



Event Report

ICEF Dubai

UAE • 12–14 Feb, 2025



Diversifying student recruitment from the Middle East and North Africa

5,398

meetings

590

individuals

412

organisations

42

countries

Our annual ICEF Dubai event returned in 2025 to connect global educators with quality, ICEF-screened international student recruitment agents from across the Middle East and North Africa. With its youthful population, the MENA region is a key destination for recruitment professionals looking to expand and diversify their enrolments. This year **590 individuals**, representing **412 organisations**, attended from **42 countries**.

Over the course of three days, **5,398 pre-scheduled, 1:1 meetings** were held at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers.

Fernanda Martins (Berlitz ELA, Malta)

The event was really well-organised and provided a fantastic chance to connect and collaborate with others. We met many dedicated agents and made some great new partnerships that I'm sure will help us in the future.

The vibe was lively and the food was delicious, which definitely added to the great experience. I'm thankful for the chance to be part of such a wonderful event and can't wait for the next one!



Education Providers

A total of **262 educators, representing 171 institutions**, joined the event in Dubai.

They came from 25 countries, with the top 5 being: the UK (27%), the US (16%), Canada (12%), Türkiye (10%), and Spain (4%).

Thalia Saplad (Edmonds College, USA)

ICEF Dubai was a well-organised event where I had the opportunity to connect with several strong potential partners. My primary goal for attending was to establish new partnerships, and I believe I successfully achieved this.

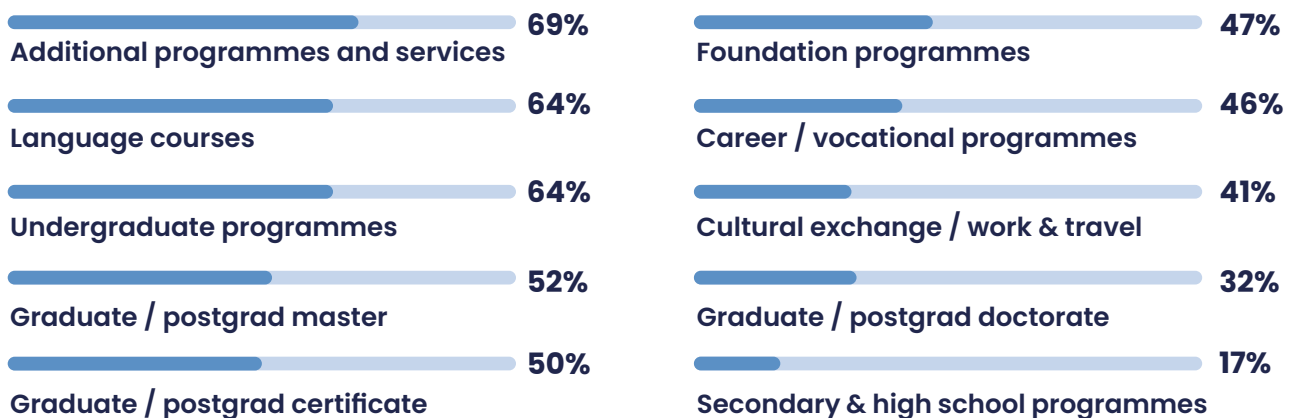
Dr Ajit Rampure (Aureus University School of Medicine, Aruba)

This is the one of the best events, if not the best event, in the industry across the globe.

Magdy Rafla (Global English Centre Sdn Bhd, Malaysia)

Every year I attend, I enjoy it more and more. Very well organised.

Educator segment representation



Student Recruitment Agents

ICEF Dubai was enthusiastically supported by our community of pre-screened agents, with a total of **229 representatives** attending from **203 organisations**.

The majority of the agents were from the UAE (28%) and Saudi Arabia (25%), followed by Egypt (10%), Iran (10%), and Kuwait (6%).



Aparna Thite (Futures Abroad, UAE)

ICEF Dubai is an exceptional event that brings together industry leaders, educators, and service providers in the international education space. The opportunity to network, share insights, and stay ahead of emerging trends makes it a must-attend event. The organisation and attention to detail ensure every aspect of the conference runs smoothly, and the discussions are always engaging and insightful. We're looking forward to participating again!

Illar Imrani (Azeri Student, Azerbaijan)

We had an amazing experience at ICEF Dubai! More than business – it was about connections, friendships, and fun! We're grateful for the insights, networking, and memories. Thank you, ICEF! Until next time!

Agent segment interest

Undergraduate programmes **95%**

Language Courses **93%**

Graduate / postgrad master **92%**

Graduate / postgrad certificate **87%**

Additional programmes and services **87%**

Career / vocational programmes **80%**

Graduate / postgrad doctorate **74%**

Cultural exchange / work & travel **66%**

Secondary & high school programmes **57%**

Foundation programmes **34%**

Service Providers

ICEF Dubai proved popular with service providers supporting international student mobility. **53 representatives** joined from **29 organisations**.

They came from 14 countries, with the top 5 being: the UK (28%), Canada (17%), the UAE (10%), the US (7%), and Austria (4%).



Sarah Scerri (EAQUALS, UK)

The event's size creates the perfect environment for making valuable new connections and connecting with existing partners. It is a good event for anyone looking to grow their network!

Seminars & informal networking

Alongside the world-class networking opportunities, attendees of ICEF Dubai were able to enjoy a comprehensive programme of seminars, panel discussions, and roundtable debates, all led by experts, academics, and senior leaders from across the sector. These sessions provided insights into the diversity of the MENA region, supporting recruitment professionals in developing an appropriate strategy. This year's topics included: a presentation introducing Türkiye as a key destination for international students; a panel discussion on evolving student preferences beyond "the big four"; a panel discussion focused on the future of student mobility in the Middle East; and a market snapshot for the region. Additionally, the roundtable debates provided an opportunity for delegates to share their knowledge and experience with their peers.

Alongside the seminars, the evening receptions are an important component of any ICEF event, providing delegates with the necessary space and time to both cement their new partnerships and renew existing friendships in a more informal setting. This year's event was no exception, with attendees enjoying a welcome reception sponsored by [St. George's University](#) on the first evening. The second day then concluded with a more formal dinner, which provided ICEF Dubai with a suitably memorable conclusion.

Great Delegate Feedback

Over the course of its 30-year history, ICEF has become renowned for the outstanding organisation of its events. We are always working to ensure that delegates are provided with the best environment, facilities, and support in order to facilitate efficient and productive meetings.

In the after-event survey for ICEF Dubai, the organisation of the event, as well as the support and level of communication provided by the ICEF team, were rated as **good or excellent by 94%** of the respondents. This feedback demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring each ICEF event is the best it can be.

92% rated the number and **90%** the quality of new contacts they made as good or excellent.

For **40%** of the respondents, this was their first ICEF event, and we look forward to welcoming them back in the future.

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