Students at LMU Munich, ranked the top university in Germany. Photo: DPA.

German unis offer 'best deal' for foreign students in Europe

Emma Anderson · 10 Mar 2016, 12:08

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A new report shows that German universities are second only to the UK in terms of quality - and that they also beat out their British rivals in cost, lack of red tape and easier visa regulations.

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Germany took 36 places out of the top 200 universities in Europe ranked by Times Higher Education (THE) on Thursday.

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"Germany is one of the stand-out performers in the European top 200 ranking," said Times Higher Education rankings editor Phil Baty in a statement.

But THE said Deutschland also has something the UK can't offer, even for international students: free tuition and less red tape.

"The rankings show that many institutions in Europe are equal in quality and reputation to some of the UK's biggest names, but are on offer to global talent at a fraction of the cost and without the endless red tape," Baty explained.

"With lower tuition fees, more relaxed visa options, and more and more degrees taught in the English language, universities in Germany and the Netherlands in particular offer outstanding options for international students."

Germany and Norway stand out among the countries ranked by being the only ones that offer free tuition to both EU and non-EU students.

Students in Germany may still have to pay certain fees that go towards things like a public transportation pass and a student union, but these amount to just a few hundred euros.

In comparison, annual fees in the UK add up to €11,612 for EU students, and for non-EU students as high as €15,611 or €18,320 for lab-based degrees.

"While once students from India or China would have considered the UK their only study option, there is now an exciting and healthy competition opening up, and it could change the fortunes of entire [UK] institutions in the longer term," Baty said.

"While the market leader, the UK, shoots itself in the foot and faces losing market share over restrictive study and work visa policies, anti-immigration rhetoric and prohibitively high tuition fees, other European countries are poised to capitalize and take more and more of the UK's share of students."
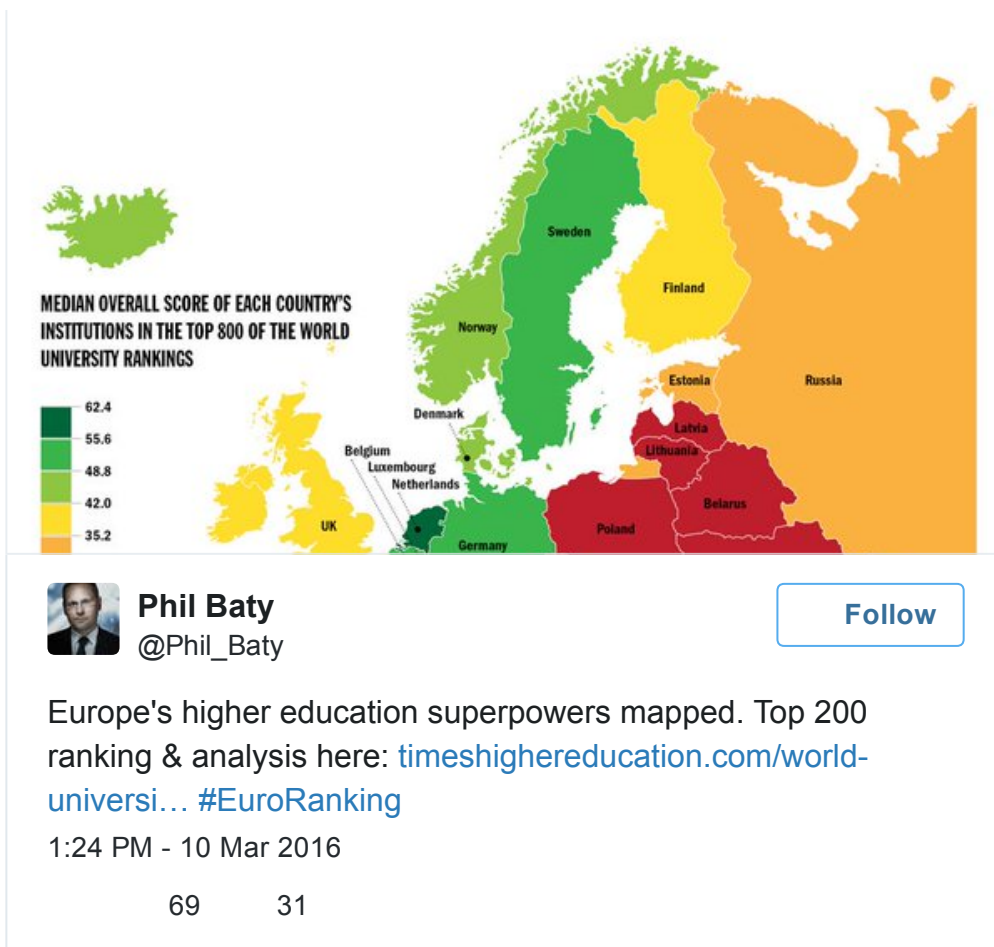
Germany's best universities in south and in Berlin

The Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich performed the best out of German universities, ranked tenth place behind Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

President of LMU Munich Bernd Huber explained that part of the university's success is based on the country's efforts to fund more science and innovation in university research.

"Prospects for researchers are excellent, conditions for students in Germany are very attractive; and let me remind British readers in particular that all this comes without tuition fees," Huber said in a statement.

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MEDIAN OVERALL SCORE OF EACH COUNTRY'S
INSTITUTIONS IN THE TOP 800 OF THE WORLD
UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

62.4
55.6
48.8
42.0
35.2

Phil Baty
@Phil_Baty

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THE scored universities on their teaching environment, research environment, number of citations in
research, industry income and international outlook. The data was also drawn from the THE world rankings
released last autumn.

German universities scored especially well in teaching environment, which is based on reputation as well as
income and number of students and doctorates per staff member. German institutions also did well in
research citations and for their connections to industry.

The second best university in Germany was Heidelberg University in the southwestern state of Baden-
Württemberg. Heidelberg was followed by three universities in Berlin to make up the top five: Humboldt, the
Technical University of Berlin and the Free University of Berlin.

Universities in eastern and southern Europe generally scored the worst, with Russia taking just five spots in
the top 200 and one in the top 100, making it the lowest scoring country in proportion to its population and
GDP.

Top universities in Germany

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European rank	Institution
10	LMU Munich
13	Heidelberg University
15	Humboldt University of Berlin
16	Technical University of Berlin
26	Free University of Berlin
30	University of Tubingen
34	University of Freiburg
39	University of Bonn
42	University of Gottingen
=46	University of Mannheim
=48	RWTH Aachen University
55	University of Erlangen-Nuremberg
=56	University of Munster
65	Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
75	University of Cologne
77	Dresden University of Technology
87	University of Konstanz
=94	University of Wurzburg
100	Charite – Universitatsmedizin Berlin

Source: Times Higher Education.