

## First-timer growth ensures ICEF Dubai remains the region’s leading event

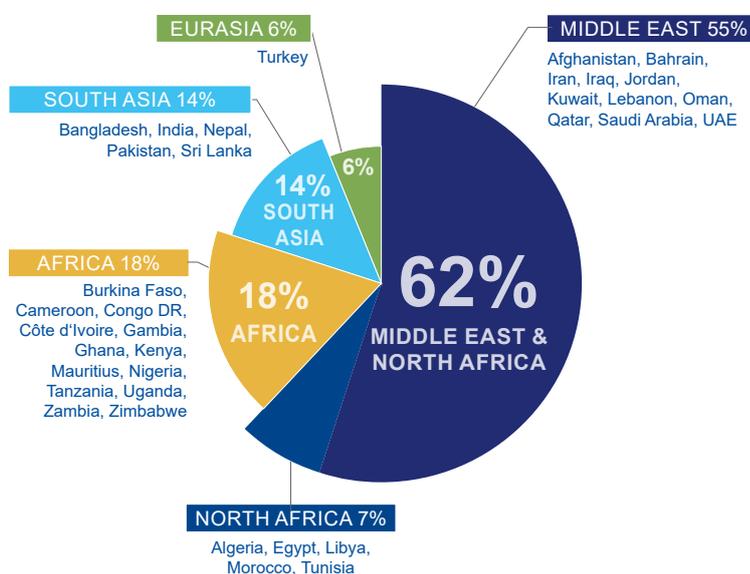
ICEF Dubai, held from February 10 – 12, 2020 at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers was the largest to date with 479 participants. The event saw healthy growth in both the number of agencies (7%) and education providers (9%) in attendance. ICEF Dubai is one of ICEF’s longest running events and brings together international education and service providers with agents from the Middle East, Africa, South Asia and Turkey.

Much of the event’s popularity is due to the number of first-time participants it attracts each year. This ensures that participants who attend regularly are always presented with new partnership opportunities. This year 43% of education providers, 43% of agents and 64% of service providers attended their very first ICEF Dubai. Ritesh Rajendran of Middle East College in Oman said: “Being a first-time participant, it was a fabulous experience getting to know recruiters from many of our Tier 1 countries. The event was very well organised”.

ICEF Dubai offers a broad selection of agents from a variety of markets across the region. Agents at the event came from 35 countries, including representatives from high-potential markets such as Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria (read more about some of these markets in this article: [Africa Ascending](#)). The agents at the event represented the following regions: Middle East 55%, Africa 18%, South Asia 14%, North Africa 7%, and Turkey 6%.

“I have attended this event many times and, in my opinion, it is one of ICEF’s best. I am unable to corner all the countries attending, but it does give me the chance to get new business and consolidate existing contacts”, said David Arrowsmith of inlingua Cheltenham (UK).

### Agent Student Recruitment Markets



### Top 10 Agent Countries

Top 10 agent countries	Agencies
1 Saudi Arabia	45
2 UAE	19
3 Nigeria	17
4 India	12
5 Turkey	11
6 Iran	9
7 Kuwait	8
8 Egypt	7
9 Pakistan	6
10 Jordan	5

ICEF Dubai welcomed 194 education providers from 136 institutions in 25 countries. UK, Canada and USA were the top 3 represented study destinations, with Turkey and the United Arab Emirates following. Agents appreciated the opportunity to access a range of education providers during two days at one single venue. "ICEF was such a great opportunity to establish new partnerships from all over the world. It also helps both agents and education providers to build a real picture of what is trending in the market", commented Mohamed Bahriz of Algerian agency IRAcademy - International Research Academy.



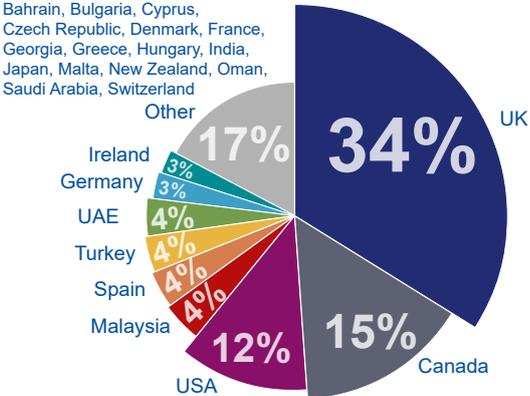
Evening Reception at ICEF Dubai

This year, 12 service providers from 7 countries represented a variety of education related sectors. Participants were able to meet with and discuss additional products and services developed to improve student experiences and the industry as a whole.

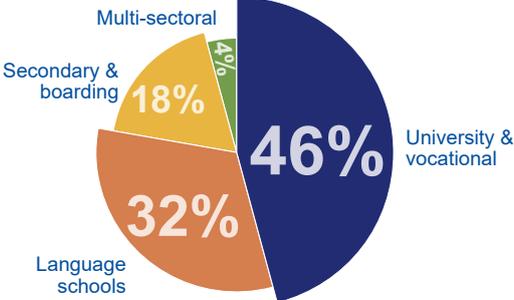
Bonnie McKie representing the Canadian association CAPS-I said: "The quality of agents, the level of interest in Canada and in high school programmes exceeded my expectations. I can't speak highly enough of the event! I am looking forward to telling my board and members about it! In fact, I received six specific leads for members during my trip over the last 2 days – the most of any ICEF Event I can recall".

In total, 4 278 meetings took place in Dubai. However, the event offered ample opportunity for even more networking away from the meeting hall. On the first day of ICEF Dubai, participants were invited to attend seminars. Topics included insights into the MENA region, how technology can be used as a recruitment tool in Africa, pathway programmes, as well as a look at the role of sports tourism and the increase in popularity of sports management and similar degrees within the Middle Eastern market. The format of these seminars allows participants to ask questions, share information and connect with peers before and after the presentations.

**Education Provider Demographics**



**Education Provider Profile**





A meeting at ICEF Dubai

Following the seminars, participants were able to continue discussions and connect with representatives at the welcome reception, sponsored by GoBritanya – Student Accommodation Agency.

The evening reception at ICEF Dubai on the second day saw a wonderful blend of networking, good food and traditional entertainment, including an Arabian sword dance. “It was my first ICEF event and it was wonderful to have had the opportunity to be in a very professional environment. It was great to meet prospective business partners, not just to discuss business but also to get to know them socially at the receptions”, commented Tessy Omozele Osajele from Learning Questa Educational Services in Nigeria.

The next ICEF Dubai event will take place from February 8 - 10, 2021. For more information please visit: [www.icef.com/dubai](http://www.icef.com/dubai).



Participants socialising at the reception