STUDENT RISK REPORT

Data from Education Abroad Programs,
January 1 - December 31, 2023

THE FORUM
ON EDUCATION ABROAD

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The Forum on Education Abroad is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, institutional membership association recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the **Standards Development Organization (SDO)** for the field of education abroad. The Forum provides training and resources to professional international educators and the institutions they serve and its *Standards of Good Practice* are recognized as the definitive means by which the quality of education abroad programs may be judged.

For more information on this and other research related to critical incidents and student risk in education abroad, visit our website.

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Executive Summary

ABOUT

Following a pilot successful study in early 2023, this inaugural Student Risk Report shares insights from education abroad student participation rates and incident reporting as collected, prepared, and shared by nine (9) education abroad provider organizations during the 2023 calendar year. Together, these organizations served 56,125 education abroad students during the reporting period of January through December 2023. All participating education abroad organizations self-report substantial conformity with the clauses of the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* that relate to health, safety, security, and well-being.

PURPOSE

This highly collaborative approach to data collection and analysis of significant incidents impacting education abroad students represents an important advancement in the education abroad community's commitment to evidence-based practice, transparency, and continuous improvement. The more we know, the better the actions all stakeholders can take to mitigate risks to the extent possible, so that students can learn, grow and thrive through education abroad.

The report outlines a strategy for collecting and reporting data about student risk based on the following questions and provides a set of common definitions and protocols in the spirit of transparency and to invite more education abroad organizations to join the initiative and grow the future dataset by empowering them to align their own incident tracking protocols with these shared definitions.

NEW FEATURES

This report includes the following new features which did not appear in the 2023 pilot:
- Two (2) additional education abroad provider organizations have joined the initiative.
- Education abroad programming in 86 countries is represented – a total of nine (9) more countries than appeared in the pilot report.
- Twelve (12) additional countries are included in the by-country incident rate reporting.
- Fifteen (15) countries welcomed more than 1,000 education abroad students from our dataset in 2023. This report shares incident type by country for these leading destinations: Spain, Italy, United Kingdom, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Czech Republic, Ireland, Australia, Netherlands, South Korea, Costa Rica, and South Africa.

Key Takeaways 🔑

OVERALL RATE OF INCIDENTS

1,140 incidents were reported, resulting in an incident rate of 0.2%. In other words, of education abroad students participating in programs represented in this dataset, about 1 in 49 reported an incident in the identified categories to their program. Incident rates by country are also provided in the "Zooming In" section of the report.

MOST COMMON INCIDENT TYPES

The most commonly reported incidents during the 2023 calendar year were:
- **Property Loss**–including theft, loss, robbery or burglary–was reported 523 times, a probability that about 1 in 107 students experienced property loss of some kind.
- **Physical Health, Illness** was reported 213 times, meaning that about 1 in 265 students experienced an illness that resulted in death, program departure or hospitalization during their education abroad program.
- **Mental Health Crisis** –a mental health event serious enough that it involved emergency department support, suicide risk and/or report of mental health distress that results in death, program departure or hospitalization–was reported 109 times, affecting approximately 1 out of every 515 students.

RESULT OF INCIDENTS

- **87.5%** of incidents reported resulted in students **returning to program**, suggesting that incidents are responded to in such a way that generally allows a student to cope or recover and still pursue their educational programming after the incident.
- **9.5%** of all reported incidents resulted in **program withdrawal or dismissal**.
  - Mental health distress incidents were the most likely incident type to result in program withdrawal (64% of all mental health distress incidents reported).
- **5.5%** of all reported incidents resulted in **hospitalization**.
- One (1) incident during the reporting period resulted in a student death.

A Brief History of Incident Tracking as a Best Practice[1]

The Forum on Education Abroad was founded in 2001 by professionals in education abroad looking to build a community of practice where they could share solutions to the complex problems they faced in their international programming and work together to identify and improve upon good practice in the field. In The Forum's first year of operation, a survey of the membership indicated a strong consensus around the need for "clear and comprehensive standards" and thus the project was born[2]. In 2004, the first edition of the *Standards* was published, representing the collective work of a committee with representatives from a diversity of institutions from around the world with the goal of identifying standards that would help to make education abroad mission focused and dedicated to continuous quality improvement. Since that first edition, Health, Safety, and Security (then called Standard 8[3]) have figured prominently in all editions[4] of the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad.* With each subsequent edition, the process for revising and updating the standards has become increasingly democratic, involving more stakeholders from a wider variety of perspectives and roles, and designed around the principles of public comment, disposition of views and objections, and the building of consensus.[5]

The first specific mention of incident tracking and reporting appeared in the field's standards in the fourth edition, published in 2011.[6] During this time, The Forum also convened a committee to pilot a Critical Incident Database[7] (CID) that would help member institutions comply with this standard. The CID was intended to serve a dual function: 1) as a tool for organizations to use to track important information about the critical incidents occurring on their programs and 2) as a data collection effort that would allow The Forum to report field-wide data[8,9]on the nature, frequency, and factors contributing to incidents so that this information could be used to inform evidence-based practice around risk mitigation, faculty/staff training, and student preparation and support. While Forum members who used the tool reported it was useful to supporting their incident tracking and reporting efforts, use of the CID did not spread as widely among Forum

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[1] This section and the one that follows (Project Background) are reproduced from our pilot report which preceded this publication: "Student Risk Report: Pilot Data from Education Abroad Programs, January 1 - June 30, 2023." We have kept these sections intact to ensure new readers of this work will continue to familiarize themselves with the motivation and history that guides The Forum's ongoing student risk data collection initiative.
[2] Sideli, K. (2004). "The Charge from the Board." *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad.* The Forum on Education Abroad.
[3] Standard 8 in the first edition of the Standards states: "The organization has established and continuously maintains effective health, safety, security, and risk management policies, procedures, and faculty-staff training."
[4] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2005). *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*, 2nd edition.; The Forum on Education Abroad. (2008). *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*, 3rd edition.; The Forum on Education Abroad. (2011). *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad,* 4th edition.; The Forum on Education Abroad. (2015). *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*, 5th edition.
[5] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2019). Standards Development Policy. Available at: https://www.forumea.org/standards-development-policy.html
[6] Standard 8, Query b.vi: "What are the established protocols for the regular reporting of health incidents to the home campus?
    1) How are faculty and staff trained in how to complete incident reports?
    2) How are incident reports shared with program partners, as appropriate?"
Query c.iii: ""What are the established protocols for the regular reporting of safety incidents to the home campus?
    1) How are faculty and staff trained in how to complete incident reports?
    2) How are incident reports shared with program partners, as appropriate?"
[7] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2010). *Incident Database Project Pilot Report.* Available at: https://www.forumea.org/uploads/1/4/4/6/144699749/forumeaincidentdatapilot.pdf
[8] Mello, N.A. (2015). *The Forum's Critical Incident Database.* Available at: https://www.forumea.org/uploads/1/4/4/6/144699749/critical-incident-database-2014-report.pdf
[9] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2019). *2019 Report: Education Abroad Critical Incidents.* Available at: https://www.forumea.org/uploads/1/4/4/6/144699749/2019-cid-report.pdf

member institutions and organizations as was hoped, largely due to varying approaches to data collection, incident tracking and response, and differing definitions of incident types across member institutions. Limited participation in the project, unfortunately, limited the results that could be reported in the research, too.

The most recent edition of the *Standards* (the sixth), was published in 2020, after a year-long process that involved hundreds of stakeholders and was subjected to two rounds of voting and revising before consensus was reached. In this edition, health, safety, security, risk management, and well-being have been woven throughout the document, rather than in a single section, as a reminder that the *Standards* are meant to be applied holistically, not in discrete chunks, and to encourage consideration of important principles and values as being the responsibility of all members of a team dedicated to education abroad program delivery, not just a single person or role.[10]

Clause 5.1.7 of the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad, Sixth edition*, calls on institutions and organizations to track and report critical incidents:

> 5.1.7. Each organization shall have policies and procedures in place regarding security and risk management that prioritize the health, well-being, and safety of students and personnel, including, but not limited to:

- Risk assessment and monitoring for program locations and activities
- Tracking, responding to, and reporting critical incidents
- Written emergency plans and protocols
- Insurance coverage

Along with this updated framing of our field's commitment to tracking, responding to, and reporting incidents comes the present project: a fresh approach to tracking and reporting on incidents of significant risk to students that helps guide good practice at the organizational level while also developing a corpus of data at a large scale that can inform evidence-based practice in the areas of risk management, faculty-staff training, and student support.

Project Background

In 2020 a group of health, safety and security professionals representing education abroad provider organizations, as an informal community of practice that emerged from the PULSE International member network, began meeting. In 2022, they approached The Forum on Education Abroad as the Standards Development Organization for the field of education abroad, originator of the Critical Incident Database, and leader in this space, to help identify a way to

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[10] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2020). *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad,* 6th edition, p. 7. doi.org/10.36366/S.978-1-952376-04-7
Note: The Topical Index in the Annex of the sixth edition points readers of the *Standards* to the clauses focused on Health, Safety, & Well-Being, Security, and Risk Management.

collect and compile data about the significant incidents that happen to students on their organization's programs using a common framework so that the data can be reported publicly to education abroad stakeholders and be used to make informed decisions and build in risk mitigations where possible.

Student Risk Task Force

In early 2023, The Forum on Education Abroad convened Phase I of the Student Risk Task Force to advance this plan, which promotes best practice in the field as identified in clause 5.1.7 of the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad.*

Colleagues who signed on as *members* of the Task Force agreed to:
- Attend monthly Task Force virtual meetings
- Participate in at least one presentation or listening session
- Offer asynchronous collaboration and respond to requests for feedback on documents, proposals, datasets, etc.
- Provide anonymized incident data to The Forum on behalf of their organization by the deadline agreed upon by the group (for initial report)
- Commit to securing institutional buy-in at their organization for on-going participation in this project (annually)
- Maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all data, discussions, opinions, document drafts, feedback, etc. collected and created as a part of this project in perpetuity.

Colleagues who signed on as *supporters* committed to and contributed equally to the meetings and exchange of ideas that resulted in the work represented in this report with the exception that organizational commitment to sharing data could not be made until after the data reporting protocols were finalized.

During monthly meetings and asynchronous collaboration in between, the group developed a proposal for data collection and reporting based on their collective expertise. They began by examining the definitions from the CID project and refining those incident definitions that were unclear or could result in varied categorization based on individual interpretation. They also discussed each contextual factor collected by the CID and discussed which pieces of information were likely to be consistently and reliably reported by different individuals at different organizations. This meant eliminating some reporting categories that were based on conjecture or personal opinion (e.g. whether alcohol or drug use was a contributing factor). The result is a data collection and reporting plan designed to be mutually feasible for organizations with different incident tracking and reporting protocols and systems so as to maximize participation from organizations across the field.

Their initial proposal was presented at The Forum's Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, on March 24, 2023 and made available for public comment (online) from all interested stakeholders from March 24 - April 30, 2023. After feedback from those opportunities was

incorporated, an updated proposal was presented to the education abroad community by the Task Force at The Forum's Annual Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management Institute in June 2023. Refinements were made to the data collection plan in response to feedback received at that event. In August and early September, the Task Force members compiled their organizations' incident report data in accordance with the newly developed protocol and submitted their pilot data to The Forum, representing incidents that occurred on all programs operated by participating organizations during the reporting period between January 1, 2023 and June 30, 2023. These data are included in the current pilot report.

Looking Ahead

Phase II of the Task Force, populated by representatives from colleges and universities, began meeting in October 2023 to consider additional factors and develop a complementary proposal that will allow colleges and universities to join in this initiative. This group will publish their proposed updates and additions to the current data reporting protocol in spring 2024. Once published, those institutions represented on the Task Force will begin contributing their data to our data set for our next reporting cycle. Additional college and university participants will be invited to join the initiative in the reporting period that follows.

How to Get Involved

Education Abroad Organizations that did not contribute data to this inaugural report are invited to join the initiative, regardless of Forum membership status. To learn more about the project and how your organization can get involved, contact The Forum at cid@forumea.org.

Acknowledgements

The Forum on Education Abroad would like to thank the following individuals for their dedicated service on the Student Risk Task Force, without whose dedication and expertise this initiative would not have been possible:

- Bill Bull, CIEE
- Jennifer Fullick, IFSA-Butler
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- Hannah Leidich, Arcadia University, The College of Global Studies
- Robin Reliford, WorldStrides
- Vanessa Sterling, CET Academic Programs
- Stacey Tsantir, DIS - Study Abroad in Scandinavia

The Forum and the Student Risk Task Force are also thankful to the many colleagues and interested parties who provided feedback on this process at conference presentations and via the public comment period and to the many other unnamed colleagues at collaborating organizations who supported their Task Force colleagues in developing and executing the data collection and reporting protocol represented here. This project would not have been possible without the thoughtful and dedicated colleagues who were engaged in the task forces and committees that brought the Critical Incident Database to life. We are grateful for everyone who shares in our commitment to student well-being and continuous improvement of our professional practice.

This report presents information about incidents that were likely very traumatic, painful, disruptive to the students involved, and that may have led to long-term or permanent damage/scars. It also represents countless hours of hard, caring, and compassionate work done by the colleagues involved in responding to these incidents and supporting students and their loved ones in the aftermath. While the statistics shared here cannot fully represent those experiences, we never forget to honor them.

Collaborating Organizations

The following collaborating organizations contributed data for the January 1 - December 31, 2023 reporting period:

Data Privacy

The Forum on Education Abroad and our collaborating organizations listed above hold the privacy of students and their loved ones as a top priority throughout the course of this project. The primary strategy for protecting individuals' data is that participating organizations remove all personally identifying information about individuals involved in reported incidents before submitting their semi-annual reports to The Forum. When organizations submit their data, it is collected and retained by The Forum on Education Abroad in accordance with our privacy policy. Only essential Forum staff have access to the reporting documents received. As soon as contributor data is verified, the data are compiled for analysis and information that would identify the reporting organization is also removed from the incidents reported.

Any time an incident is isolated by itself within a unit of analysis, no additional information about the incident will be reported to avoid sharing details that could permit a reasonably knowledgeable person to identify the individual involved from context. For example, the current dataset includes only one incident that resulted in death. To protect the privacy of the deceased and their loved ones, no additional details about this incident are included in the report. While we do withhold details from the public to protect individual privacy considerations, these data are included in global totals throughout the report. Details are also retained in their entirety so that additional analyses and insights may be reported when the dataset expands and anonymity can be achieved.

Terminology and Definitions

The following terms, category, and definitions were used by participating organizations to prepare their data for submission. Except where noted, these are the same definitions that appeared in our previous report, "Student Risk Report: Pilot Data from Education Abroad Programs, January 1 - June 30, 2023."[11]

Program Disruption

A Program Disruption is described as any large-scale event disrupting the program and/or causing student injury.

NOTE: If the cause of program disruption also results in a student incident(s) as defined above, a separate report is generated for each student incident in addition to the program disruption report.

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[11] The Forum on Education Abroad. (2023). Student Risk Report: Pilot Data from Education Abroad Programs, January 1 - June 30, 2023. https://doi.org/10.36366/R.2023SRR.Pilot.

Disruption Type

Vehicular Crash, e.g., car, bus, boat, bicycle, train, etc. impacting several students/the entire program

Civil unrest, e.g., strikes, protests, demonstrations, coups, war, armed conflicts, etc. that substantially disrupt a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury

Fire, materially impacting student housing, classroom, program time for 3 days or more regardless of physical damage or student harm

Infrastructure/Tech, e.g., oil spills, cyberattacks, power outage, banking crisis, crowd control issues, etc.) that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury

Natural disaster, e.g., serious weather, earthquake, etc., that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury

Public Health, e.g., disease outbreak that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury

Terrorism that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury

Other Accident/Incident, i.e., use for incidents that are not represented by any of the other categories above yet that substantially disrupt a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury

Incidents Directly Impacting a Student

Incident Type

Arrest or charged in local legal system (including if assault perpetrator)**:** persons processed by arrest, citation or summons

Assault (non-sexual victim): any event where there was a physical attack (with or without a weapon) delivered with the likely intention of injury

Assault/Harassment/Stalking (sexual victim): any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent.

Identity-Based/Hate Violence: an offense committed against a person or property which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias, negative opinion, or attitude toward a group

of persons based on their race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, or national origin, or if reported by the victim as their interpretation of the event. NOTE: The incident is countable in this category based on the perception of the offender, even if the victim is not a member of the intended victim group.

Kidnapping: the taking of a person against his/her will (or from the control of a parent or guardian) from one place to another under circumstances in which the person so taken does not have freedom of movement, will, or decision through violence, force, threat or intimidation.

Mental Health Crisis[12]: A mental health event serious enough that it involved ER support, suicide risk and/or report of mental health distress that results in death, program departure or hospitalization.

Missing Student: any event in which a student was missing/overdue for the amount of time which meets the local threshold for reporting to/involvement of *local law enforcement (not your internal policy or that of the U.S. RSO).*

Physical Health, Illness: An illness that resulted in death, program departure or hospitalization.

Physical Health, Injury: An injury that resulted in death, program departure or hospitalization.

Theft/Loss: The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. In many of these cases, the student isn't sure if their item was taken or was left behind so the incidents are reported together.

Robbery/Burglary: Taking or attempting to take anything of value by the use or threat of force from the care, custody or control of a person or persons (robbery) or entry into a building, with the intent to commit a crime, especially theft (burglary).

Contextual Information Collected About Incidents

Month of Incident

Program Length

- Less than 4 weeks
- 4-8 weeks
- 8-12 weeks
- 12+ weeks

Program Type[13]

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[12] This category was previously identified as "mental health distress" but has been adjusted at the suggestion of a mental health practitioner working in our field and with the consensus of members of the Student Risk Task Force (Phase II).

[13] As defined in the Glossary published by The Forum on Education Abroad.

Exchange

A program involving reciprocal movement of participants—whether faculty, students, staff, or community members—between institutions or countries.

Faculty-Led Program (or Faculty-Directed Program)

A study abroad program directed by a faculty member (or members) from the home campus who accompanies students abroad. Usually, though not always, brief in duration.

Field Study Program

A study abroad program type whose pedagogy revolves around experiential study outside the classroom setting. Examples include field research programs, internship programs, service-learning programs, archaeological field schools, and field biology programs.

Health-Related Program

Any experiential learning program delivered in public health and/or health care delivery settings, including both clinical and community health care contexts.

Hybrid Program

(or **Mixed Program**) A program that combines two or more of the program types to a significant degree. For example, a study abroad center might emphasize courses just for study abroad participants but also permit students to enroll in host university courses and to do a credit-bearing internship.

Integrated University Study

A study abroad program type in which the predominant study format is participation in regular courses alongside degree-seeking students from the host university. May be either via Direct Enrollment or enrollment facilitated by a study abroad provider organization.

Internship Abroad

An experience in a professional setting that takes place outside of the country in which a student's home university is located. This professional, practical experience is viewed as an extension of coursework and an opportunity for training or professional exploration related to a student's future career path.

Multi-Site Program

A program in which students spend a significant amount of time studying in each of two or more locations.

Study Abroad Center

An education abroad model in which the predominant study format consists of classroom-based courses designed for non-host country students. Centers may be operated independently, be special units within a host country university, or be sponsored by a college or university in another country or by a study abroad provider organization. Many study abroad centers have permanent staff and facilities.

Teaching Abroad

A volunteer (or largely volunteer) placement abroad as a teacher or teacher's assistant. Varieties of teaching abroad programs include student teaching (in partial fulfillment of a teaching certificate); teaching English as a second or foreign language; and professional teaching in a K-12 or university environment. Some programs combine volunteering with structured learning. Most volunteering is unpaid, though some programs provide a living stipend.

Travel Seminar

(preferable to the roughly synonymous **Study Tour** or **Study Travel Program**) A program in which students travel to many different cities or countries and receive instruction in each location, often regarding a designated, unifying topic. Examples include shipboard education programs or European cultural studies tours. This is a distinct program type and differs from field trips or excursions within other program types/subtypes.

Volunteering Abroad

Largely self-directed, unpaid work- or service-based learning opportunity initiated by students motivated to respond to the needs of an organization or community, often without specific learning objectives or associated coursework.

Work Abroad

Immersion in an international work environment with the educational value of the experience itself being the primary purpose. May or may not be for academic credit. Depending on the focus of the experience, it may be designated as interning, volunteering, service-learning, teaching, or just working abroad. Work abroad is sometimes used more narrowly to mean working for pay. By design, work abroad programs are temporary, lasting from a few weeks to two or three years. Educational work abroad is to be distinguished from career-related overseas assignments, permanent jobs abroad, and migration for gainful employment.

Custom or Not

A Custom Program (or Customized Program) is a study abroad program administered by a program provider organization according to specifications of a college, university, consortium, or other group.

Student Type

- First year
- Undergraduate
- Graduate/professional
- High school/gap year

Country of Incident

Location of Incident

Did the incident happen in the location of study/program activity (city/town/village) or not? (I.e. location where field study, internship, class, etc. takes place)

Result of Incident

Death. Reporting organizations were given the option to provide details about cause of death and asked not to include any personally identifying information about individuals. This option was included so that details provided here can be referred to for updates to the process in the future. No cause of death information was provided for the death included in this pilot report.

Hospitalization (admitted for physical or mental health care)

Program withdrawal, dismissal, or early departure (regardless of what happens with credit or support protocols)

Return to program (student returns to or continues participation in the program)

An optional open-ended notes section was provided at the end of each incident entry.

Methodology

Each participating organization has its own methods and systems for collecting information about incidents of significant risk to students as well as many other cases of minor incidents that require the support or attention of program faculty and staff. For the purposes of the pilot study, the Student Risk Task Force drew on data already recorded in their existing systems. After finalizing the plan for the pilot report, the members of the Student Risk Task Force worked with colleagues within their organization to extract all cases from their organizational incident databases during the reporting period. Personal communication with the new collaborators for the second reporting period of 2023 (June - December) indicates that they followed a similar process for preparing to join in this initiative. For the pilot phase organizations, new incidents occurring after June 2023 may have been recorded in systems that had been adjusted to more closely align with the definitions in this report for ease of future data preparation and submission. The Forum relies on collaborating organizations to undertake the set-up and maintenance of these systems for the duration of their participation in the initiative.

Submitted incident data is organized in accordance with The Forum's data submission template (Appendix 3). Each incident is coded for incident type and contextual information to match the categories and definitions outlined in the instructions for reporting (Appendix 1). Incidents that fit more than one category (e.g., Assault & Identity-Based/Hate Crime) are assigned multiple codes. Representatives from contributing organizations upload their data to a secure online form (Appendix 2).

Upon receipt, research staff at The Forum on Education Abroad verify that the data submission has been properly organized and uploaded. When data appears to be missing or improperly coded, a Forum staff member reaches out to the submitter to verify or correct the information. Once the data is clean, the Forum staff de-identify the data and compile reports from all contributing organizations into a single spreadsheet for analysis. The incidents reported by the organization have not been subjected to independent verification by The Forum on Education Abroad.

About the Organizations Contributing to The 2023 Annual Report

Nine (9) education abroad provider organizations reported incident data for the 2023 calendar year reporting period.[14] Collectively, these organizations served 56,125 students on education abroad programs between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023. During the reporting period, these organizations were operating education abroad programs in the following 86 countries.

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[14] One organization submitted data for only the second half of the calendar year. All others provided incident data for the entire year.

Albania*	France	Panama
Argentina	Germany	Peru
Australia	Ghana	Poland
Austria	Greece	Portugal
Bahrain*	Hungary	Rwanda*
Belgium	Iceland	Samoa*
Belize*	India	Serbia*
Bhutan*	Indonesia	Singapore
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ireland	Sint Maarten*
Botswana*	Israel*	Slovakia
Brazil	Italy	Slovenia
Cambodia*	Japan	South Africa
Cameroon*	Jordan	South Korea
Canada*	Kenya	Spain
Chile	Kosovo	Sweden
China	Latvia	Switzerland
Colombia	Lithuania*	Taiwan
Costa Rica	Macedonia*	Tanzania
Croatia	Madagascar*	Thailand
Cuba*	Malawi	Trinidad & Tobago*
Cyprus*	Malaysia*	Tunisia
Czech Republic	Malta*	Turkey*
Denmark	Mexico	United Arab Emirates*
Dominican Republic	Morocco	United Kingdom
Ecuador	Nepal*	United States
Egypt*	Netherlands	Uruguay*
Estonia	New Zealand	Vietnam
Fiji*	Norway	Zimbabwe
Finland	Oman*	

* Non-reportable. Data for incidents occurring in this country will not be reported in by-country analyses because only one participating organization is operating a program in this location. These data are still included in all global totals shared throughout this report.

Applying the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* to Support Student Safety and Well-Being

Each time organizational representatives submit data for this report, they are asked to answer a series of questions to self-report whether or not their organization was complying with the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* as they relate to health, safety, security and

well-being of education abroad students. All participating organizations indicated substantial conformity with the *Standards* at the time of last reporting (February 2024).

Table: Self-Reported Conformity with the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad*

Clause of the *Standards*	Question	Organizations Responding Yes
4.2.2	Does your organization regularly discuss and clarify the following topics with partners and collaborators? ● Compatibility of missions and alignment of goals, objectives, and outcomes; ● Determining the objectives of the partnership; ● Establishing respective financial responsibilities; ● Assigning functional roles or tasks to responsible parties; ● Establishing policies and procedures; ● Managing health, safety, and security risks	9/9
5.1.5	Does your organization have policies and procedures in place that govern personnel matters, conduct, and training, including: ● Participant conduct management; ● Communication protocols; ● Participant health, well-being, safety, and security; ● Emergency management and response; ● Partner relations, roles, and responsibilities?	9/9
5.1.6	Does your organization have policies that govern student matters related to (Student affairs): Student conduct matters, including but not limited to durg and alcohol use, mental health, and well-being, culturally sensitive behavior, sexual misconduct, travel, housing, disciplinary process, and appeal process?	9/9
5.1.7	Does your organization have policies and procedures in place regarding security and risk management that prioritize the health, well-being, and safety of students and personnel, including: ● Risk assessment and monitoring for program locations and activities; ● Tracking, responding to and reporting critical incidents; ● Written emergency plans and protocols; Insurance coverage?	9/9
5.1.8	Does your organization have guidelines governing its partnerships, including: establishing partnerships and formalizing collaboration, responsibility for security and risk management, managing privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure practices, marketing practices, partnership review?	9/9
5.2.4	Does your organization provide risk management, preparedness, and emergency response measures and ensure insurance coverage is in place for all programs?	9/9
6.1.8	Does your organization communicate expectations for conduct and consequences of behaviors to participants?	9/9

6.1.10	Does your organization provide students with information related to accessing physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being services?	9/9
6.1.11	Does your organization prepare students to manage their safety by providing resources related to concerns including but not limited to: physical risks, behavior, property crime, liability and legal issues, sexual misconduct, identity-based discrimination, country-specific recommendations?	9/9
6.1.12	Recognizing that not all countries have in place the same support and infrastructure as the home institution, does your organization clearly convey to students the importance of disclosing mental health and physical disability status, accommodation, and other specific needs to students? Work with other responsible parties and students to determine how their needs may be met on the program? And advise students on other program options if their needs cannot be met?	9/9
6.2.6	Does your organization support students as they navigate identities including race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, and socioeconomic status in the local context?	9/9
6.2.7	Does your organization support students in accessing physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being services?	9/9
6.2.8	Does your organization support students in managing their safety by providing resources related to: physical risks, behavior, property crime, liability and legal issues, sexual misconduct, identity based discrimination, country-specific recommendations?	9/9
6.3.4	Does your organization provide resources related to student mental and physical well-being related to program participation?	9/9

Incident Detail

Important Note on Interpreting the Results in This Report ⚠️

⚠️ The data provided in this report are presented to illustrate the frequency of incidents of significant risk to students during participation in education abroad. Limitations to our data collection strategy mean that we CANNOT at this time make comparisons or draw conclusions about relative likelihoods of incidents nor the impact of contextual program factors on the likelihood of an incident occurring. In other words, *just because there are more of a particular incident type reported on a certain type of program, it does NOT mean that the program type is inherently more risky.*

Total Program Disruptions:

Four (4) program disruptions were reported to this study during the 2023 reporting period.
- Two (2) were described as natural disasters occurring in New Zealand in February 2023.
- Two (2) were described as being caused by civil unrest; one in Kenya and one in Panama.

All of these program disruptions were followed by a return to program, though a note was provided to indicate that in one case, the program was relocated to another country in order to resume operations.

Given the small number of incidents in this category, no further exploration of this data will be included in this report. The information about program disruption reporting methodology is included in this report in detail so that as the dataset is built over time, more data in this category can be collected and analyzed in more depth in future reports.

Total Incidents Impacting Students:

🔑 1140 separate incidents impacting individual students were reported.

Incident Rate:

🔑 0.02%

In other words *about 1 in 49 education abroad students in this dataset experienced and reported to their programs an incident in our reporting categories.*

Student Type:

89% of incidents in the dataset were reported by/about undergraduate students. The other incidents were reported by/about: high school students (10%); students on first-year programs (1%); a graduate/professional student (<1%)(n = 1).

Type of Incident

🔑 The most commonly reported incidents were: Property Loss (45.6%), Physical Health, Illness (18.5%), and Mental Health Distress (9.5%).

Chart: Incident Type Count
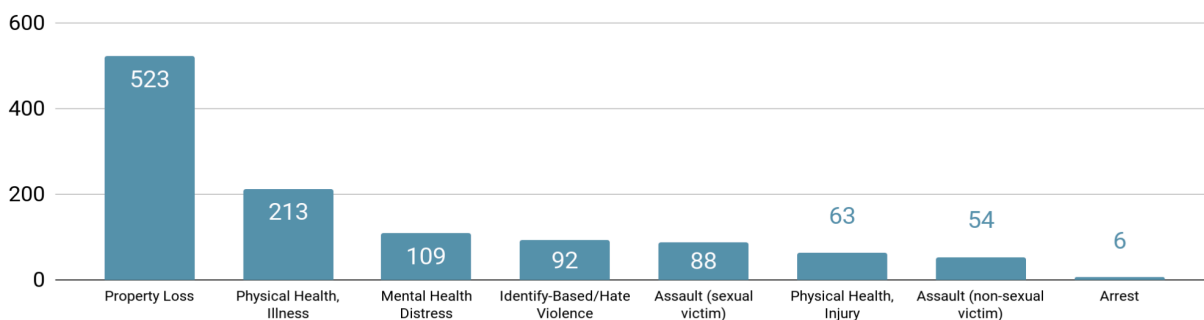
The vast majority of Property Loss incidents (n=389) were in the Theft/Loss category (no force or threat of force) (33.9%). Nine percent of all incidents (n=106) were categorized as Robbery/Burglary (with force or threat of force). The remaining 2.4% of Property Loss incidents were unspecified (n=28).

When we divide the Incident Type into categories we find that Health-related Incidents comprise about 33% of all incidents while Crime-related Incidents were reported at about double the rate (67%).

Table: Side-by-Side Count of Incident Type. Health vs. Crime

Health-Related Incidents	#/% of All Incidents		Crime-Related Incidents
Physical Health, Illness	213/18.5%	523/45.6%	Property Loss
Mental Health Distress	109/9.5%	92/8%	Identify-Based/Hate Violence
Physical Health, Injury	63/5.5%	88/7.7%	Assault (sexual victim)/Harassment/Stalking
		54/4.6%	Assault (non-sexual victim)
		6/0.5%	Arrest
Total Health	**33%**	**67%**	**Total Crime**

Month of Incident

Chart: Percentage of Incidents Reported by Month
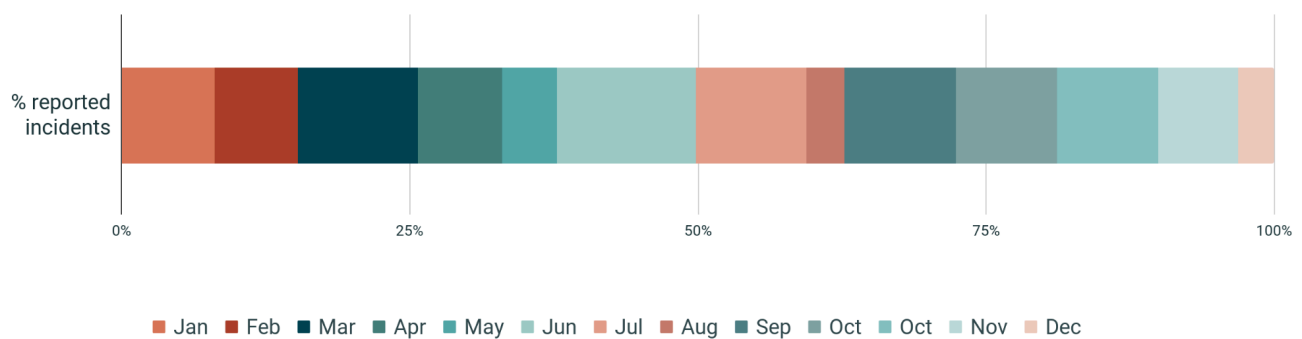
⚠️ REMEMBER: The relative frequency of incidents between two different category types, e.g., May vs. June, cannot be interpreted to mean that in a particular month a student is at higher risk than other months for these incidents to occur. Such conclusions would require more information than we have available to us in this report.

Program Length

Chart. Count of Incidents Reported by Program Length
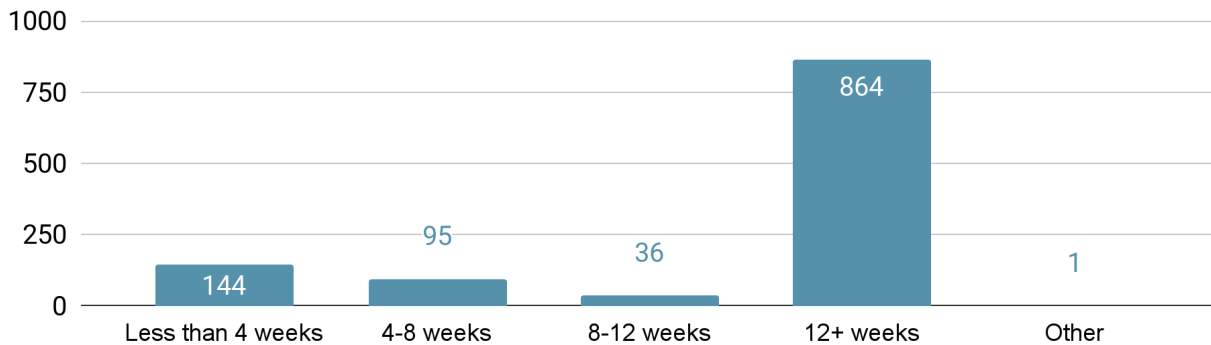
Most incidents in this dataset were reported by students on long-term programs.
⚠️ This *cannot* be interpreted to mean that incidents are more likely on long-term programs.

During the pilot phase of this project, Phase I Task Force members conjectured that students on longer programs may be more likely to report an incident to program faculty/staff, when compared with students on shorter programs, who might think, "I'll be home soon, I can seek treatment/help then" and choose not to report to program staff. This would be an area for future research.

💡 Remember that incidents reported to home institution staff or families after the program has ended cannot be consistently represented in this dataset. Program providers can only record the incidents that they learn about at a later date if they are called upon by a student or partner to assist with incident follow-up.

Program Type

Most incidents in this dataset were reported by students on study abroad center programs.
⚠️ This *cannot* be interpreted to mean that incidents are more likely to occur on study abroad center programs. It is more likely an artifact of the fact that most of the programs offered by the participating organizations in this study are study abroad center programs. Because total participation rates by program type are not collected in our dataset, we cannot draw any inference about how program type impacts incident likelihood. The same is true regarding custom vs. non-custom program types below.

Chart: Count of Incidents by Program Type
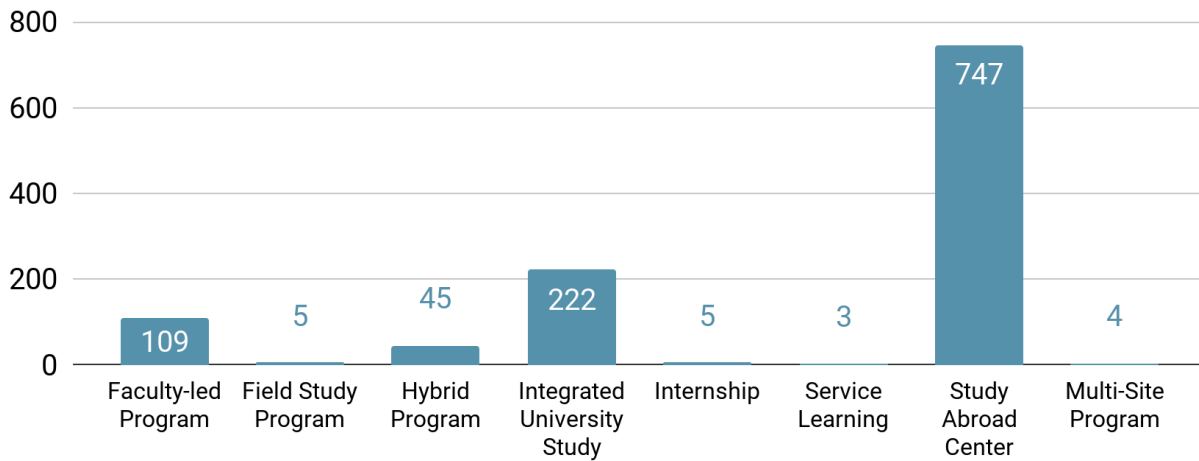
Chart: Count of Incidents from Custom and Non-Custom Programs
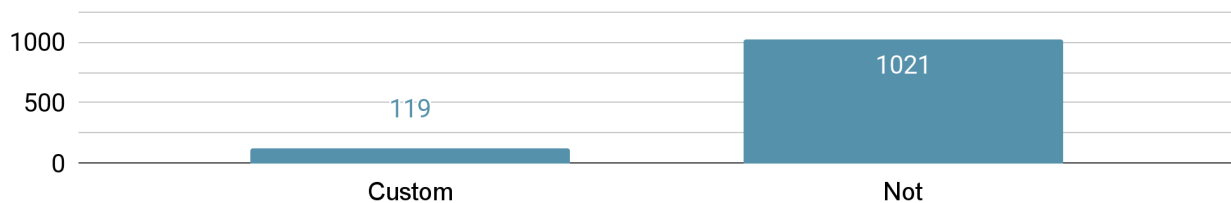
Country

Incidents were reported in all world regions represented by the programs represented in this dataset, but not in every country. We explore the country-level data in more detail in the "Zooming In" section below.

Where only one participating organization operated a program during the 2023 reporting period, country-level information is not included. Data for those countries are still included in global totals and will be retained for inclusion in future iterations of this report where geographical breakdowns may be made possible as the dataset grows.

Chart: Incident Count by Country Location

Country	Incident Count		Country	Incident Count
Argentina	61		Ireland	36
Australia	20		Italy	145
Austria	5		Japan	34

Botswana	4		Jordan	11
Brazil	6		Mexico	12
Chile	21		Morocco	3
China	9		Netherlands	29
Colombia	5		New Zealand	8
Costa Rica	10		Panama	5
Cuba	2		Portugal	14
Czech Republic	24		Singapore	5
Denmark	57		South Africa	34
Dominican Republic	4		South Korea	10
France	67		Spain	309
Germany	44		Sweden	15
Ghana	5		Taiwan	14
Greece	6		United Kingdom	63
Hungary	3		Vietnam	2
India	4			
Countries with 1 or fewer reported incidents during the reporting period:			Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Latvia, Nepal, Norway, Peru, Poland, Serbia, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, United States	

Location of Incident

Ninety-two percent (88%) of incidents reported were reported to have happened in the city/town/village where the program was taking place. Most of the remaining reported incidents (12%) were reported to have happened in another location (i.e., during independent travel to another city). For three (3) incidents, the location was not given in the incident report.

⚠️ Remember, we cannot infer that this means that incidents are more likely to occur in a program location. *Our data do not permit us to infer causation.* During our pilot study, task force members speculated that students are less likely to report or seek help for an incident occurring away from their program location or during independent travel.

Result of Incident

🔑 87.5% of significant incidents reported here resulted in students returning to program. This would seem to suggest that many major incidents are responded to in such a way that allows a student to cope or recover and still pursue their educational programming after the incident.

🔑 9.6% of all reported incidents resulted in program withdrawal.

🔑 5.5% of incidents included hospitalization as a result.

💡 Some reporting organizations reported hospitalization as a standalone result of an incident, while others reported two results when hospitalization was involved – the hospitalization itself and what happened after – either a return to program or a program withdrawal. In the future, the process for reporting incident results will be refined to avoid perpetuating these inconsistencies.

Chart: Incident Result by Incident Type

	Return to program	Hospitalization	Program withdrawal	Death *
Assault (non-sexual victim)	93%	2%	5%	
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	96%		3%	
Mental Health Crisis	35%	3%	64%	
Property Loss (all types)	100%			
Physical Health, Injury	78%	22%	11%	
Physical Health, Illness	82%	10%	23%	
Arrest	67%		33%	
Identify-Based/Hate Violence	97%		3%	

*Non-reportable

🔑 Mental health distress incidents were the most likely incident type to result in program withdrawal, with 64% of students who experienced these withdrawing from their program after the incident.

Zooming In: Incident Data by Country

A large and growing dataset permits us to share more granular insights into the nature and frequency of insights occurring in a particular location. This in turn will allow readers of this report to better understand the regional or local risk environment in the education abroad program location and target risk mitigation and management efforts accordingly. This section shares the relative frequency of incidents in the top 15 countries who received the most students in our dataset in 2023.

Spain 🇪🇸

Total Students in 2023: 10,766 (Ranked #1 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.029; about 1 in 34 students experienced one of the incident types.

Table: Incident Details for Spain, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	168	54.5%
Robbery/Burglary	26	8.5%
Theft/Loss	125	40.6%
Unspecified	17	5.5%
Physical Health, Illness	69	22.4%
Physical Health, Injury	21	6.8%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	14	4.5%
Mental Health	13	4.2%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	13	4.2%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	8	2.6%
Arrest	2	0.6%
Total	*308*	

Italy 🇮🇹

Total Students in 2023: 6,676 (Ranked #2 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.022; about 1 in 45 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Italy, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	70	48.3%
Robbery/Burglary	24	16.6%
Theft/Loss	44	30.3%
Unspecified	2	1.4%
Physical Health, Illness	27	18.6%
Mental Health	17	11.7%
Physical Health, Injury	13	9%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	8	5.5%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	6	4.1%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	4	2.8%
Total	*145*	

United Kingdom 🇬🇧

Total Students in 2023: 6,150 (Ranked #3 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.015; about 1 in 67 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for United Kingdom, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	46	48.4%
Robbery/Burglary	2	2.0%
Theft/Loss	38	40%
Unspecified	6	6.3%
Physical Health, Illness	16	16.8%
Mental Health	13	13.6%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	8	8.4%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	4	4.2%
Physical Health, Injury	4	4.2%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	3	3.2%
Arrest	1	1.1%
Total	*95*	

Denmark 🇩🇰

Total Students in 2023: 4,815 (Ranked #4 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.012; about 1 in 83 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Denmark, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Mental Health	14	24.6%
Property Loss	11	19.3%
Robbery/Burglary	1	1.7%
Theft/Loss	10	17.5%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	10	17.5%
Physical Health, Illness	9	15.8%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	5	8.8%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	4	7%
Physical Health, Injury	2	3.5%
Arrest	2	3.5%
Total	57	

France 🇫🇷

Total Students in 2023: 4,241 (Ranked #5 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.016; about 1 in 63 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for France, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	27	40.3%
Robbery/Burglary	5	7.5%
Theft/Loss	21	31.3%
Unspecified	1	1.5%
Physical Health, Illness	11	16.4%
Mental Health	10	14.9%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	8	11.9%
Physical Health, Injury	4	6%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	3	4.5%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	3	4.5%
Arrest	1	1.5%
Total	*67*	

Germany 🇩🇪

Total Students in 2023: 2,541 (Ranked #6 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.017; about 1 in 59 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Germany, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	12	27.3%
Robbery/Burglary	5	11.4%
Theft/Loss	7	15.9%
Physical Health, Illness	9	20.5%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	9	20.5%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	7	15.9%
Mental Health	4	9.1%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	3	6.8%
Total	*44*	

Japan 🔴

Total Students in 2023: 2,426 (Ranked #7 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.014; about 1 in 71 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Japan, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	12	35.3%
Property Loss	10	29.4%
Theft/Loss	10	29.4%
Physical Health, Illness	5	14.7%
Mental Health	5	14.7%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	2	5.9%
Total	*34*	

Sweden 🇸🇪

Total Students in 2023: 1,890 (Ranked #8 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.008; about 1 in 125 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Sweden, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	5	33.3%
Property Loss	3	20%
Theft/Loss	3	20%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	3	20%
Physical Health, Illness	2	13.3%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	1	6.7%
Mental Health	1	6.7%
Total	*15*	

Czech Republic 🇨🇿

Total Students in 2023: 1,727 (Ranked #9 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.014; about 1 in 71 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Czech Republic, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	9	37.5%
Robbery/Burglary	7	29.2%
Theft/Loss	2	8.3%
Physical Health, Illness	5	20.8%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	4	16.7%
Physical Health, Injury	3	12.5%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	1	4.2%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	1	4.2%
Mental Health	1	4.2%
Total	24	

Ireland 🇮🇪

Total Students in 2023: 1,700 (Ranked #10 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.021; about 1 in 48 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Ireland, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	16	44.4%
Robbery/Burglary	4	11.1%
Theft/Loss	12	33.3%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	8	22.2%
Physical Health, Illness	6	16.7%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	4	11.1%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	2	5.6%
Total	*36*	

Australia 🇦🇺

Total Students in 2023: 1,617 (Ranked #11 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.012; about 1 in 83 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Australia, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Physical Health, Illness	8	40%
Mental Health	7	35%
Property Loss	2	10%
Theft/Loss	1	5%
Unspecified	1	5%
Physical Health, Injury	2	10%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	1	5%
Total	*20*	

Netherlands 🇳🇱

Total Students in 2023: 1,564 (Ranked #12 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.019; about 1 in 53 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Netherlands, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	14	48.3%
Theft/Loss	14	48.3%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	5	17.2%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	3	10.3%
Physical Health, Illness	3	10.3%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	2	6.9%
Mental Health	2	6.9%
Total	*29*	

South Korea 🇰🇷

Total Students in 2023: 1,333 (Ranked #13 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.008; about 1 in 125 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for South Korea, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Physical Health, Illness	7	70%
Assault (non-sexual victim)	1	10%
Physical Health, Injury	1	10%
Mental Health	1	10%
Total	*10*	

Costa Rica 🇨🇷

Total Students in 2023: 1,198 (Ranked #14 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.008; about 1 in 125 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for Costa Rica, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	4	40%
Robbery/Burglary	2	2%
Theft/Loss	2	2%
Physical Health, Illness	3	30%
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	1	1%
Physical Health, Injury	1	1%
Mental Health	1	1%
Total	*10*	

South Africa 🇿🇦

Total Students in 2023: 1,079 (Ranked #15 overall for student participation in this dataset)
Overall Incident Rate: 0.032; about 1 in 31 students experienced one of the incident types observed

Table: Incident Details for South Africa, 2023

Incident Type	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Property Loss	17	50%
Robbery/Burglary	6	17.6%
Theft/Loss	11	32.4%
Identity-Based/Hate Violence	10	29.4
Assault (sexual victim)/ Harassment/Stalking	3	8.8%
Mental Health	2	5.9%
Physical Health, Injury	1	2.9%
Physical Health, Illness	1	2.9%
Total	*34*	

Lessons Learned

In this inaugural report, we've highlighted key insights to inform evidence-based practice related to risk and risk management. These insights have been highlighted in the Key Takeaways section and indicated using the key (🔑) icon throughout the report.

As we have continued this work after the pilot phase, we continue to learn that building this growing dataset and the commitment to transparency and data sharing from partners across our field is feasible and worthwhile. Throughout the report we have noted ideas for improvement or expansion of this work using the lightbulb (💡) icon. As we continue this initiative and welcome colleges and universities to take part, we will also continue to incorporate these ideas into future iterations of the data protocols and reports.

Future Directions 💡

Future iterations of this report will continue to refine definitions and reporting guidelines. In Phase II of the Student Risk Task Force, representatives from colleges and universities are identifying ways that incident reports from colleges and universities can be combined in the same dataset with incident reports from education abroad organizations without counting the same incident twice, i.e., when a student from a college reports their illness to both their home campus and to the on-site staff of the education abroad organization that operates their program in partnership with the college. Inclusion of college and university data will help to improve the rate of capture of incidents that are potentially left out of the education abroad provider organization data because they are not reported by the student until after returning home from their program.

The Forum anticipates publishing regular updates of this report in order to maintain current and timely information, as well as to continue to grow the size of the dataset so that more specific insights can be drawn from the data. With a larger sample, future reports could explore in more detail rates of particular incident types by country and related program factors, for example. More specific observations can help the profession continue to improve and target our practices and protocols in the areas of faculty and staff training, student preparation, program development, health and well-being services and resources, and more. Hopefully, readers of this report will find inspiration and motivation to join this initiative to help reach those goals.

Join Us!

💡 Organizations report that initial data preparation for their first round of submission required a significant investment of time and effort. Those who have now reported for a second time indicate that the subsequent round of data preparation and submission was far simpler. Interested future participants are encouraged to use the information provided in this report and on The Forum's website to get a head start on collecting and organizing information about incidents on their programs to align with the definitions and procedures described here.

Appendix 1: Reporting Instructions for Participating Organizations

Student Risk Data Collection & Reporting Plan

Use this document as your guide for participating in The Forum on Education Abroad's initiative to collect data about incidents of significant risk to students during education abroad programs and share that data with our community to inform decision-making and advance the application of best practice in student and program health, safety, security, and risk management.

Organizations participate in this data collection and reporting effort voluntarily and in accordance with the terms outlined below. If you are interested in having your organization join the initiative, contact The Forum's Senior Director for Research and Publications, Dr. Amelia Dietrich, dietrica@forumea.org.

If you are operating in incidents categories are prohibited from being reported to this effort by law, but you would still like to participate in the project (e.g., in California, colleagues working at public institutions cannot share information about kidnapping incidents) include this information in your initial email to the Senior Director for Research and Publications.

NOTE: This is a working draft, prepared to guide the pilot reporting efforts in August 2023. It is subject to change during subsequent reporting periods. Any changes will be noted in future iterations of this document to allow participating organizations to adjust their data collection and reporting procedures accordingly.

Original Draft: 1/24/2023
Last update: 9/12/2023

What incidents will be reported to The Forum?

Incidents Directly Impacting a Student

NOTES on REPORTING:

We are only collecting data on students participating in education abroad programs. Do not include incident reports about incidents impacting faculty, staff, or others.

If multiple students are directly impacted by the same incident, generate a separate report for each individual student.

We define impacted students as students who are the victims of the crime or the person suffering from the illness or injury reported. DO NOT submit separate incident reports for students who are witnesses or serve as support networks to victims after the fact.

If an incident could be classified within multiple categories below, submit a single incident report identifying the most severe category of those applicable.

Incident Type

- **Arrest** or charged in local legal system (including if assault perpetrator)**:** persons processed by arrest, citation or summons
- **Assault (non-sexual victim):** any event where there was a physical attack (with or without a weapon) delivered with the likely intention of injury
- **Assault/Harassment/Stalking (sexual victim):** any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent.
- **Identity-Based/Hate Violence:** an offense committed against a person or property which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias, negative opinion, or attitude toward a group of persons based on their race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, or national origin, or if reported by the victim as their interpretation of the event.
  NOTE: The incident is countable based on the perception of the offender, even if the victim is not a member of the intended victim group.
- **Kidnapping:** the taking of a person against his/her will (or from the control of a parent or guardian) from one place to another under circumstances in which the person so taken does not have freedom of movement, will, or decision through violence, force, threat or intimidation.
- **Mental Health Distress:** A mental health event serious enough that it involved ER support, suicide risk and/or report of mental health distress that results in death, program departure or hospitalization
- **Missing Student:** any event in which a student was missing/overdue for the amount of time which meets the local threshold for reporting to/involvement of *local law enforcement (not your internal policy or that of the U.S. RSO)*

- **Physical Health, Illness:** An illness that resulted in death, program departure or hospitalization
- **Physical Health, Injury:** An injury that resulted in death, program departure or hospitalization
- **Theft/Loss:** The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another. In many of these cases, the student isn't sure if their item was taken or was left behind so the incidents are reported together.
- **Robbery/Burglary:** taking or attempting to take anything of value by the use or threat of force from the care, custody or control of a person or persons (robbery) or entry into a building, with the intent to commit a crime, especially theft (burglary)

Program Disruptions: any large-scale event disrupting the program and/or causing student injury

NOTE: If the cause of program disruption also results in a student incident(s) as defined above, generate a separate report for each student incident in addition to the program disruption report.

Disruption Type

- **Vehicular Crash,** e.g., car, bus, boat, bicycle, train, etc. impacting several students/the entire program
- **Civil unrest,** e.g., strikes, protests, demonstrations, coups, war, armed conflicts, etc. that substantially disrupt a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury
- **Fire,** materially impacting student housing, classroom, program time for 5 days or more regardless of physical damage or student harm
- **Infrastructure/Tech,** e.g., oil spills, cyber attacks, power outage, banking crisis, crowd control issues, etc.) that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury
- **Natural disaster,** e.g., serious weather, earthquake, etc., that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury
- **Public Health**, e.g., disease outbreak that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury
- **Terrorism** that substantially disrupts a program for 3 days or more and/or cause a student injury
- **Other Accident/Incident,** i.e., use for incidents that are not represented by any of the other categories above yet that substantially disrupt a program for 3 days or more and/or cause student injury

What information will be reported about each incident?

- Month of incident:
    - **Spell out the name in full**
- Program length:
    - **Less than 4 weeks**
    - **4-8 weeks**
    - **8-12 weeks**
    - **12+ weeks**
- Program Type[15]:
    - **Exchange:** A program involving reciprocal movement of participants—whether faculty, students, staff, or community members—between institutions or countries.
    - **Faculty-Led Program** (or Faculty-Directed Program) – A study abroad program directed by a faculty member (or members) from the home campus who accompanies students abroad. Usually, though not always, brief in duration.
    - **Field Study Program** A study abroad program type whose pedagogy revolves around experiential study outside the classroom setting. Examples include field research programs, internship programs, service-learning programs, archaeological field schools, and field biology programs.
    - **Health-Related Program** any experiential learning program delivered in public health and/or health care delivery settings, including both clinical and community health care contexts.
    - **Hybrid Program** (or **Mixed Program**) – A program that combines two or more of the program types to a significant degree. For example, a study abroad center might emphasize courses just for study abroad participants but also permit students to enroll in host university courses and to do a credit-bearing internship.
    - **Integrated University Study** A study abroad program type in which the predominant study format is participation in regular courses alongside degree-seeking students from the host university. May be either via Direct Enrollment or enrollment facilitated by a study abroad provider organization.
    - **Internship Abroad** An experience in a professional setting that takes place outside of the country in which a student's home university is located. This professional, practical experience is viewed as an extension of coursework and an opportunity for training or professional exploration related to a student's future career path.
    - **Multi-Site Program** A program in which students spend a significant amount of time studying in each of two or more locations.

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[15] As defined in the Glossary published by The Forum on Education Abroad.

- ○ **Study Abroad Center** An education abroad model in which the predominant study format consists of classroom-based courses designed for non-host country students. Centers may be operated independently, be special units within a host country university, or be sponsored by a college or university in another country or by a study abroad provider organization. Many study abroad centers have permanent staff and facilities.
  - ○ **Teaching Abroad** A volunteer (or largely volunteer) placement abroad as a teacher or teacher's assistant. Varieties of teaching abroad programs include student teaching (in partial fulfillment of a teaching certificate); teaching English as a second or foreign language; and professional teaching in a K-12 or university environment. Some programs combine volunteering with structured learning. Most volunteering is unpaid, though some programs provide a living stipend.
  - ○ **Travel Seminar** (preferable to the roughly synonymous Study Tour or Study Travel Program) – A program in which students travel to many different cities or countries and receive instruction in each location, often regarding a designated, unifying topic. Examples include shipboard education programs or European cultural studies tours. This is a distinct program type and differs from field trips or excursions within other program types/subtypes.
  - ○ **Volunteering Abroad** Largely self-directed, unpaid work- or service-based learning opportunity initiated by students motivated to respond to the needs of an organization or community, often without specific learning objectives or associated coursework.
  - ○ **Work Abroad** Immersion in an international work environment with the educational value of the experience itself being the primary purpose. May or may not be for academic credit. Depending on the focus of the experience, it may be designated as interning, volunteering, service-learning, teaching, or just working abroad. Work abroad is sometimes used more narrowly to mean working for pay. By design, work abroad programs are temporary, lasting from a few weeks to two or three years. Educational work abroad is to be distinguished from career-related overseas assignments, permanent jobs abroad, and migration for gainful employment.
- ● **Custom** or **Not**
  - ○ Definition from Glossary: Custom Program (or Customized Program) – A study abroad program administered by a program provider organization according to specifications of a college, university, consortium, or other group.
- ● Student type:
  - ○ **First year**
  - ○ **Undergraduate**
  - ○ **Graduate/professional**
  - ○ **High school/gap year**
- ● Country of incident:
  - ○ **Spell out full country name**

- Location of incident

  Did the incident happen in the location of study/program activity (city/town/village) or not? (I.e. location where field study, internship, class, etc. takes place)
  - **Yes**
  - **No**
- Result of incident:
  - **Death**
    - Optional: provide details about cause of death. Please do not include any personally identifying information about individuals. that we can look at for updates to the process in the future
  - **Hospitalization** (admitted for physical or mental health care)
  - **Program withdrawal**, dismissal, or early departure (regardless of what happens with credit or support protocols)
  - **Return to program** (student returns to or continues participation in the program)
- Open-ended notes section: Please do not include any personally identifying information about individuals in this section.

How will data be submitted to The Forum?

1. The Forum will provide spreadsheet templates, definitions, and instructions for organizing your data.
   a. Instructions will be clear to remove any personally identifying data before submission.
2. Participating organizations will upload their spreadsheet to an online portal via The Forum's website.
   a. Submitting individuals must give consent on behalf of the organization to participate in the project each time they submit.
   b. Submitting individuals must confirm that no personally identifying data is included in the data reporting.
   c. Submitting individuals must report the organization's total students served by education abroad programming during the period of the data upload so that a total number of students represented can be included in the report.
   d. Submitting individuals must provide a list of all countries in which the organization operated education abroad programs during the reporting period.
   e. The submission form will include an agreement that the data upload includes all reportable incidents that occurred on organization's programs during the time period listed. Agreeing to participate in this project means committing to transparency and accountability.
3. Data uploads: Twice a year. Exact dates TBD, but we plan to delay reporting deadlines for a month after a reporting period ends (e.g., report for January through June by August 1)

to allow time to close out incidents and collect information for incidents initiating at the end of the reporting period.

4. Compliance self-reporting: Submitting organizations will be asked to answer a series of questions about the application of health, safety, security, and risk management best practices as outlined by the *Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad* (6th Edition).

How will The Forum protect the data it receives?

The primary form of data protection is for reporting organizations to remove all personally identifying information about individuals involved in reported incidents before submitting their semi-annual reports to the project.

Data will be collected and retained by The Forum on Education Abroad in accordance with our privacy policy. Only essential Forum research staff will have access to the original reporting documents received for the purposes of contributor verification and to remove potential duplicates from the incidents reported.

How will the data be reported to the public?

The Forum is committed to updating the report at least annually.

The report will be published on The Forum's website in an open-access format.

Reports will always recognize the individuals and organizations involved in this Task Force (as the originators of the project) as well as any additional organizations that join the data submission efforts over time.

Reports will never report data at the institutional or individual level. Data will only be reported in the aggregate. Even if personally identifiable information is accidentally supplied to The Forum, no student, staff, or faculty names or personally identifying information will ever be included in the final report.

The Forum will endeavor to ensure that individual incidents are not identifiable from context even when anonymized, e.g., if only one contributing organization runs a program in Nicaragua, the data for Nicaragua will be kept confidential and listed as "non-reportable" in the report. Data that is non-reportable in smaller sub-samples of the data will still be included in the global statistics reported.

Appendix 2: Data Submission Form

Your Name*:

Professional Role/Title:

Organization Name*:

Email address*:

We may use this information to follow up with you if we have questions about your upload.

During the reporting period of [DATES], how many students participated in education abroad programs at your organization?
Please enter only a number.

Please upload your data spreadsheet for the [DATES] reporting period in the space below.*
Link to Data Reporting Spreadsheet template:
Link to Data Collection & Reporting plan, which includes definitions and more detailed instructions for preparing your data for reporting:

<div align="center">

Select a file...
or drag and drop a file here

</div>

Please check the box next to all questions to which your answer is YES.

☐ 4.2.2: Does your organization regularly discuss and clarify the following topics with partners and collaborators? Compatibility of missions and alignment of goals, objectives, and outcomes; Determining the objectives of the partnership; Establishing respective financial responsibilities; -Assigning functional roles or tasks to responsible parties; Establishing policies and procedures; Managing health, safety, and security risks

☐ 5.1.5: Does your organization have policies and procedures in place that govern personnel matters, conduct, and training, including: Participant conduct management ; Communication protocols ; Participant health, well-being, safety, and security; Emergency management and response; Partner relations, roles, and responsibilities?

☐ 5.1.6: Does your organization have policies that govern student matters related to (Student affairs): Student conduct matters, including but not limited to durg and alcohol use, mental health, and well-being, culturally sensitive behavior, sexual misconduct, travel, housing, disciplinary process, and appeal process?

☐ 5.1.7: Does your organization have policies and procedures in place regarding security and risk management that prioritize the health, well-being, and safety of students and personnel, including: Risk assessment and monitoring for program locations and activities; Tracking, responding to and reporting critical incidents; Written emergency plans and protocols; Insurance coverage?

☐ 5.1.8: Does your organization have guidelines governing its partnerships, including: establishing partnerships and formalizing collaboration, responsibility for security and risk management, managing privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure practices, marketing practices, partnership review?

☐ 5.2.4: Does your organization provide risk management, preparedness, and emergency response measures and ensure insurance coverage is in place for all programs?

☐ 5.2.7: Does your organization provide a safe environment that supports learning for all students?

☐ 6.1.8: Responsible parties shall communicate expectations for conduct and consequences of behaviors to participants?

☐ 6.1.10: Does your organization provide students with information related to accessing physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being services?

☐ 6.1.11 Does your organization prepare students to manage their safety by providing resources related to concerns including but not limited to: physical risks, behavior, property crime, liability and legal issues, sexual misconduct, identity-based discrimination, country-specific recommendations?

☐ 6.1.12 Recognizing that not all countries have in place the same support and infrastructure as the home institution, does your organization clearly convey to students the importance of disclosing mental health and physical disability status, accommodation, and other specific needs to students? Work with other responsible parties and students to determine how their needs may be met on the program? And advise students on other program options if their needs cannot be met?

☐ 6.2.6 Does your organization support students as they navigate identities including race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, and socioeconomic status in the local context?

☐ 6.2.7 Does your organization support students in accessing physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being services?

☐ 6.2.8 Does your organization support students in managing their safety by providing resources related to: physical risks, behavior, property crime, liability and legal issues, sexual misconduct, identity based discrimination, country-specific recommendations?

☐ 6.3.4 Does your organization provide resources related to student mental and physical well-being related to program participation?

Certification of Removal of Personally Identifying Information*
I confirm that no personally identifying information about anyone involved in the reported incidents is included in the data I am submitting for this reporting period (including victims, perpetrators, and individuals involved in the response, e.g., program staff, faculty, medical professionals, law enforcement, etc.).
Choose one…

Consent*
I give consent on behalf of my organization to participate in The Forum on Education Abroad's Student Risk Data Collection & Reporting project. By agreeing to this, I understand the data reported in this submission will be included in The Forum's open-access report as outlined in the Student Risk Data Collection & Reporting Plan and that the data will be collected and stored in accordance with The Forum's Privacy Policy.

I agree

Organizational Logo Upload
Please upload a high-resolution JPG or PNG image of your organization's logo that can be used to recognize your organization's participation in this project on The Forum's website, in the pilot report, and in any future presentations that derive from the pilot project.
Select a file...
or drag and drop a file here

Enter your full name here to confirm your consent to the terms above.*:
Today's Date*:

Appendix 3: Data Submission Template

Welcome to our Student Risk Incident Data Reporting tool:

Please download a copy of this spreadsheet and save it with your organization's name and the reporting period as the filename, e.g.:

TheForum_Jan-June_2023.xlsx

Tab 1 is for Incidents Directly Impacting a Student: Use this sheet to report incidents impacting students on your organization's education abroad programs. *Use the appropriate terminology in bold (no abbreviations) as the entry in each cell.*

Tab 2 is for Program Disruptions: Use this sheet to report large-scale events that disrupt the program and/or cause student injury. *Use the appropriate terminology in bold (no abbreviations) as the entry in each cell.*

Tab 3 is for you to provide a List of Countries where your organization operated programs during the reporting period. The Forum uses this information to avoid sharing incident details that will make the incident identifiable from context.

This document provides more detailed definitions and instructions for preparing your data. The links in the column headings direct you to the section of the document relevant to that column.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1i3FxkQTCpQwp-nGOxm52e4qdu7FSPrHlfUh9cWjn32o/edit?usp=sharing

REMEMBER TO FOLLOW BEST PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PROTOCOL TO SAFEGUARD CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ON YOUR DEVICES. SAVE THIS DOCUMENT IN A SECURE LOCATION, ONLY SHARE WITH THE NECESSARY STAFF, AND REMOVE PERSONALLY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION FROM ANY REPORTS OR SUMMARIES SHARED OUTSIDE OF YOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RISK MANAGEMENT TEAM.

SHEET 1: How to Use This Document

Incident Type	Month of Incident	Program Length	Program Type	Custom or Not	Student Type	Country of Incident	Location of Incident	Result of Incident

SHEET 2: Incident Reports

Disruption Type	Month of Incident	Program Length	Program Type	Custom or Not	Student Type	Country of Incident	Location of Incident	Result of Incident

SHEET 3: Program Disruptions

Please provide a list of all countries where your organization operated education abroad programs during the reporting period. Spell out the full name of each country.	Number of Students Who Studied in This Country During Reporting Period	REMINDER: For multi-country programs, students will be "double-counted" in this section. Total discrete students served across all programs during the reporting period will be shared in the submission form.		

SHEET 4: Country Listing