

Higher education in Luxembourg

Adolfo Sommaribas
Senior Legal Expert, EMN Luxembourg
Member of the University Council, University of Luxembourg

PL EMN National Conference
Krakow, 28-29 November 2019



Co-funded by the European Union's
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund



History (1/2)

- Higher education is relatively new in Luxembourg
- Geographical dimension and the population size of the country did not have the critical mass to create a higher education institution
- Proximity to larger countries (BE, DE & FR) allowed Luxembourgish students to obtain a higher education abroad
- The gross domestic product per capita allowed Luxembourg to send students abroad (even before the EEC)
 - Policy makers considered an asset -> professional of different backgrounds and educational systems improved quality of work force
 - Development of a professional network based on personal contacts
 - Financial aid of the GDL allowed students to choose freely where they wanted to study

History (2/2)

- Until 2003, there were some higher education institutions which offered courses for the 1st & 2nd year of career
- The development and diversification of the Luxembourgish economy required the establishment of a University
- University of Luxembourg was created by abrogated law of 12 August 2003 (now regulated by amended law of 27 June 2018)
 - Education adapted to the national context and satisfying the needs of the Luxembourgish economy
- The higher education framework is completed also by:
 - Secondary educational institutions offering educational programmes which award BTS
 - Private foreign universities having campuses in Luxembourg

Structure of the University of Luxembourg

The University of Luxembourg is a teaching and research institution

- Faculties
 - Faculty of Science, Technology and Communication (FTSC)
 - Faculty of Law, Economics and Finance (FDEF)
 - Faculty of Languages and Literature, Arts and Education (FLSHASE)
- Interdisciplinary centres
 - Interdisciplinary Centre for Security, Reliability and Trust (SnT)
 - Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine (LCSB)
 - Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History

Legal framework

- **European Level**

- Directive 2004/114/EC
- Directive 2016/801/EU (Recast of the Students Directive)

- **National Level**

- Amended law of 27 June 2017 on organization of the University of Luxembourg
- Amended law of 29 August 2008 on free movement of persons and immigration
- Amended grand ducal regulation of 5 September 2008 (resources and housing)

- **Policy on international students**

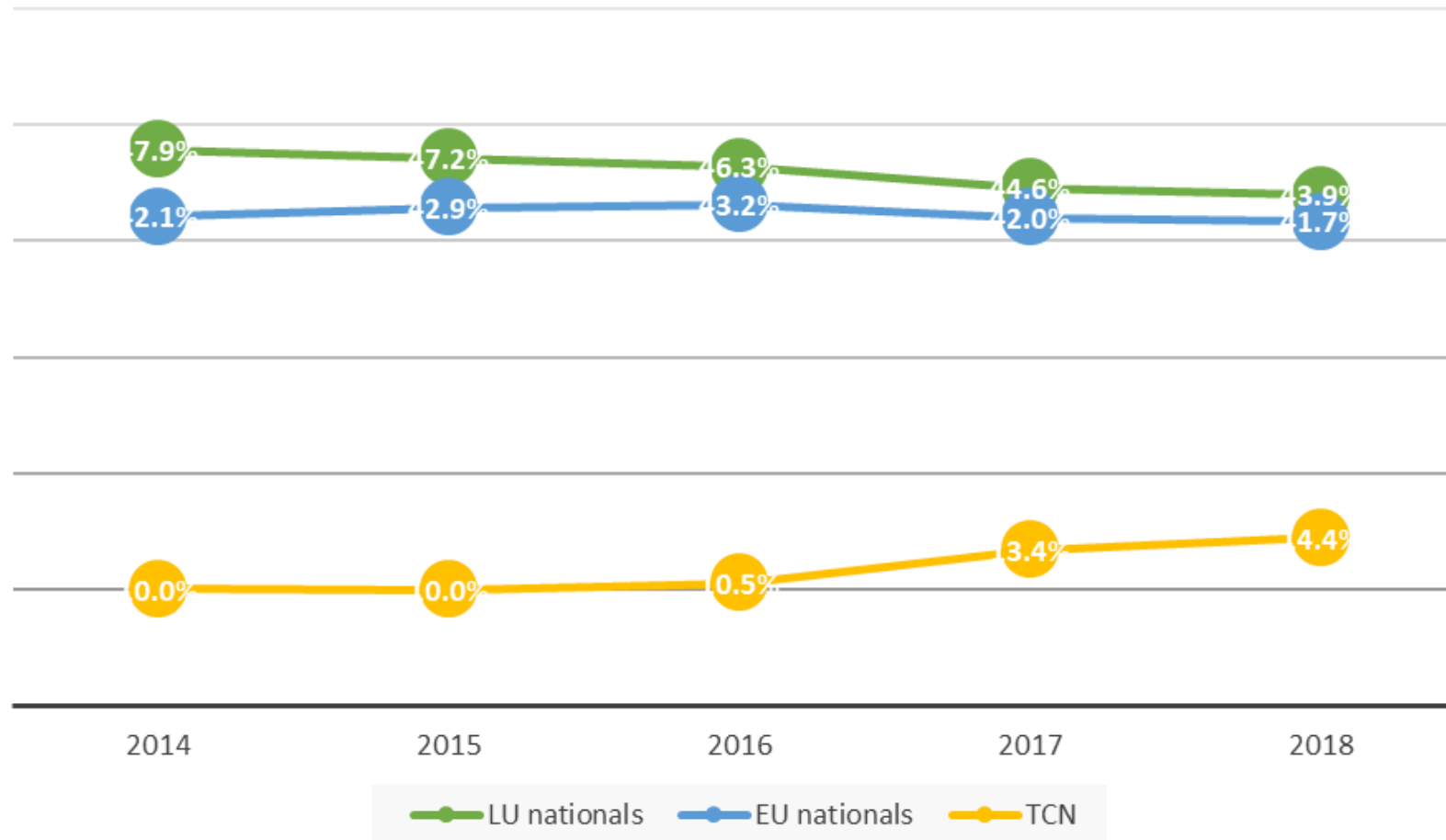
- No national specific strategy for attracting international students
 - Certain priority sectors -> attract international students (i.e. ICT, biomedicine, space)
- UL -> vocation to attract students exemplifying excellence (specific research areas)

Students of the University of Luxembourg by origin (2014-2018)

	2014	%	2015	%	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%
LU nationals	3021	47.9%	2920	47.2%	2861	46.3%	2860	44.6%	2752	43.9%
EU nationals	2657	42.1%	2654	42.9%	2664	43.2%	2697	42.0%	2610	41.7%
TCN	631	10.0%	618	10.0%	648	10.5%	859	13.4%	903	14.4%
Total	6309	100.0%	6192	100.0%	6173	100.0%	6416	100.0%	6265	100.0%

Source: University of Luxembourg © EMN Luxembourg 2019

Students of the University of Luxembourg by origin (2014-2018)

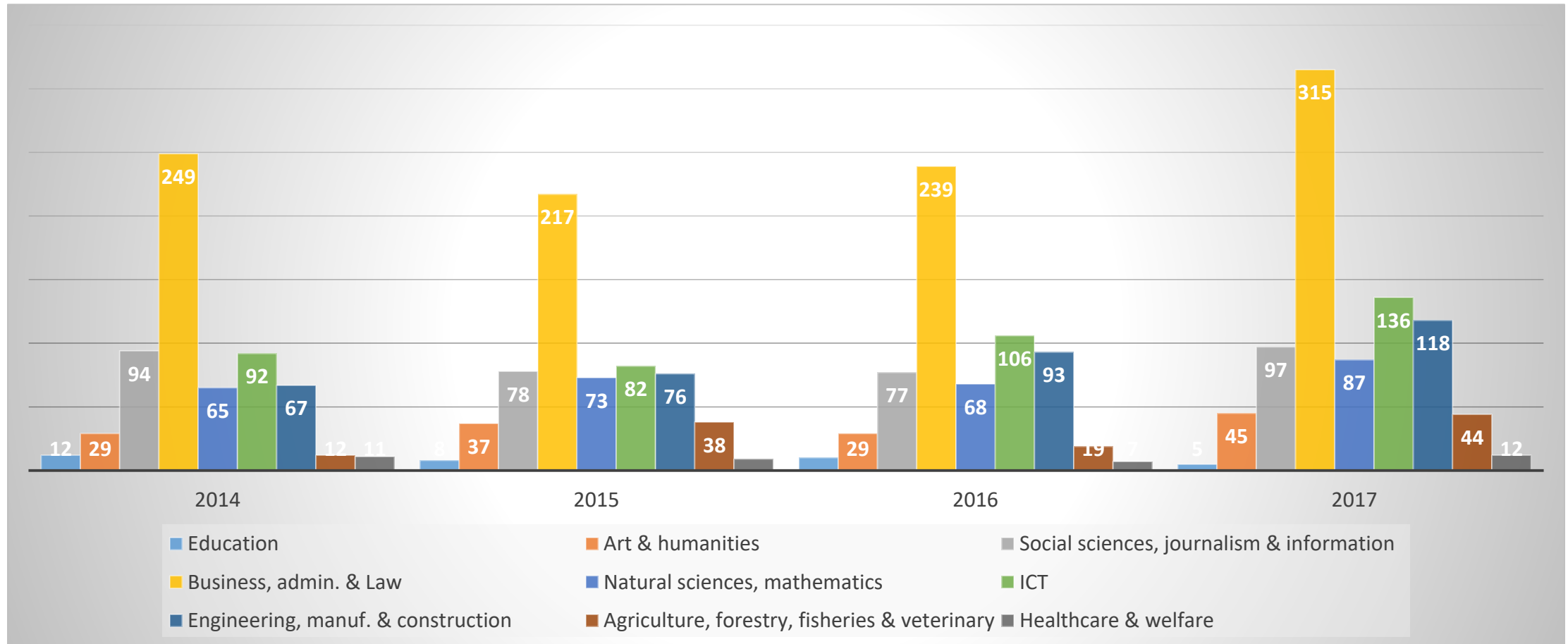


Top-5 Third-country nationalities (2014-2017)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
China	71	70	93	99
Russia	55	48	43	55
Cameroon	48	42	34	37
Iran	34	38	30	46
India	33	27	31	61
Total	241	225	231	298
Total TCN	631	618	648	859
Percentage	38.2%	35.7%	36.6%	47.2%

Source: University of Luxembourg © EMN Luxembourg 2019

Third-country national students by educational sector (2014-2017)



Admission conditions of TCN students

In order to be granted a student authorisation of stay the TCN must fulfil the following conditions:

- proof that s/he has been admitted to an approved HEI to pursue, as a main activity, a full-time study programme enabling him/her to obtain a higher-education qualification -> admission letter of the UL
 - Language proficiency is required to be admitted in the UL
 - Recognition of foreign qualifications (done on a case by cases basis)
- proof of sufficient resources to cover his/her living costs and return-travel costs (at least 1.161,60€ in 2019)
 - Prove by presenting a scholarship, student loan certificate, a bank statement, or a guarantee by a third person of Luxembourgish nationality
- proof of health insurance coverage
- Registration fees (200€ per semester for Master & PhD programmes)

Residence permit

Once the temporary authorisation of stay has been granted :

- TCN should apply for a D-Visa in the 90 days after being notified (if necessary)
- Enter into the territory (90 days after being notified)
- Declaration of arrival 3 days after entering the territory at the municipality where s/he plans to leave
- Request residence permit at the Directorate of Immigration
 - Copy authorisation of stay
 - Declaration of arrival
 - Medical certificate
 - Proof of payment of issuance fee of 80€
 - It is issued for at least 1-year and can be renewal for a similar period if conditions still being fulfilled
 - A certain number of ECTS credits must be obtained in order to be able to re-register in the following academic year.

Access to the labour market during their study in Luxembourg

- Access to the labour market was facilitated by the Law of 1st August 2018
 - Students can work maximum 15 hours per week (this does not apply to the PhD with contracts with the UL or research centres)
 - limitation does not apply for salaried activities exercised during school vacations
- Access to the labour market after finalization of the studies
 - Can change status without having to leave the country
 - authorised to stay in Luxembourg for a maximum period of nine months (non-renewable) in view of seeking employment or establishing a business

Access to the labour market after their study in Luxembourg

- Access to the labour market after finalization of the studies
 - Can change status without having to leave the country
 - authorised to stay in Luxembourg for a maximum period of nine months (non-renewable) in view of seeking employment or establishing a business
- Procedure
 - Application must be introduced 30 days before the expiration of the residence permit
 - Conditions to be fulfilled
 - Master or PhD diploma finished (flexibility proving it)
 - Sufficient resources
 - Healthcare coverage
- Residence permit issued for 9 months (no-renewable)
- Possibility to register at the Luxembourg Employment Agency to find a job (if applicable receive unemployment benefits)
- Decision taken in 90 days by the Directorate of Immigration

Challenges to attract international students

- The languages of Bachelor level programmes (FR & DE)
- Languages used in the labour market (predominant use of FR & LU)
- Cost of living/availability of housing
- Misuse of the student residence permit (i.e. Bangladesh students)
- Difficulties related to the authenticity of foreign diplomas (i.e. forgery)
- Challenging procedure regarding the entrance exam for students coming from countries which are not signatories of Paris/Lisbon conventions
- Limited international exposure of the UL
- Lack of awareness of employers and students regarding the new possibilities
- Implementation and the maintenance of an alumni database in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Conclusions

- Attracting international students is not considered as a national political priority “per se”
- It falls into a broader strategy to attract talent in order to meet the needs of the economy in areas such as ICT, biomedicine and space
- Government plans to develop a national strategy for attracting, developing and retaining talent for Luxembourg in order to satisfy the economic interests of Luxembourg
- Transposition of the Recast Directive facilitates intra-EU mobility as well as the access to the labour market during and after graduation
- Given the recent transposition into national law, it is still too early to assess the effects of the transposition of this Directive.

Thank you for your attention!

Contact:

Adolfo.sommarribas@uni.lu