

# PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 16, APRIL 19-25

## International students

**M**ore than 4.6 million students had crossed country borders to study in 2017, up from 2.1 million in 2001. Most had come to one of six nations: the USA, UK, China, Australia, France or Canada. The USA is host to over a million students; the UK and China, half a million each.

International students present an extraordinary opportunity for local Christians to offer hospitality and welcome. Many students will never otherwise be invited into a local home. Some will never have lived in a place they can hear and freely consider the gospel. Some arrive with a great spiritual hunger. And many will rise to positions of influence in their home countries.

China is unique. It sends more students into the world than any other nation—more than 300,000. It is also growing fast as an international student destination. This rise is boosted by visa restrictions in the West, by growing academic excellence in China, and by scholarships being offered, especially to African students. China is the most popular destination for English-speaking African students. International students in China enjoy an unusual measure of freedom, for example to attend international churches.



- 🙏 Pray for Christians worldwide to welcome international students and take them into their homes, churches and hearts.
- 🙏 Pray that there will be campus Christian groups in every university in the world. China alone has more than 2,600 campuses.
- 🙏 Pray that many more international students will find faith, grow in Christ, and become leading influencers for the Kingdom of God in their home countries.

THE NATIONS

## 🇨🇳 CHINA: GROUPS FOR SPECIAL PRAYER



**Children.** Under-15s in China number around 250 million. They enter a high-pressure race for the best education, a good job, an apartment, and a spouse. Most have no brothers or sisters, and so they are the only repository of hopes for two parents and four grandparents. They may also be spiritually directionless. Increasingly they have the same temptations and illnesses - such as mental health issues - as other rich-country urban youth.

**Muslims.** Islam is an official religion in China, but it is extremely politically sensitive. Many of China's Muslims originated as Central Asian peoples who settled in China. The Uyghurs of north-west China are severely repressed and are under intense surveillance. Many have been sent to 're-education camps'. China's Muslims have little exposure to the Good News, and few Christians live among them.

**Minority ethnic groups.** Around 90% of Chinese are of Han Chinese ethnicity. The rest are divided among nearly 500 different minority ethnic groups. Most people in these groups have not encountered the gospel; some groups have no known Christian believers. Over 200 minority Chinese languages have no scripture translation.

- 🙏 Pray for the discipleship of China's children and young people in loving, multi-generational church families.
- 🙏 In the midst of political repression, ask God to bring freedom in Christ to China's Uyghurs!
- 🙏 Pray that God will raise up people to take the gospel to China's minorities.

*Praying for the World* is a free weekly prayer guide to inspire and inform the whole church to pray for the whole world. Visit [www.lausanne.org/pray](http://www.lausanne.org/pray) to start any week. Created through the partnership of Operation World and the Lausanne Movement.

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