numerous education opportunities across a range of sectors in countries along the Belt and Road. They aim to build up on the foundations already laid down by the Belt and Road Initiative, adhering to the visions of promoting people-to-people bonds, cultivating supporting talent and achieving common development. The opportunities presented are by no means comprehensive, but simply a snapshot of the many possibilities that lie ahead. It is hoped that they will serve as inspiration to education organisations and promote a variety of new forms of education collaboration and development throughout the Belt and Road.

# Natural Partners in Education

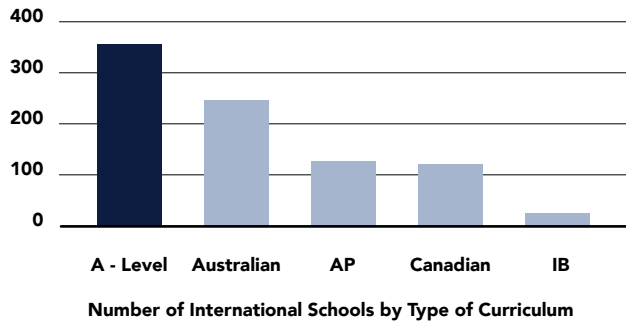
China-UK relations have flourished in recent years and politicians and media sources have frequently touted the two countries as enjoying a 'golden age' of relations.

Education in particular has some of the most visible signs of success in UK-China cooperation. As the Chinese education market has developed at an impressive pace, British education companies have enjoyed particularly high levels of participation across all sectors.

## International Schools

In 2017, British curriculums were **the most popular** form of international curriculum in China's 734 international schools.

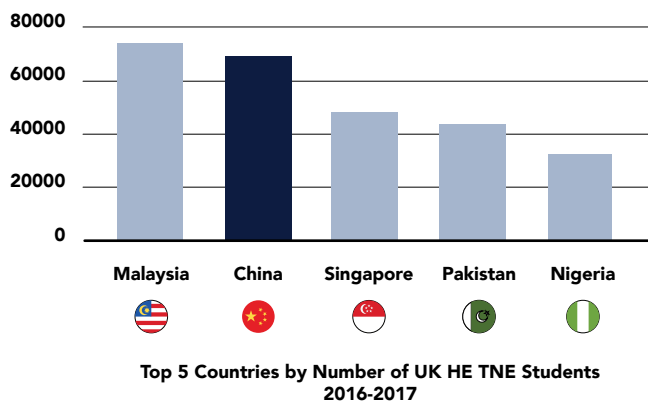
(Source: Newschool Insight Media)



## TNE Partnerships

China has become **the second largest source** of UK TNE partnerships.

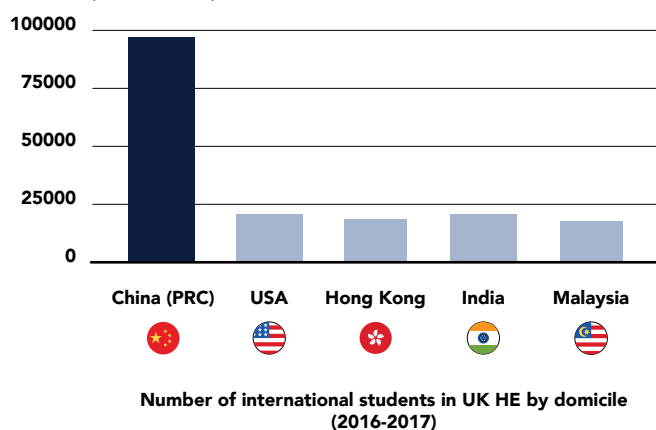
(Source: Universities UK)



## International Students

There were **95,090 Chinese students** studying in UK HE in 2016-2017.

(Source: HESA)



This is more than **5x higher** than the second most populous nationality.



And it is my belief that Britain, lying at the Western end of the Belt and Road, is a natural partner in this endeavour.'

- excerpt from Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond's speech at the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing, 2017

## Language Training



In 2017, the UK had **the second most** Confucius Institutes and classrooms of any country, at 186.

**This accounted for over 11% of the world's total.**

• The UK and China have seen a number of positive developments in education cooperation over the past year including:

- • A £75 million partnership that will open 32 Busy Bees British nurseries throughout China by 2023
- • A partnership between Harper Collins and East China Normal University Press in the translation and publication of Chinese maths textbooks
- • An agreement between Oxford University and TAL Education Group
- • The opening of 20 British brand affiliated international schools in China in the 2018-19 academic year
- • A partnership between UK NARIC and the Tao Xingzhi Committee to deliver training on international education for Chinese vocational colleges hoping to work with foreign providers

**With such a wide array of existing UK-China partnerships taking place, the UK is well positioned to collaborate with China in BRI countries to share its experience and expertise in education.**

# Areas of Cooperation

## People-to-people bonds

### English Language Training



#### Why this area?

In an increasingly globalised world, the need for a shared language is more essential than ever. English sits firmly as the global lingua franca and the British Council has predicted that the number of people actively learning English around the world will exceed 1.9 billion by 2020. The benefits of improved English language training (ELT) are numerous.

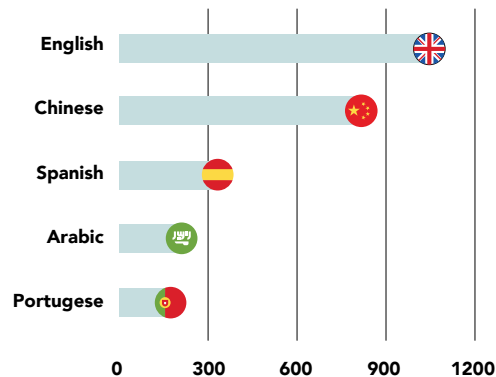


#### Why the UK?

The UK has long played a role in delivering high quality English language training around the world. Numerous British organisations have established a high reputation for their skill and experience in English training including Cambridge English, Pearson, Oxford University Press, The Open University and the British Council.

The British Council, which promotes the study of English around the world, already works in 100+ countries worldwide and in 2017-2018 alone, educated 400,000 students around the world in its English learning centres. IELTS, the international standardised test of English, which is partly managed by The British Council and Cambridge Assessment English, is recognised by more than 10,000 universities, schools, employers and immigration bodies internationally. The test was taken by more than 3 million people in 2017.

#### The Internet



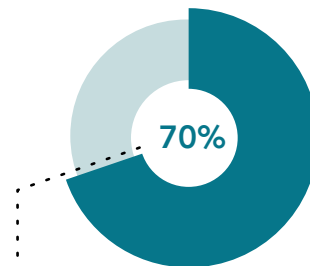
Top five languages on the Internet in millions of users December 2017

(Source: Internet World Stats)

#### Research

**All 100 of the world's most influential scientific journals** (as determined by SCImago Journal Rank) **publish their articles in English.**

#### Business



In a 2016 survey of companies in 28 non-English speaking countries, 70% of companies reported English was important for their business.

(Source: Education First)

## HE Collaboration



### Why this area?

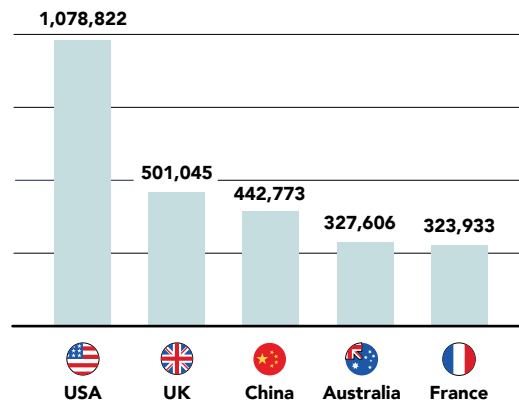
The BRI has already demonstrated the enormous impact it can have on international collaboration in higher education. Hundreds of universities have worked together through cooperation agreements and BRI alliances to carry out student exchanges, research partnerships and teacher visits. By taking full advantage of the opportunities presented by the BRI for exchange and collaboration, British universities would have strong potential to continue to internationalise, drawing in greater numbers of international talent and benefiting from greater access to high quality resources through research alliances.



### Why the UK?

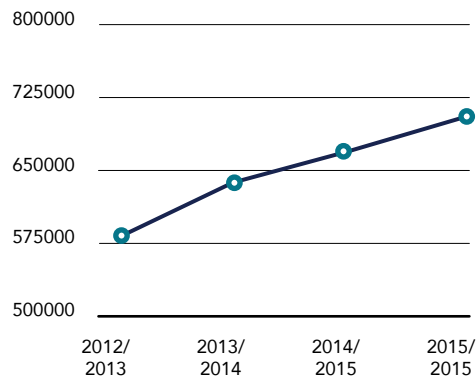
The UK has long enjoyed a fruitful history in collaboration with HEIs from around the world. According to a UniversitiesUK report on UK transnational education (TNE), as of 2016 there were only 15 countries in the world where the UK did not offer any TNE.

In 2017, the UK had 501,040 international students, the second most of any country in the world.



(Source: Project Atlas)

### Growth in UK TNE Students Abroad



(Source: British Council)



Due to its reputation for excellence in higher education, the UK has become a top study destination for international students, consistently drawing in higher numbers of students who study both in their home countries and abroad.

# Areas of Cooperation

## Cultivating Supporting Talent

### International Schools

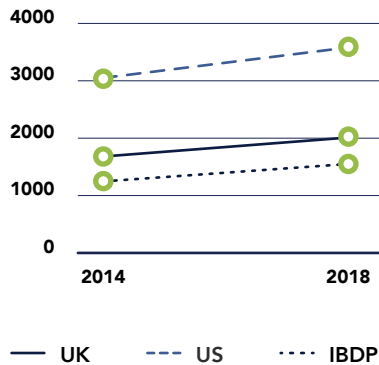
#### Why this area?

The role the BRI can play in developing countries' economies and lifting more and more people out of poverty and into the middle class offers strong potential for driving further growth in the international school market. British international schools, buoyed by the strong reputation of the UK education system, are poised to capitalise on this growth in emerging markets in BRI regions. What's more, by offering a high quality alternative to national education systems and a global student experience, international schools can play a positive role in achieving BRI aims of mutual development and people-to-people connectivity.

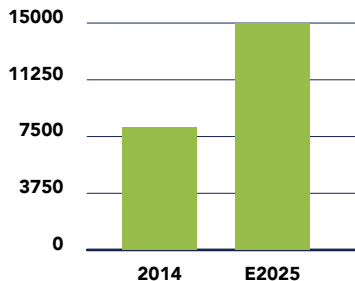
#### Why the UK?

Desire for internationally recognised qualifications, an English language education and a global experience has caused the international school market to soar. According to data published by ISC research, there were 8,257 international schools teaching over 4 million students in 2016. ISC predict the number of schools and students to nearly double by 2025 with 15,000 English-medium international schools teaching over 8 million students. Among English-medium international schools, British curriculums have overwhelmingly remained the most popular, accounting for nearly half in 2018.

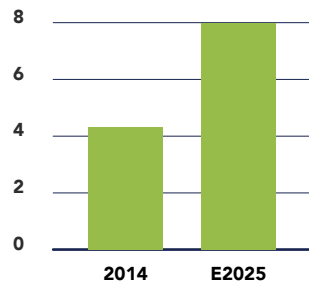
Curriculum adoption trends of international schools globally



Number of English-medium international schools globally



Number of students at English-medium international schools (million)



Source: ISC

## Early-Years Education



### Why this area?

Developing countries around the world are launching ambitious plans to reach more developed status with education at their heart. Early-years education is seen as a critical phase of education development that has a significant impact on later stages of education. Data from a 2009 PISA survey found that in 58 of 65 countries, 15-year-old students who had attended at least a year of pre-primary school outperformed students who had not, even after accounting for socio-economic background.

In the context of the Belt and Road Initiative, the benefits of investing in early years education are clear. High-quality and accessible early-years provision will help BRI countries to work toward the goal of mutual development and prosperity. As international connectivity increases, the need for bilingual education will become greater than ever. With the first years of a child's life being a critical period of language acquisition, early-years education can go a long way in promoting multilingualism. The UK's long history in providing early years education and reputation for excellence has put British providers in a strong position to develop the sector across BRI countries.



### Why the UK?

The UK has a long history of early-years education and has cultivated a strong international reputation for high quality provision. The progressive nature of the British early years system and its holistic approach to learning provide a strong model for other countries in the process of developing their early years education systems to follow..

The UK's experience in English language training also puts it in a prime position to cooperate internationally in preschool education. Given the crucial period a child's early years is for second language acquisition, British early years providers could play a significant role in cultivating future multilingual talent by working with local schools to provide bilingual education.

## TVET



### Why this area?

Rapid globalisation and economic growth have led to a major shift in the types of skills needed from the modern workforce. However, many countries' education systems have been unable to keep up with these changes, resulting in a mismatch between what is learned in schools and what is required by businesses. This widening skills gap can lead to both rising youth unemployment and stagnation in economic development.

Improved technical and vocational education and training (TVET) can play a key role in reducing the skills gap and putting countries on the road to economic success. As new industries are developed through the numerous infrastructure projects across BRI countries, TVET will be integral in ensuring the Initiative achieves its goal to 'support localised operation and management of Chinese companies to boost the local economy, increase local employment (and) improve local livelihood.'



### Why the UK?

The UK has a well-established TVET industry, delivering a wide range of skills through schools, universities, independent training providers and technical colleges. British TVET is known for being innovative, learner-centred, and with a balance of practical and theoretical content that match industry needs. The British system enjoys strong quality assurance systems that ensure fairness, accuracy and consistency. Furthermore, British TVET programmes are in line with national qualifications frameworks that adhere with the European Qualifications framework, allowing them to be internationally transferable.

## Entrepreneurship Education



### Why this area?

According to the World Bank, 42% of people in the world are under the age of 25, with 524 million people aged 12-24 in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa alone. However, lack of employment opportunities for these young people is posing a significant challenge for global development and the current youth unemployment rate stands at over 13%. The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development included entrepreneurship in its education development goals, pledging to 'substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including... entrepreneurship'. The benefits of entrepreneurship education are numerous. A European Commission compilation of evidence from 91 studies across 23 countries found that students participating in entrepreneurship education were more likely to start their own businesses and these businesses tended to be more innovative and successful than those started by people without entrepreneurship education backgrounds. Entrepreneurship education could play a role in stimulating jobs creation by equipping young people across the BRI with the soft and hard entrepreneurial skills they need to set up their own businesses and pursue a life of entrepreneurship.



### Why the UK?

The UK has continued to make contributions to the development of entrepreneurship education globally. In 2012, the UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) published a comprehensive guidance on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education, advising institutions on how to support innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives as well as approaches to teaching and assessing students' entrepreneurial capabilities. The document was updated in 2018 and also been republished in Mandarin. This document has been used to inform international initiatives including the European Commission's EntreComp Framework.

The UK is also home to leading entrepreneurship education organisations such as EEUK and hosts the annual International Enterprise Educator Conference (IEEC), which attracts policymakers, educators and academics in the field of entrepreneurship education to exchange knowledge and experience. The UK and China have a record of success in EE collaboration, and the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education China, a China-UK partnership, has made significant headway in combining research and pedagogy from the two countries to develop the entrepreneurial capacity of students.



# Areas of Cooperation

## Achieving Common Development



### Teacher Training

#### Why this area?

One major obstacle to educational progress in developing countries is a severe shortage in trained and qualified teachers around the world. 2016 statistics from UNESCO found that countries would need to recruit 68.8 million teachers over the subsequent 14 years in order to provide every child with primary and secondary education. Such a severe shortage in trained teachers can have a debilitating effect on a country's future economic growth, with students unable to acquire the skills they need to meet the demands of the workplace.

#### Why the UK?

The UK has developed a reputation internationally for providing high-quality education through its pioneering and progressive methods and pedagogies. British education makes use of differentiated teaching, holistic approaches and problem-based learning which helps develop well-rounded students who can thrive both in and out of the classroom. The success of British teaching methods can be seen in the popularity of British education around the world. More international schools use the British curriculum than that of any other country, and the UK is one of the most popular study destinations in the world. As such, the UK has much to offer in the field of teacher training to countries that are developing their education systems.

### EdTech

#### Why this area?

The rapid development of technology is transforming the face of education, providing students with unprecedented access to information and resources, and facilitating exciting new learning methods. Parents and schools around the world are embracing this new technology which has allowed the education technology (EdTech) market to develop at rapid pace, creating exciting new technological advancements. EdTech investment and development across the BRI could create a whole range of exciting opportunities including:

- Improving education access through distance learning and streaming technology
- Learning and streaming technology
- Supporting TVET education with AR and VR
- Simplifying school systems to free up teachers' time
- Developing students' 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in ICT and STEM

#### Why the UK?

The UK is a major player in the global EdTech market, ranking 4th in the world for the number of EdTech deals between 2011 and 2016. The UK is also a regional leader in Europe, accounting for 34% of EdTech venture capital and angel funding. Its 1,200 companies account for one quarter of the EU's total EdTech companies. As such, British EdTech companies have much expertise to offer Belt and Road countries in a range of areas including learning management systems, English learning technology and STEM and robotics.



## Girls' and Women's Education

### Why this area?

Significant progress has been made around the world in reducing the gender gap in education, but disparities continue to exist in regions around the world. Such high gender disparities have been proven to have extremely damaging effects on the development of countries. The World Bank's 'Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls' carried out extensive research on the positive impact of improving girls' and women's education, which included:

- Higher earnings and standards of living of women and girls
- Lower rates of early marriage and early childbearing better the health, well-being and nutrition of women and girls
- Slower global population growth
- An increase in agency and decision making
- An improvement of social capital and institutions
- A stronger global economy

From an economic standpoint alone, the report found that current disparities in girls' and women's education was costing the global economy anywhere between US\$15 trillion and US\$30 trillion.

Achieving gender equality in education throughout Belt and Road countries will be integral in enabling the BRI to achieve its goal of promoting economic prosperity.

### Why the UK?

The UK has a strong international reputation for promoting girls' and women's equality, and in 2017 the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office created a new Gender Equality Unit which set improving girls' and women's education as one of its 2017-2018 objectives. Since 2015 the UK government has helped at least 5.6 million girls in developing countries gain access to education, and in 2018 Theresa May pledged £400 million of UK Aid for the 'Girls' Education Challenge' programme, which supports girls around the world to continue their education through primary, secondary school and training as well as giving women who have dropped out of school a chance to learn through catch-up classes and vital skills training.



**Today over 130 million girls did not go to school... By denying girls an education we deny them a voice, we deny them choice, we deny them their future...**

*- excerpt from UK Prime Minister Theresa May's speech at the UN General Assembly 2018 in New York*



## Opportunities in Southeast Asia

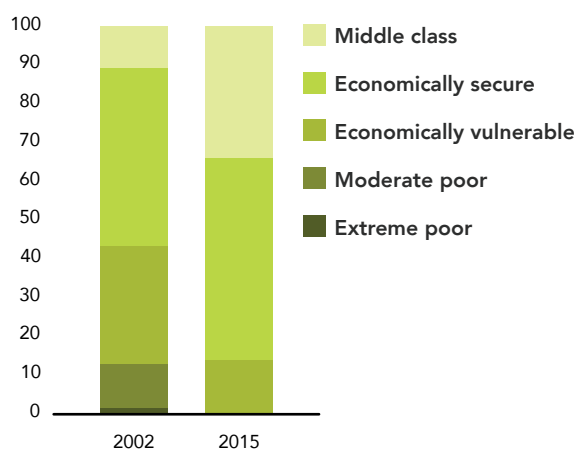


### International Education in Thailand (CST)

Thailand's consistent economic growth over the past few decades has propelled huge portions of the country's population out of poverty and created a rising middle class. This has led to an increase in international school numbers; according to data from ISC Research, there were 176 English-medium international schools teaching 65,000 students in Thailand in 2015.

International schools are poised to ride the wave of the country's continued economic growth that is expected in the coming years.

Thailand's middle class as a percentage of total population



(Source: World Bank)

## ★ International Education in Vietnam (CST)

Prior to 2017, Vietnamese law governed that local students could not make up more than 10% and 20% of students in international primary and secondary schools respectively. However, in August 2018, Decree 86 came into effect, raising the cap for both types of school to 50%, significantly increasing the number of Vietnamese students who can enrol in international schools.

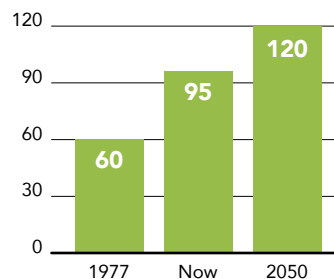
This change in law is expected to have a huge positive impact on the international school market in Vietnam, accelerating the growth of international schools throughout the country.

## ★ Increasing Vietnam's Labour Productivity (CST)

Vietnam is currently experiencing a major shift in its labor force. According to the ADB, around 1 million agricultural workers transitioning into industry each year. In order to sustain its economic growth, the McKinsey Global Institute estimates that Vietnam needs to increase labour productivity growth by more than 50%. The Vietnamese government has responded to this need with the 2015 'Law on Vocational Education and Training' that encourages private sector involvement in the provision of TVET through incentive policies on land, taxation, credit, training of educators and administrative officials, renting of facilities to vocational training institutions and non-profit foreign-invested vocational training institutions.

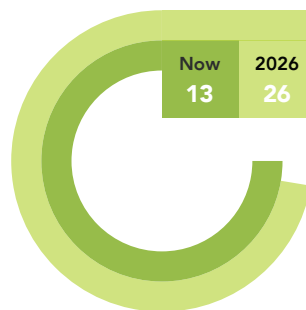


Population of Vietnam



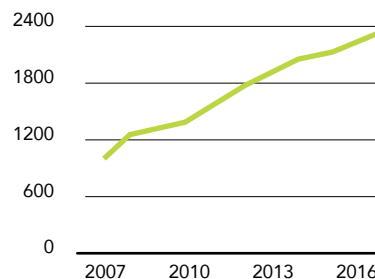
(Source: World Bank)

Middle Class as a Percentage of the Population



(Source: World Bank)

Vietnam GDP Per Capita



(Source: World Bank)



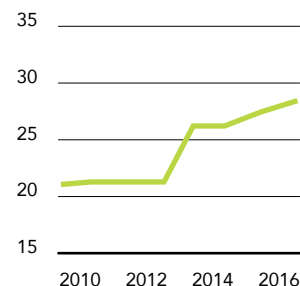
## Diversifying Brunei's Economy (CST)



Brunei's economy is heavily reliant on sales of oil and gas, the revenue of which makes up 90% of the government's revenues. In a climate of sliding oil prices, and sharply rising youth unemployment, Brunei's government is looking to diversify the country's economy and create new means of revenue and has signed a number of BRI cooperation deals with China.

Vocational education is expected to play a vital role in the country's economic transformation in the years ahead. The country's National Vision, Wawasan 2035, aims to create 'an education that will prepare the youth for employment and achievement in a world that is increasingly competitive in knowledge based'. In addition, the Department for Technical Education (DTE) has set out to transform the country's TVET sector, better matching graduates' qualifications to the needs of a modern and diversified economy. Working with local TVET providers to ensure quality skills education in Brunei's burgeoning industries will help ensure the long term success of diversification efforts.

Unemployment, youth  
total (% of total labor  
force ages 15-24)



(Source: World Bank)



## HE Collaboration in Malaysia (PTP)



Malaysia has set its sights on becoming the education hub of Southeast Asia and the country has made great strides to develop world-class universities. The Malaysian government aims for 40% of the country's population to have a higher education degree by 2020 and also hopes to internationalise its universities and attract 250,000 international students by 2025.



## International Education in Malaysia (CST)

Malaysian Government initiatives to reform education has led to a sharp rise in private school enrolment, especially within the international school system. The introduction of tax incentives and removal of enrolment caps for Malaysian students has accelerated international school growth, and the country added 10.7 international schools per year (for a total of 142 schools in 2016) in comparison to 4.6 schools per year on average between 2000 and 2009. As more and more students enter the international school system, the value attached to an early years bilingual education is likely to increase, driving growth in the international preschool sector.

British universities have traditionally had strong ties to Malaysian ones and Malaysia is the second largest source of international students to the UK after China. TNE partnerships are also thriving in the country and Malaysia is the largest source of UK TNE students in the world, providing 51,260 in 2015-2016, 14.20% of all TNE students. Malaysia has five overseas British campuses, more than any other country in the world. The Malaysian higher education market shows no signs of slowing down, both in terms of student numbers and research outcomes, and UK universities have much to gain by deepening cooperation with Malaysian institutions.

## **ELT in Laos** (PTP)

Faced with extremely low English proficiency levels (the country came 80th out of 80 in the 2017 EF English Proficiency Index), the Laotian government has set about to raise the quality of English teaching. In addition to government support, there is a growing demand in the private sector for English training. According to a United Nations' World Travel and Tourism Council, Laos' developing tourism industry has already created 114,000 new jobs, and tourism sector jobs will account for 3% of all employment by 2028. As BRI projects connect more and more Laotian industries to the global market, the importance of speaking English will only increase.

However, Laos' ELT market is still relatively untapped. According to a recent BETT report, there is only one IELTS test centre in the whole country. Such an imbalance in demand and supply promises strong opportunity for British ELT providers looking to enter the market.



## **EdTech in the Philippines** (ACD)

The government of the Philippines has gone to efforts to improve ICT infrastructure within the education system and raise ICT literacy among students. The Department of Education's DepEd Computerisation Program is working to provide public schools with information and communication technologies to improve the teaching and learning process. The programme includes the provision of laboratory packages to secondary schools and electronic classrooms to elementary schools.

As the number of public schools with access to ICT grows, so too will the demand for online modules and software packages, creating new opportunity for British EdTech providers.

## **Teacher Training in Cambodia** (ACD)

Despite significant improvements in recent years, Cambodia's education system continues to be hindered by a lack of qualified teachers. It is estimated that around 75,000 teachers do not have bachelor's degree equivalencies and more than 80% of teacher trainees have a grade-12 exam score of D or E.

Cambodia's Strategic 2014-2018 Education Plan set out to increase the number of professionals entering the teaching profession, improve the quality of teacher training and develop a standardised teacher training system. The plan paid particular focus to STEM education, aiming to 'Increase the knowledge and skills for teachers of mathematics and science through in-service training, and initiate a staff performance appraisal system.'



**In 2016, the student-teacher ratio in Cambodia was 42.534, the highest of any Southeast Asian country.**

(Source: World Bank)



## Opportunities in Southern Asia



### Removing barriers to girls' and women's education in Afghanistan

(ACD)

Under Taliban control from 1996 to 2001, Afghan women were denied many rights, including education. Though Afghan girls now make up 40% of students, they still face hurdles to education such as sexual harassment, child-marriage and inaccessibility of schools. Working toward providing maternal care, quality healthcare and menstrual hygiene management could help Afghanistan achieve full gender parity in education enrolment.



### Increasing Accessibility in the Maldives

(ACD)

The Maldives' population of 436,000 is thinly spread across the 200 inhabited islands that make up the country and it is estimated that 95 islands have a population of 500 people or less. The unique population distribution of this island nation makes it difficult to develop educational infrastructure and many of the smaller islands do not have a secondary school. The need for children to go to other islands for secondary education has negatively impacted secondary education enrolment rates, particularly among girls, whom parents are more reluctant to send away.

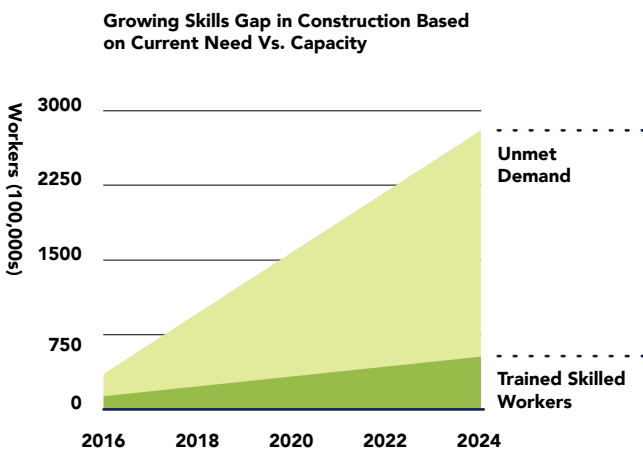
The National Centre for Information Communication and the Ministry of Education have been working to ensure all children are connected to the internet and that ICT content is integrated into education. Access to high quality online content and a developed distance learning infrastructure would have a transformative impact on the lives of students on smaller islands and raising the country's enrolment rates.

95 of islands in the Maldives have a population of 500 people or less



## **Preparing Bangladesh's Construction Sector** (CST)

Steady growth in Bangladesh's construction sector has led to an ever increasing demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers. A Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies report estimates that between 2016 and 2025, 2.82 million new workers will need to be trained in construction. However, as of 2016 the country's yearly training capacity for the construction sector was only 70,500 workers. Without significant expansion of the construction TVET sector, the country's workforce will be increasingly unable to meet industry demands, hindering future growth in this sector. Cooperation between British TVET providers and Chinese companies carrying out BRI construction to train the local workforce could significantly alleviate the skills gap.

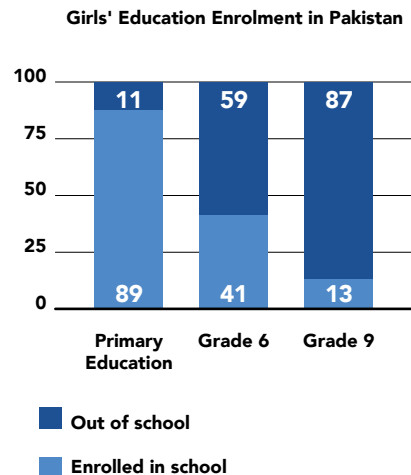


Source: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies



## **Pakistan Schools' Crisis** (ACD)

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, 'Shall I Feed my Daughter or Educate Her?' paints a grim picture of life in education for Pakistani girls, with a third out of school, compared with 21% of boys. The report found that the schools' lack of funding has led to a schools shortage with girl schools hit hardest. Though 89% of girls enrol in primary schools, faced with high school fees, corruption and poor quality teaching, only 41% go on to secondary schools. Solving this schools crisis will help to bring the 77.3% of non-working women into the workforce.



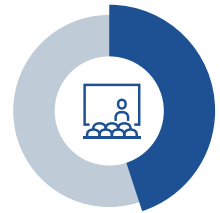
Source: HRW



### Teacher Training Sri Lanka (ACD)

In 2017, IPS Research highlighted the difficulties caused by inexperienced and undertrained teachers in Sri Lanka. IPS found that although Sri Lanka had a surplus of teacher, there was a significant shortage of qualified and experienced teachers, especially in mathematics and science. At the time of the findings, the share of qualified and experienced teachers was only 40%. In 2015, 45% of students who sat for the G.C.E. Ordinary level either failed the exam or conditionally passed due to failing mathematics. IPS noted that only two of the 17 state universities had Faculties of Education and only three had Departments of Education.

In 2018, the country's National Human Resources Development Council proposed a 43% increase in spending on education by 2020. Proposals for the funding included increasing training of teachers and collaborating and partnering with foreign universities. By working with local universities to set up teacher training institutions and run teacher training programmes, British providers could increase the number of trained teachers in Sri Lanka, allowing the country to raise its education standards.



**In 2017, only 40% of teachers in Sri Lanka were qualified and experienced.**

Source: IPS Research



## Opportunities in Central Asia

### International Schools in Kazakhstan (CST)

Despite a slight downturn over the past few years, Kazakhstan has seen huge economic growth over the past decades that has led to an ever growing middle class. In 2017, the World Bank estimated that the middle class had grown to 20% of the country's population, offering huge potential for the growth of private schools within the country. British education is highly regarded in Kazakhstan, with around half of parents listing British education as their preferred type of international education in a recent British Council survey.

A 2017 government pilot project that publicly finances students attending private schools has the potential to open up the international education market. The market has further benefited from recent government education reforms aiming to follow international standards and best practice, as well as plans to attract more foreign investment. The result is a very positive policy environment for international schools.

### Early-Years Education in Kazakhstan (CST)

Kazakhstan has well-founded confidence about its own future; investing 17.769% of its growing GDP into education, with the ambitious target of providing 100% of children aged 3-6 with pre-school education by 2019. Early-years education has a particularly important role in the country given its need for trilingual education in Russian, Kazakh and English, and the importance of the 0-3 years window for language acquisition. As such, there is strong potential for British preschools to share their experience in early-years education and work with local partners to provide high quality, bilingual preschool education.



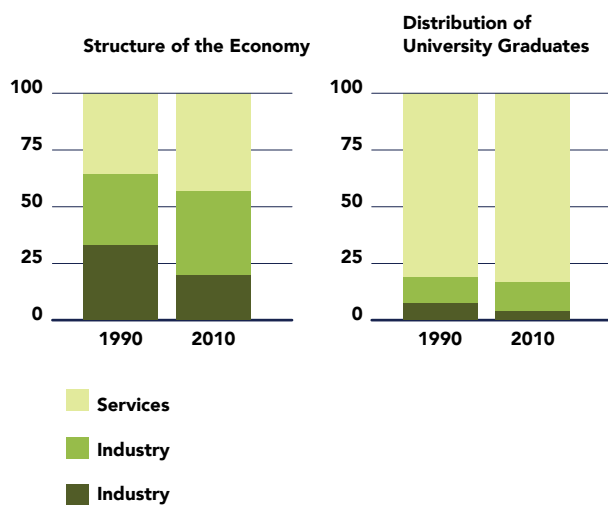


## Assisting Uzbekistan's Transitioning Economy (CST)

Uzbekistan's agricultural economy has undergone rapid transformation and it is estimated that 80% of new jobs created are in the service industry. This economic transition has left graduates unprepared for the modern job market and one industry survey found that one-third of the firms (35%) said that employee skills posed a 'major' or 'very severe' obstacle to growth. New skills training is necessary to ensure Uzbekistan is able to meet the demands of its growing service-based economy.



**Change in Structure of the Uzbek Economy vs Distribution of Graduates**



(Source: World Bank, Ministry of Finance Data)



## ELT in Kyrgyzstan (PTP)

The Kyrgyz government has laid out a three-national-language policy of Kyrgyz, Russian, and English and aims for 90% of secondary school leavers to have attained CEFR B2 level in their non-native language. In the context of this policy direction, a British Study Centre was established in Kyrgyzstan's capital city, Bishkek, with the aim of delivering Cambridge CELTA courses, teacher training programmes, international foundation years and junior summer camps.

Numerous projects to improve connectivity within the region offer new opportunity for development of Kyrgyzstan's emergent ELT market. In a 2018 survey of aviation projects along the Belt and Road, the Centre for Aviation identified four known airport terminal expansion or extension projects within Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the China Machine Engineering Corporation has signed an agreement with Manas International Airport to build a new USD300million airport in Kyrgyzstan's second biggest city. As the country's aviation industry develops, the need for English, the international language of aviation, is also set to grow, creating new opportunity for professional ELT providers.



# Opportunities in The Middle East and Northern Africa

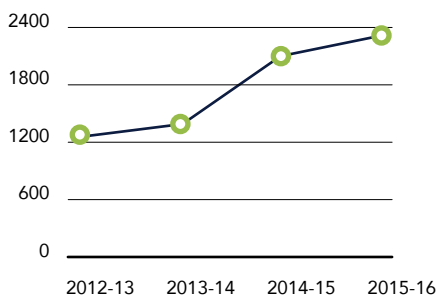
## International Schools in Egypt (CST)

Egypt has an extremely young population, with 40% of its population under the age of 18 in 2017, according to the state's statistics agency, CAMPAS.

ISC Research ranks Egypt at number 10 in number of international schools globally, with 224 international schools as of 2018.



**Number of Egyptian Students in British HEIs**



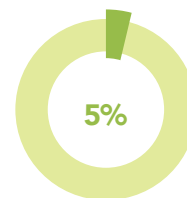
Source: HESA

British education is extremely popular in Egypt. Egyptian students make up 5.3% of UK HE TNE students, making the country the fifth biggest source of UK TNE students in the world. There has also been a strong upward trend in the past four years of Egyptian students studying in the UK. Egypt's growing youth population and rising interest in British education offer strong potential for the continued growth of British international school numbers.



## Strengthening Jordan's Entrepreneurship Education (CST)

Jordan's youth unemployment rate surpassed 39% in 2017, a number that is all the more striking considering the country has one of the youngest populations in the world. Research conducted by the International Labour Organisation as part of its Known About Business campaign attributed the high youth unemployment to the absence of entrepreneurship education and a culture of self-employment. According to the ILO, only 5 per cent of micro, small or medium enterprise owners were young. Strengthening Jordan's entrepreneurship education systems could have helped the country build a culture of entrepreneurship and have a positive impact on small business creation.



**Only 5% of micro, small or medium enterprise owners in Jordan are young**

Source: ILO



## Research Cooperation with the UAE (ACD)

The United Arab Emirates is positioning itself as an international education hub of the Middle East. Abu Dhabi is home to branches of a number of prestigious universities including NYU and Paris Sorbonne, while a number of high profile research projects have been set up around the country. The UAE has particularly focused on funding research in the areas of energy and AI. In January 2017, the country invested USD163 billion into clean energy with the goal of increasing the contribution of clean energy to 50% by 2050 and increasing consumption efficiency by 40%. Meanwhile, the government's Artificial Intelligence Strategy sets the ambitious goal of making the UAE a global leader in the field of AI investments across various sectors.

With such a high level of investment and commitment from its government, the UAE is well positioned to work with with international HEIs in research partnerships and alliances. BRI research collaboration in AI and energy would allow for mutually advantageous knowledge exchanges and could lead to high impact discoveries that bring benefit to countries around the world.



## EdTech Solutions in Lebanon (ACD)

Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education's (MEHE) set out priorities in its National Educational Technology Plan for 2012-2017 which proposed that all students would have suitable access to technology in class by 2017. The policy came in response to challenges faced by the country's education system including absence of a national curriculum or standards for technology and insufficient technology infrastructure and teacher shortages.

The recent refugee crisis in the Middle East has led to a large influx of children into Lebanon. The UK has played a key role in providing education to these children and in September 2018, a British education trade mission visited Lebanon to explore potential EdTech solutions in the country. British EdTech expertise could help ensure access to high quality education for Lebanon as its existing system faces increasing pressures from an influx of students.





## Opportunities in Europe

### **Standardising Bosnia and Herzegovina's HE System** (ACD)

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the few European countries with no national Ministry of Education, which has weakened the country's ability to ensure universal standards for HEIs. As a result, the country has been beset with private universities that essentially offer degrees in exchange for money, leading to the deterioration of the value in holding a local degree.

With the UK's experience in accreditation and international standards, British HEIs have a lot to offer in helping Bosnia and Herzegovina to standardise its higher education system and put an end to the rise of fake degrees.



**#41**  
**of 41 in Europe for**  
**Entrepreneurship**

*(Global Entrepreneurship Index)*

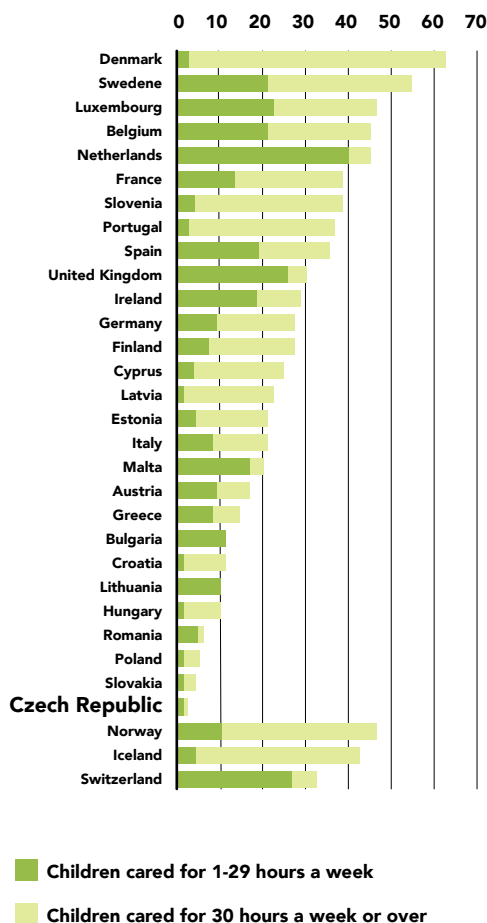
### **Raising Levels of Entrepreneurship in Bosnia and Herzegovina** (CST)

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a youth unemployment rate of 54.9 percent, the highest in the world. This severe shortage of jobs has led to many youth moving abroad to find work, and in 2018 the country ranked 135th out of 137 for 'capacity to retain talent' in the World Economic Forum's 2017-2018 Global Competitiveness Report. Bosnia and Herzegovina's government have acknowledged the potential positive impact of entrepreneurship education, releasing a 'Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning in Education Systems' in 2012. The strategy had an overarching goal 'to foster and promote entrepreneurial mindsets which positively impact upon social and economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina'. Working with Bosnia and Herzegovina's government and schools in their development of its entrepreneurship education systems could help ensure the country is able to improve general entrepreneurship levels.



## Improving Czech Nurseries (CST)

Faced with urgent shortages in nursery school places, The Czech Republic this year launched its 6th call for applicants to the Nursery and Basic School Capacity Development Fund for subsidies of the total 11.5 million Euros. A 2013 survey of formal childcare services across the EU found that the Czech Republic had the lowest percentage of children under 3 in childcare of all EU countries. Increased access to pre-school education may go some way to freeing Czech women for the workforce, given that the employment rate of those with children was found to be 29.9pp lower than those without.



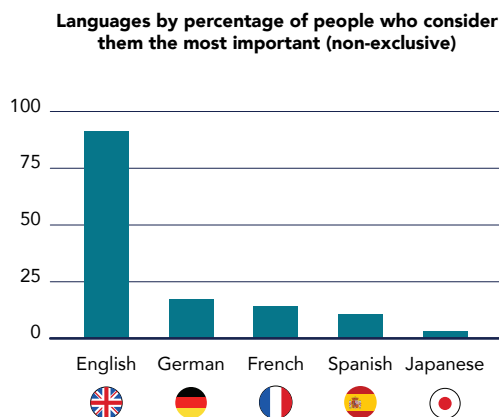
Source: Peer review on quality early childcare services, Czech Republic 2015



## English Language Training in Russia (PTP)

As of 2020, it will be mandatory to study a foreign language as part of Russia's Unified State Exam. English is seen as a highly desirable language in Russia and in a 2015 poll conducted by the Russian Public Opinion Research Centre, 92% of respondents considered English to be the most useful foreign language.

However, despite interest in English learning, there is still relatively low English proficiency in Russia. Although the number of Russians with some level of English rose from 16% in 2003 to 30% 2015, the proportion familiar with colloquial language was only 7% while only 3% identified as fluent speakers. In the 2018 English Proficiency Index, Russia ranked 42 out of 88, putting it behind the majority of European countries surveyed. As such, there is a strong need for the development of Russia's ELT sector to satisfy the country's current demand.



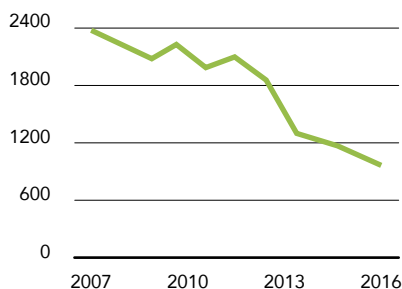
Source: Russian Public Opinion Research Centre



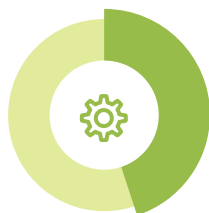
## Raising Enrolment in Ukraine (CST)

Despite impressively high participation in tertiary education, Ukraine suffers from low vocational education enrolment levels and student numbers have continued to see a steady decrease from year to year. An International Labour Organisation survey in 2013 found that a contributing factor to such low enrolment levels was the perception that non-technical jobs have a higher status than technical jobs. Faced with a significant skills gap, improvements in skills training are essential for Ukraine's future economic success.

Total Students Enrolled in Vocational Schools



Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine



**40%** of firms in four key sectors reported a significant gap between the skills their employees possessed and the skills the businesses required.

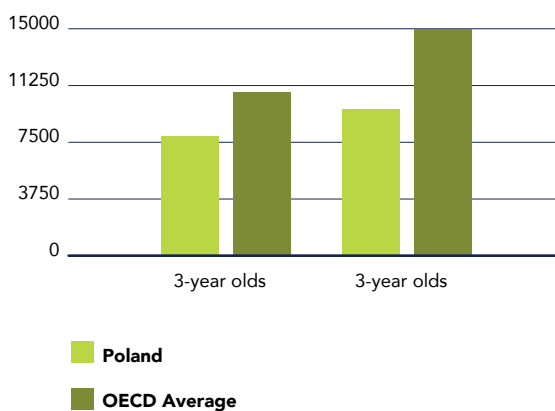
Source: World Bank



## Raising Preschool Enrolment in Poland (CST)

In 2013, about 52% of 3-year-olds and 66% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in early childhood education, well below the OECD average of 74% and 97%. Despite growth in the number of early years institutions, demand continues to outstrip supply. The Polish government has demonstrated a proactive attitude in developing the country's early years education system, providing the right to participate in pre-primary education to all 4-year olds in September 2015 and facilitating access to all 3-year olds from September 2017. State budget allocations have also been made to subsidise early years education costs.

2013 Enrolment in Early Childhood Education



Source: OECD



### **Supporting Macedonia's Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy (CST)**

Macedonia has been marred by high youth unemployment since its foundation and sits at 47% as of 2017. The government's 'Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020' comments that the challenge of unemployment 'can only be addressed by new jobs creation, and increased entrepreneurial activities of the people will have significant impact.' The document sets out its short and long term goals, which include raising entrepreneurial awareness, improving the entrepreneurial competence of teachers and better integrating entrepreneurship into the national curriculum. Working with the government to achieve its long and short term goals could help raise youth entrepreneurship and bring down the country's high unemployment rates.

### **Raising Education Attainment in Bulgaria (ACD)**

In the latest PISA assessment, Bulgaria had some of the highest underachievement in basic skills of all EU countries.

Low education achievement can be partly attributed to insufficient funding and according to the World Bank Bulgaria only spent 4.062% of its GDP on education in 2013, below the EU average of 5.297%. However, the Bulgarian government has been increasing education spending, which is expected to reach 4.3% by 2020, with much of the money going to increases in teachers' salaries. Directing some of this education funding toward teacher training could help raise standards and allow Bulgarian students to catch up with other EU countries in achievement in basic skills.



### **Bringing Estonian Classrooms into the 21st Century (ACD)**

The Estonian government is currently in the process of updating the IT infrastructure in schools. Institutions are gradually updating their Information Technology (IT) infrastructure. This includes:

- An investment of 1.4 million euros in free digital learning materials
- 12 million euros of computers and smart devices to support teaching of skills in design, robotics or programming
- 5.5 million euros for setting up education labs the development of digital textbooks
- 13 million euros invested in upgrading the network connections of schools

Under this policy context, there is strong opportunity for EdTech providers of educational equipment, software and e-programmes.



Overall, the proportion of 15 year-olds with underachievement in each subject was:

**Reading: 41.5%**

**Maths: 42.1%**

**Science: 37.9%**

Source: PISA



## Opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa



### Kenya's Digital Classrooms (ACD)

Kenya's Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology introduced a Digital Literacy Programme with a goal of preparing children and schools for 21st century employment and a global economy. The programme ambitiously proposed to provide all of the country's 21,718 public primary schools with 1.2 million devices by the end of 2017. Furthermore, in order to ensure the maximum benefit from these digital devices, 61,000 primary school teachers have also been trained to use the tablets and content.

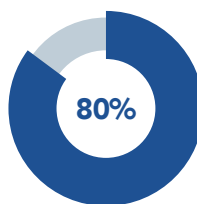
The country has also begun to emerge as a startup hub for education technology, with new innovative EdTech ventures starting up around the country and particularly in its capital. As Kenya embraces the value of technology in education, it is likely that the market will increasingly be open to involvement from international stakeholders and EdTech providers.



### Teacher Training in Madagascar (ACD)

Madagascar's education system suffers from insufficient teacher training and around 80% of the country's teachers have had no formal teacher training. According to the 2016 Service Delivery Indicators (SDI) survey, public primary school teachers lack pedagogical competencies.

The country has recently looked to teacher training as a means of improving its education system. Its Education Sector Plan (2018-2022) aims to introduce regional training plans, improve teachers' skills in teaching French and maths and develop curriculums. In addition, the country's National Development Plan prioritises social expenditures including education.



of teachers have no training (80,000 in total)

Source: World Bank





The Higher Institute of Science and Technology of Mozambique found that in 2015, there were nearly **70,000 students in TVET**, with **approximately 17,000 in oil and gas related courses**. Of these, the study approximates **only 5,600 of these would graduate**.



### Oil & Gas in Mozambique (CST)

Newly discovered oil and gas reserves stand to add 39 billion dollars to Mozambique's economy by 2035, but the country's workforce lacks the specialised skills required by oil & gas companies. In 2017, Mozambique's national oil and gas company signed a deal with China National Petroleum Corporation, with the two countries agreeing to cooperate in oil and gas exploration and production, engineering technology, engineering construction, refining and logistics supports. As companies such as these begin to open up the oil and gas industry, local skills and expertise will be more necessary than ever. Itself home to gas and oil reserves, the UK has a good deal of expertise in TVET skills within the oil and gas industry. By partnering with local and Chinese oil companies, British TVET Providers can empower empower local talent and aid Mozambique in establishing a stronger, more self-sufficient economy.



### ELT in Angola (PTP)

English is the international language of the oil and gas industry and as Angola is the second largest oil producer in the world, English plays an important role in the its workforce. A 2011 Chatham House report found that around 60% of Angolan students entering tertiary education came from oil companies and would return there upon graduation.

However, Angola suffers from relatively low quality English training and in the 27th edition of the English Proficiency Index, Angola ranked 72nd out of 80, falling into the band of 'very low proficiency'. Workers in the oil and gas industry therefore require additional ELT training and there is strong opportunity for British ELT providers to implement professional English language programmes targeted at this sector.



### Raising Preschool Enrolment in Togo (CST)

Togolese preschool enrolment falls far below OECD averages, but government drives to increase early years education coverage create strong possibility for growth in this sector. Free pre-primary education was introduced in 2008 and the 2014-2015 education sector plan set out goals to increase pre-school enrolment of 4-5 year olds from 18% in 2011 to 27% in 2025. As Togo works towards developing its early years sector, British providers could work with local schools to share resources and best practice.



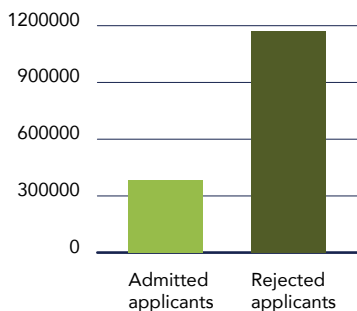


## Higher Education Collaboration in Nigeria (CST)

According to statistics from Nigeria's Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), out of 1.6 million applications to university in 2015, only 415,000 students were admitted, leaving over one million qualified college-age Nigerians without access to higher education. The country's education quality has failed to keep up with its economic growth and Nigeria lags far behind countries like South Africa, Ghana and Uganda in world class universities.

With such intense competition for local placements, an ever growing number of Nigerians are looking abroad for university education. In 2015/16, the country had 71,351 students abroad, more than any other African country. Developing new joint programmes with universities on the ground would allow British HEIs to tap into the huge student potential of Nigeria while alleviating pressure on students without the funds to travel abroad.

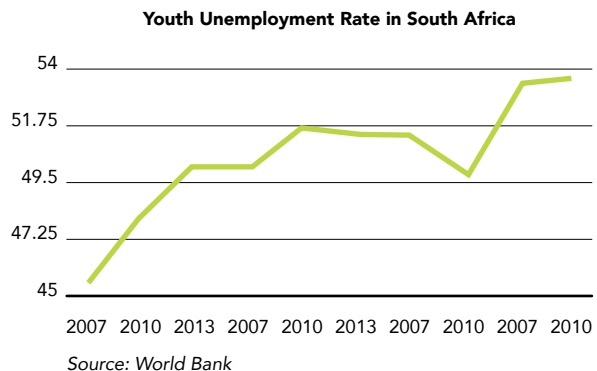
**In 2015/16, 1,185,000 Nigerian students were left without a university place, around 3/4 of applications.**



Source: JAMB

## Increasing Entrepreneurial Intentions in South Africa (CST)

South Africa's youth unemployment rate of 53.53% stands at one of the highest in the world. However, despite the lack of available jobs, a GEM report found that South African youth are much less likely to start their own business in comparison to neighbouring countries. According to the report, only 10.1% of South Africans of working age intend to start their own business in the next three year, significantly lower than the 41.6% average of other African countries surveyed. Over the past 15 years, the report has consistently identified education as one of the three major reasons for the country's low entrepreneurship level.



## Teacher Training in South Africa (CST)

South Africa is undergoing a shortage of teachers, bringing down student outcomes across the country. In September 2017, South Africa's Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga revealed that the country had 15,888 teacher vacancies. It is predicted that the country may need an additional 30,000 teachers by 2025.

This news came in spite of heavy investment in teacher training which doubled the number of annual graduates from teacher programmes from 5,939 in 2008 to 13,708 in 2012. Working with South African teacher training providers to increase capacity will ensure the country is able to keep up with increasing demand for qualified teachers in the years to come.

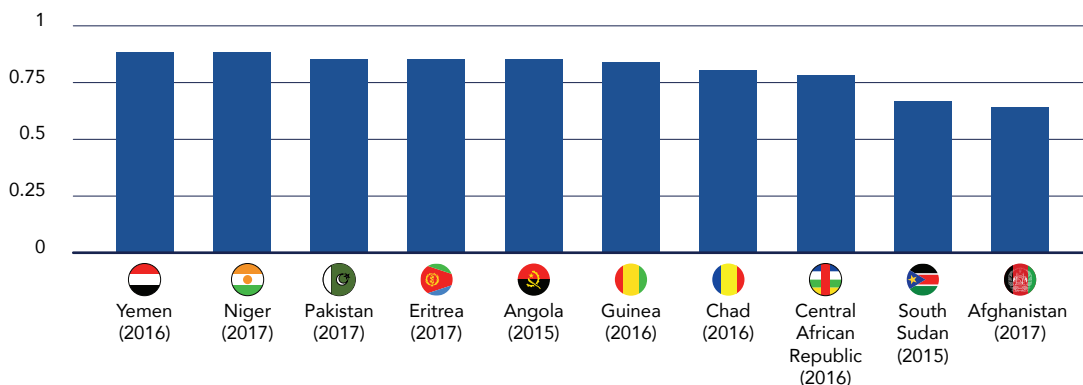


## Reducing Gender Disparity in sub-Saharan Africa (ACD)

In the UNESCO eAtlas of Gender Inequality in Education, Afghanistan was named as the worst performing country for gender disparity in primary enrolment, but the six next most unequal are all in sub-Saharan Africa: South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Chad, Eritrea and Angola. There are a number of factors exacerbating gender inequality in school including gender based violence, child marriage, the favouring of boys in families' education spending, and the direct or hidden costs of going to school.

The region lags behind global improvements on education in general. Partly down to a combination of high population growth rates, of the 61 million out-of-school children, 34 million or more than half live in sub-Saharan Africa. Girls are hit hardest with 23% out of school, compared to 19% of boys. Much more work needs to be done in the region if it is to achieve gender parity in education.

**Do as many girls as boys enrol in primary education throughout the world?**  
(Gender Parity Index)



*Source: UNESCO*



## Opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean



### **Diversifying Skills in Colombia** (CST)

Colombia's economy is highly reliant on oil and coal, which make up more than half of its total exports. This dependency has placed the economy in a precarious position, and with the country's oil reserves expected to run out by 2025, Colombia is in urgent need to diversify its economy. Both the World Trade Organisation and International Monetary Fund have urged the country to diversify its economy by stimulating its manufacturing and service sectors. Coordinating with government and TVET providers to train workers in new industries could help ensure economic stability for the country in the coming years.



### **Providing EdTech to Uruguay's Classrooms** (ACD)

In 2007, Uruguay launched the ambitious 'Plan Ceibal' which implemented a 'one laptop per child' policy and connected all of the country's schools to the internet. These computers have already created huge potential for the implementation of EdTech within public schools. A countrywide British Council remote teaching programme provides English lessons to over 80,000 children across 568 state primary schools and in 2013, a German-based adaptive learning platform was implemented in middle and high-school maths classes. Considering the country's below-average PISA scores and new innovations in the EdTech industry, there is strong potential for software developers to work with public schools to implement further EdTech teaching programmes.



Argentina ranked  
**57 out of 64**  
in the 2012 PISA tests



### Teacher Training in Argentina (ACD)

In a bid to raise education standards, the Argentinian government released the 2006 Education Funding Law which called for 6% of GDP to be invested in GDP annually. However, education standards failed to rise as expected and in 2012's PISA test, the country ranked 57 out of 64 participating countries. Former Minister of Education, Juan Carlos Tedesco, has argued that teacher training in Argentina is in need of deep reform including getting training institutes accredited, ensuring that the first few years on duty are part of the training process, diversifying in-service training, and developing an active policy in training teacher trainers. With its well developed teacher training sector, the UK has a lot to offer in assisting Argentina to raise its teaching standards.



### ELT in Brazil (PTP)

Brazil is considered a low proficiency country on English First's English Proficiency Index, ranking 53rd of 88 countries. However, there is strong demand for English language training and a 2015 British Council survey found that 82% of respondents who had not learned English would do so in order to improve their employment prospects. Brazil's government has made numerous attempts to improve language proficiency, including programmes to teach English prior to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games, as well as the 2014 Languages Without Borders programme that works to prepare Brazilian students to study abroad. Working with the government and schools in future drives to improve proficiency could ensure students have access to high quality and effective ELT.

# Opportunities:

## Key Takeaways

- ----- Having already carried out numerous successful education collaborations, the UK and China are 'natural partners' for BRI education projects.
- ----- British education organisations have the experience, quality and prestige needed to deliver impactful education projects in BRI regions.
- ----- Myriad opportunities exist in BRI regions that will help meet the three guiding visions of the BRI Education Action Plan.
- ----- English language training and higher education collaboration will promote people-to-people bonds.
- ----- International schools, early-years education, TVET and entrepreneurship education will cultivate supporting talent.
- ----- Teacher training, EdTech and girls' and women's education will achieve common development.



# **BritCham BRI Benchmarks**

The widely differing contexts and priorities in existing and potential BRI projects, which nonetheless still fall within the vision laid out in the Education Action Plan for the BRI, suggest to us the need for a set of benchmarks, which can clarify and guide best practice for new and established BRI partnerships, and ensure that the ideals of BRI are honoured in the spirit and practice of the growing array of projects within its purview.

We hope to see these benchmarks act as guiding principles for BRI education projects, and to offer a cohesion which may otherwise be hard to achieve in such a dynamic and large-scale vista of activity. We believe that by incorporating these benchmarks, businesses can help to ensure that the BRI reaches its transformative potential and has a far-reaching and lastingly positive impact on all countries involved in the Initiative. In both experience and disposition, the UK is well-placed to aid and support this process, as we have briefly highlighted in the sub-sections below each of the benchmarks.

## The benchmarks are divided into 3 broad areas:

**High standards  
and rigour**

**Fiscal responsibility  
and opportunity**

**Sustainability  
and ethics**

These areas are subdivided into 9 core dimensions as follows:

**1 Knowledge  
exchange**

**4 Transparency  
and accountability**

**7 Local engagement  
and empowerment**

**2 Quality**

**5 Reciprocity**

**8 Economic  
sustainability**

**3 Congruence**

**6 Diversity  
of involvement**

**9 Environmental  
sustainability**


Each dimension contains a short list of benchmark standards, the purpose of which is to make clear what project participants need to consider in order to be able to meet the stated vision, principles and priorities of the BRI, and to support consistency in participants' professional judgements and practices.

The benchmarks are designed to be concise and accessible, with only sufficient detail to communicate the standards clearly. Project participants are strongly encouraged to find time to engage in professional discussion within their specific contexts and teams to ensure that implementation of the benchmarks is proportionate and manageable.

To the best of our knowledge at the time of writing, no such benchmarks exist specifically for education projects in the BRI. They are inspired by globally agreed principles of development effectiveness, shared by many countries involved in the BRI, and based on consultation with the stated aims of both the UK and the Chinese government and the views of members. Some of the key sources consulted include the UNDP and China Center for International Economic Exchanges agreement on 'A new means to transformative global governance towards sustainable development', with further reference to goals 4, 8, 12 and 16 from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the general policies contained within OECD 'Guidance for Multinational Enterprises', close attention to relevant discussions from the China-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue, the foundational principles of the WTO, the IMF and World Bank's Debt Sustainability Framework, relevant ASEM declarations and statements and the UN Green Belt and Road Strategy.

# 1. Knowledge exchange



















In bringing together a diverse range of countries, the Belt and Road Initiative promises to stimulate the exchange of knowledge and ideas from countries all over the world and offer valuable new perspectives and understanding. However, with such a diversity of cultures and systems also comes the risk of competition and conflict of interest. It is important that in the spirit of mutual learning, the unimpeded pursuit of knowledge is made a priority in educational partnerships, and that academics may operate in environments of openness and academic freedom transcending both ideology and national borders.

 In recent decades the UK has established a large number of high-quality, positive and high-trust educational partnerships with Chinese educational organisations at all levels. This is echoed in many countries across the world; as outlined earlier, the UK has established TNE partnerships in all but 15 countries globally. UK education and educational practices enjoy high prestige globally and have established effective working practices across a breadth of different real-world contexts.

**Knowledge exchange benchmarks**


- a.** Communities of enquiry are actively encouraged across relevant academic partners, and ‘bottom up’ as well as ‘top down’ forms of knowledge exchange are incorporated into the structure and culture of the project.
- b.** Academic standards from different stakeholders are shared early and adhered to.
- c.** Opportunities for open and rigorous academic cooperation are prioritised within the project, and supported by project leadership.
- d.** Ensuring that access to academic resources are free and unimpeded, and that intellectual property is respected, remaining a priority throughout the lifespan of the project.
- e.** The importance of free and open knowledge exchange, and the application of rigorous academic standards is highlighted in educational programme development.
- f.** Efforts are made to ensure that knowledge exchange is made accessible through sensitivity to native languages.

n/a                      In progress                      Complete










2. Quality

As countries at different stages of educational development collaborate and share resources, it is important that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms are put in place and maintained. These protect the prestige and reputation of participating institutions and can guarantee that BRI education projects are routinely executed to the highest standards, creating meaningful and lasting impacts for all participants.

 British educational standards, structures, practice and institutions enjoy a high level of prestige and esteem globally, as seen in the continued attractiveness of UK institutions as preferred educational destinations, and the high uptake of British curriculum, qualifications and educational technology in countries around the world. Increasingly well-established standardization and quality assurance in recent decades, through the growth of organisations like Ofsted and QCA ensure that UK standards, practices and qualifications are widely perceived as world-class in clarity and rigour.


Quality benchmarks

- a. There is a shared understanding of what constitutes high quality delivery, and participating teams and individuals strive towards this within and across teams.
- b. Quality assurance measures are agreed upon, and responsibility for implementing them is clearly designated and communicated at all levels, from teachers to written materials.
- c. Best practice for participating countries is understood and observed in developing specific measures for the project, by, for example, applying externally derived standards relevant to context.

n/a	In progress	Complete
		
		
		













3. Congruence

Participating countries and organisations within the Belt and Road Initiative belong to a complex variety of existing international bodies with established international laws and standards. Adherence to existing international standards have the potential to align BRI projects with international best practice and cement their collective international reputation.

 The UK has played an energetic and often foundational role in many of the key international bodies and organisations responsible for codifying and maintaining international standards in a wide variety of different disciplines. The significant expertise it has developed in consulting, developing and implementing international standards which relate to education makes it well-placed to ensure high standards are maintained in BRI projects.


Congruence benchmarks:

- a. Every reasonable effort is taken to find, take note of and apply international standards relevant to the project area.
- b. Governments and support organisations promote and support dissemination and understanding of national and international standards and best practice.
- c. Local and international laws, procedures and protocols are respected, and closely examined to find and make the most of points of congruence.
- d. The internationally recognised human rights of all those affected by the project are respected

n/a	In progress	Complete
		
		
		
		










## 4. Transparency and accountability

Education along the Belt and Road involves a complex variety of stakeholders including governments, NGOs, private industries and individual citizens. Providing maximum transparency at every level in all projects is essential for BRI educational partnerships to continue to be propagated, grow and thrive.

 In 2018, the UK was granted a rating of 80 in Transparency International's CPI, giving it the 11th highest transparency ranking in the world. Freedom of information, data protection and clear auditing procedures have a long tradition and are enshrined in law, with a great many UK institutions placing impartiality and accountability at the core of their organisational values.


**Transparency and accountability benchmarks:**

- a.** Roles and responsibilities are clearly demarcated from the outset, and updated as the project develops.
- b.** Working culture highlights and supports core principles of honesty, integrity, objectivity and impartiality, and is modelled by project leaders.
- c.** Clear and practicable accountability protocols for all involved parties are agreed, developed and rigorously sustained.

n/a	In progress	Complete
		
		
		










## 5. Reciprocity

The Belt and Road has led to a very large number of new cooperation projects and partnerships, with an ever-growing number of countries opening their markets to foreign investment and development. In order for the Belt and Road Initiative to realise its goal of win-win cooperation, partnership agreements at every level must adhere to the principle of reciprocity, with all participating countries demonstrating an openness to investment and participation from outside markets.

 The UK today is proud of its world-class reputation for education in many areas, and keen to maintain its high standards and rigour in the extensive, and often very well-established, educational joint ventures it has successfully undertaken with partners across the world. Central to this long-term experience is a spirit of reciprocity, and a deep understanding of how important it is to maintain a clear focus on the benefits and opportunities available to all partners in a fair and equitable way.


### Reciprocity benchmarks

- a. Balance is carefully maintained through clearly stated and mutually agreed rules of engagement, covering both financial rewards and free and fair opportunities for participation and contracts are clear and adhered to.
- b. Mutual responsibility and relationships are developed beyond the contractual level.
- c. 'Win-win' remains in prominence as a central principle throughout the lifespan of the project, and meaningful steps are taken to ensure economic benefits are fairly distributed.

n/a	In progress	Complete
		
		
		













## 6. Diversity of involvement

There is significant opportunity for further involvement in educational projects across Belt and Road nations. As increasing numbers of large-scale projects get underway, many smaller scale opportunities emerge which could be carried out by small to medium-sized enterprises. Recent studies have shown that state-owned enterprises currently account for half of infrastructure projects and more than 70% of the combined value of contracts launched under the initiative. By pursuing the development of smaller scale SME run projects, the BRI could carry out an increasingly diverse range of development projects, enhancing opportunities for people-to-people cooperation.

 Historically, British education, innovation and technology tend to have grown from relatively small beginnings, with many of its most prestigious schools and universities maintaining a proud individual identity with comparatively small annual cohorts. Supporting and promoting SMEs has also been granted a high profile and priority by recent UK governments, and promoted through a number of initiatives and outreach projects. Meanwhile, the increasing centralisation of education that has been taking place since the 1980's has led to the development of significant experience and expertise coordinating larger-scale educational projects within and beyond the UK.


### Diversity of involvement benchmarks

- a. Opportunities for SME involvement are promoted and supported at a governmental level.
- b. Connections, opportunities and networks are nurtured and disseminated across different scales of involvement.
- c. Forums for sharing practice, experience and expertise are initiated/supported.
- d. Where relevant and applicable, educational programming reflects the diversity of different levels of possible organisational involvement.

n/a	In progress	Complete
		
		
		
		

# 7. Local engagement and empowerment



















The Belt and Road Initiative promises to ‘boost the local economy, increase local employment, improve local livelihood’ of participating countries. Education can play a pivotal role in achieving this by empowering local communities and providing a means for inclusive development.

 Through its work with the DfID, globally recognized UK-based NGOs, and well-established international partnerships and working practices in the private sector, the UK has helped to lead the way in promoting high levels of local engagement in international cooperation. Long-established international relationships based on historical interactions, such as the Commonwealth, and a diverse national population have the potential to help to ensure strong levels of intercultural understanding and respect.

## Local engagement and empowerment benchmarks

- a. ‘Local engagement’ and ‘empowerment’ are clearly defined, understood and honoured in the specific context of the project by all stakeholders.
- b. The potential short-, medium- and long-term benefits of the project on the local community are clearly identified and enumerated.
- c. Opportunities to work with local stakeholders are maximised and human capital formation is encouraged through creating and facilitating employment and training opportunities wherever practicable.
- d. Potentially negative impacts of the project on local community are considered and responsibly monitored.
- e. Every effort is made to understand and respect the different contexts, cultures and priorities of the different stakeholders within the project.
- f. Educational programmes and curricula take account of and celebrate local culture and traditions.

n/a      In progress      Complete

## 8. Economic sustainability

The Belt and Road Initiative has facilitated the creation of groundbreaking, and in many cases correspondingly high-cost projects. A recent paper from the Center for Global Development has raised concerns about the debt distress that could impact a number of BRI countries and some participating nations, such as Malaysia, have expressed concern at the high debt that could be incurred from BRI construction. Though borrowing is often a necessary pathway to economic growth, an excess of debt can create serious negative impacts in the long term. The Chinese government has committed to resolving BRI debt issues and it is imperative that both China and its partners continue to strive towards long-term economic sustainability for all countries and participants involved in the BRI.



Successive UK governments have placed a high level of importance on supporting international development and continue to commit significant financial resources and expertise to achieve this. As the second biggest service economy in the world, UK through its banking and financial services continues to play a significant role in shaping and codifying global financial practice.

### Economic sustainability benchmarks

- a. Project planning includes details of short, medium and long-term financial impacts on all stakeholders.
- b. Financial record-keeping is rigorous and transparent.
- c. Stakeholders’ and countries’ debt-carrying capacity is investigated with due diligence, and both taken into realistic account at the start of projects, and regularly reviewed going forward.
- d. The impact of the project/partnership on growth and jobs, as well as external analysis (e.g. by IMF/World Bank) is taken into account in all financial planning and processes.

n/a	In progress	Complete

## 9. Environmental sustainability

Educational organisations are often well-placed to improve and develop environmental awareness and improve environmental outcomes, and to initiate and promote best practice within their context. The significant international scope and scale of the BRI offers a unique opportunity to improve environmental outcomes at local and international levels.



Commitment to improving environmental sustainability continues to gather momentum at all organisational levels in the UK, often tessellating with a long and proud tradition of innovation. Environmental dimensions have been increasingly integrated into existing British educational programmes and curricula, and the UK’s dynamic and growing EdTech field offers new and exciting opportunities to contribute in this area.

**Environmental sustainability benchmarks:**

- a. Negative environmental impacts associated with the project are assessed at the outset and minimised, and options are presented and costed that maximise positive environmental impacts.
- b. Participating project members promote environmental sustainability as part of their working culture.
- c. Wherever relevant and practicable, environmental dimensions are included in the structure of any educational and curriculum development.

n/a                      In progress                      Complete



# BritCham BRI Benchmarks:

## Key Takeaways

- ..... The BritCham Education Forum has outlined nine benchmarks divided into three broad areas: high standards and rigour, transparency and accountability,
- ..... Benchmarks for knowledge exchange, quality and congruence will ensure high standards and rigour in the education delivered by BRI partnerships.
- ..... Benchmarks for transparency and accountability, reciprocity and diversity of involvement will ensure projects are carried out in the spirit of fiscal responsibility and opportunity.
- ..... Benchmarks for local engagement and empowerment, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability will ensure the outcomes of BRI partnerships are both ethical and sustainable.

These benchmarks can be incorporated by businesses to deliver sustainable projects with a far-reaching and positive impact.



## Next Steps

For further information on anything discussed in the report, or to learn more about our advocacy work and how to participate in future roundtables, contact [education@britishchamber.cn](mailto:education@britishchamber.cn)

To learn more about membership and joining the British Chamber, contact [han.wei@britishchamber.cn](mailto:han.wei@britishchamber.cn)

For general inquiries about BritCham China, contact [steven.lynch@britishchamber.cn](mailto:steven.lynch@britishchamber.cn)



问创  
VENTURE

This report was researched and written by Venture Education.  
Venture Education supports UK-China education through research,  
consultancy and partnerships.

[contact@ventureeducation.org](mailto:contact@ventureeducation.org)

#### **The British Chamber of Commerce in China**

Room 1001, China Life Tower  
16 Chaoyangmenwai Avenue  
Beijing 100020  
+86 (0)10 8525 1111

中国英国商会  
北京朝阳门外大街16号  
中国人寿大厦 1001室  
邮编100020  
+86 (0)10 8525 1111

#### **The British Chamber of Commerce Shanghai**

No.9, Sub-lane 56 Lane 590, Weihai Lu  
Shanghai 200041  
+86 (0)21 6218 5022

上海英国商会  
上海市静安区威海路  
590弄56支弄9号  
邮编 200041  
+86 (0)21 6218 5022

#### **British Chamber of Commerce Guangdong**

Room 2201, 22/F Guangzhou International Finance Centre,  
No.5 Zhujiang Xi Road  
Guangzhou 510623  
+86 (0)20 8331 5013

广东英国商会  
广州市天河区珠江西路5号  
广州国际金融中心22层2201B  
邮编 510623  
+86 (0)20 8331 5013

#### **British Chamber of Commerce Southwest China**

British Business Centre, Chengdu  
Room 2308, Huarun Building,  
No. 10 Shuangqing Road, Chengdu  
Sichuan 610058  
+ 86 028 6830 5159

中国西南英国商会  
成都市成华区双庆路10号  
华润大厦2308室  
邮编 四川 610058  
+ 86 028 6830 5159