

International education Magazine

# Study

## *In Northern Cyprus*

### **A Rising Hub for International Education**

Discover why Northern Cyprus is emerging as a global hub for higher education, offering affordable, high-quality programs, vibrant multicultural campuses, and unparalleled student support in a stunning Mediterranean setting.



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# Why Study in Northern Cyprus?



Northern Cyprus has become a beacon of higher education, attracting students worldwide to its picturesque Mediterranean shores. Once home to a single university in the 1980s, the region now boasts 23 active institutions. These universities collectively host over 100,000 international students annually, marking a transformative leap in the region's academic landscape.

The growth is no accident. Northern Cyprus's commitment to becoming a global education hub is evident in its strategic planning. English is the primary language of instruction, making it accessible to a global audience. Its affordability, lower cost of living, and reputation as one of the safest destinations in the world further amplify its appeal.

**“Our vision was to make Northern Cyprus an education hub with English as the medium of instruction, offering quality education at a lower cost,” explains Asim Vehbi, a leader in the region's higher education sector and the president of the Cyprus Universities Association .**

The geographical location of Northern Cyprus is also pivotal. Situated at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the region provides easy access to a diverse range of cultures, opportunities, and experiences. Students benefit from both the region's academic excellence and its vibrant international community.

# A Commitment to Global Excellence

Northern Cyprus universities are closely affiliated with the Turkish Higher Education Council (YÖK), a governing body that ensures degrees meet international accreditation standards. This affiliation guarantees that graduates' qualifications are recognized worldwide, offering them the flexibility to pursue opportunities across borders.

**“This recognition makes Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD) degrees valued worldwide,” Vehbi explains. “Our adherence to these standards not only strengthens our academic credibility but also positions our graduates for success in an increasingly interconnected global job market.”**

Universities in Northern Cyprus regularly undergo rigorous inspections and evaluations by YÖK. This ensures that students receive a high-quality education comparable to institutions in countries like the UK, Canada, and the US. Moreover, the emphasis on research and innovation is a growing priority, with older universities evolving into research hubs.



## Diverse and Inclusive Student Communities

The international student body in Northern Cyprus is as diverse as it is vibrant. Students from countries such as Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia, and Iran make up a significant portion of the population, reflecting the region's broad appeal. At institutions like the the Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD), international students account for nearly three-quarters of the student body.

**“Our campuses are melting pots of cultures, where students exchange ideas and build lifelong connections,” Vehbi highlights. “This diversity enriches the learning experience for everyone involved.”**

Central Asia remains the largest source of students, with many coming from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The Middle East, particularly Iran and Jordan follows closely. African and South East Asian students are also increasingly drawn to the region, appreciating its affordability and supportive environment. This multiculturalism fosters not only academic growth but also cultural exchange, preparing students to thrive in a globalized world.



## Affordable Tuition and Scholarships

Northern Cyprus is renowned for its affordability, with tuition fees ranging from €6,000 to €15,000 per year. Even the most expensive programs, such as medicine, cost significantly less than equivalent programs in Western countries. Students also benefit from a lower cost of living, making the region a financially accessible destination.

Scholarships are a cornerstone of Northern Cyprus's educational strategy. Many universities, including ARUCAD, offer scholarships based on academic performance, aptitude, and even artistic portfolios. Vehbi elaborates:

**“Around 50% of students receive scholarships, making quality education accessible to talented individuals.”**

These scholarships reduce the financial burden on students, allowing them to focus on their studies. For those without scholarships, the total annual cost—including living expenses—still remains within €15,000, offering exceptional value compared to tuition fees in the US, which can exceed \$70,000 annually.

## A Closer Look at Northern Cyprus Universities

The Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design (ARUCAD) exemplifies Northern Cyprus's innovative approach to education. As a boutique institution, ARUCAD specializes in art, design, and communication, offering a unique and personalized learning experience.

**“We integrate traditional techniques with modern technologies, preparing students for diverse careers,” says Vehbi.**

Programs such as industrial design, animation, and visual communication equip students with both the creative and technical skills needed to excel in their fields.

ARUCAD is organized into four faculties, including Art, Design, Communication, and Music and Performing Arts. Each faculty offers a range of bachelor's programs taught in English, from Textile and Fashion Design to Digital Game Design and Contemporary Dance. This diversity ensures that students can pursue their passions while gaining practical, industry-relevant skills.

# A Vision for the Future



Northern Cyprus is poised to continue its growth as an education hub, but with a clear focus on quality over quantity. Vehbi outlines the region's vision for the next decade:

**“Our priority is quality over quantity. We aim to attract top-tier students while evolving older universities into research institutions.”**

Out of the 23 universities in the region, five are long-established institutions that are now transitioning into research-focused universities. These institutions are setting the standard for academic excellence, emphasizing innovation and advanced scholarship. Meanwhile, newer universities are carving out niche specializations, such as ARUCAD's focus on creative arts and design.

The selective growth strategy aims to maintain the region's reputation for high-quality education, ensuring that students graduate with the skills and credentials needed to succeed in a competitive global market.

# Transforming the Study Experience

What sets Northern Cyprus apart is its unwavering commitment to personalized student support. Universities go above and beyond to ensure a smooth transition for international students. Services include visa assistance, airport pickups, housing arrangements, and comprehensive orientation programs.

**Vehbi explains, “Our students receive individualized support, ensuring a seamless transition to university life. From the moment they arrive, we make sure they feel at home.”**

The admissions process itself is highly selective, often involving multiple interviews and portfolio reviews. This ensures that students are not only academically prepared but also aligned with the university’s values and standards. Upon arrival, students are welcomed with tailored orientation programs that help them adapt to their new environment and thrive academically.

## The Transformative Power of Education in Northern Cyprus

Studying in Northern Cyprus is more than an academic pursuit—it’s a life-changing experience. The region’s blend of affordability, diversity, and academic rigor creates an environment where students can grow both personally and professionally.

**“Northern Cyprus is a place where students can grow, connect, and achieve their aspirations. It’s more than just an education—it’s a transformative journey,” Vehbi concludes.**

With its strategic location, world-class education, and unparalleled student support, Northern Cyprus is poised to remain a leading destination for international students. For those seeking a unique, enriching educational experience, this Mediterranean gem offers the perfect blend of opportunity and growth.



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