

## PRESS STATEMENT



### NEW REPORT REVEALS LATEST TRENDS ON INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUSES

**Kuala Lumpur, 10 November 2016:** The report *International Branch Campuses, Trends and Developments, 2016*, to be released 9<sup>th</sup> November, reveals there are presently 249 IBCs around the world enrolling at least 180,000 students. The number of countries hosting IBCs has increased to 76, up 10% since 2011, with the top five host countries as China (32), the United Arab Emirates (31), Singapore (12), Malaysia (12), and Qatar (11), which together host 98 IBCs, or 39% of the world's total.

The report, authored by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE) in conjunction with the Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT)—the world's two leading authorities on the subject—reveals that China has overtaken UAE as the top host country driven by government incentives and strong student demand. Meanwhile, the UAE has experienced a modest decline in the number of IBCs. This shift is part of a wider trend of growth concentrated in Asia, particularly China, Malaysia, and South Korea from 2011-2015. “While there are increasing questions about the sustainability of globalization efforts, these trends suggest that many countries still see cross-border education as a way to build capacity within their country,” said Jason Lane, a co-director of C-BERT and chair of the Educational Policy and Leadership department at State University of New York at Albany.

The number of home, or “source”, countries has also increased in the past five years: IBCs now come from 33 different home countries, an 18% increase since 2011. The top five home countries, in terms of the number of IBCs, are the United States (78), the United Kingdom (39), France (28), Russia (21), and Australia (15), which together account for 181 branch campuses, or 73% of total IBCs.

While the growth in IBCs is undeniable—66 were founded from 2011-2015, amounting to a 26% increase in that time period—the distribution has been uneven: only four new IBCs were developed in Africa outside of the MENA region and just one in South America from 2011-2015. In addition, future growth continues to be largely driven by providers based in the United States and Europe. Of the IBCs currently under development worldwide, around half are planned by institutions based in the US and UK.

Rachael Merola, Senior Researcher at the OBHE, highlights the importance of the report’s findings, stating “International branch campuses may be the most ambitious kind of cross-border higher education, redefining institutional identities and national systems. Our ongoing work marks the most comprehensive research to date on the IBC phenomenon, combining the resources of the OBHE and C-BERT to come to a new understanding of the past, present, and future of IBCs.”

Kevin Kinser, the other C-BERT Co-director and Professor of Education Policy at Pennsylvania State University, emphasizes the trends in the report, noting “Quality assurance is adapting as the IBC phenomenon expands into more countries. We are seeing the emergence of new systems for managing and regulating truly multinational universities.”

*International Branch Campuses, Trends and Developments, 2016*, follows on four previous editions of the report, published in in 2002, 2006, 2009, and 2012 by the OBHE and many C-BERT publications. The report release date is timed to coincide

with the OBHE's **Global Forum**, titled *Brain Gain: charting the impact and future of TNE*, which will take place in Kuala Lumpur, 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> November 2016. A second part to the report, to be released in 2017, will focus on interviews with institutional leaders at a sample of IBCs in operation for at least a decade. This report will investigate motivations and operations of mature IBCs, judge impact from different perspectives and explore what combination of conditions breeds success.

The report is free for OBHE member institutions and organizations and available for purchase by non-members. Headline findings can be found here and the full report can be purchased at [obhe.org](http://obhe.org) or email [info@obhe.ac.uk](mailto:info@obhe.ac.uk).

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**OBHE and C-BERT** The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE) is a higher education think tank with institutional members across 30 countries. The OBHE provides strategic intelligence for education leaders and policymakers attempting to navigate the opportunities and threats of borderless higher education. Originally a collaborative initiative between the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and Universities UK, The Observatory joined the International Graduate Insight Group (i-graduate) in August 2010 and now form part of the Tribal Group.

The Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT) was founded in 2010 at the State University of New York at Albany and is co-directed by Kevin Kinser (Professor and Department Head of Education Policy Studies at *Pennsylvania* State University) and Jason Lane (Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Policy & Leadership at the State University of New York at Albany).

C-BERT researches cross-border higher education from organisational, sociological, economic, and political perspectives. The group maintains a website (CBERT.org) detailing cross-border ventures of college and universities, and serves as a clearinghouse of relevant news, current events, information, and research.