

Is Post-Graduate Legal Education in the U.S. Still Globally Attractive?

*Using the past to consider the future:
international law students 2012-2021*

AALS Annual Meeting 2025

Post-Graduate Legal Education - Global Engagement

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Visa Data



Homeland
Security

Data includes:

- Country of citizenship
- Country of birth
- Gender
- US Law school and its location
- Law school degree program/field of study
- Funding from the law school

- Visa approvals for international students to study law in a law school

- Visas approved during period from 2012 through 2021 (and part of 2022)

- Any law school in the US, any program

- 59,545 unique individuals

- Data obtained via FOIA request

STUDY in the **STATES**

Being international goes beyond visa status

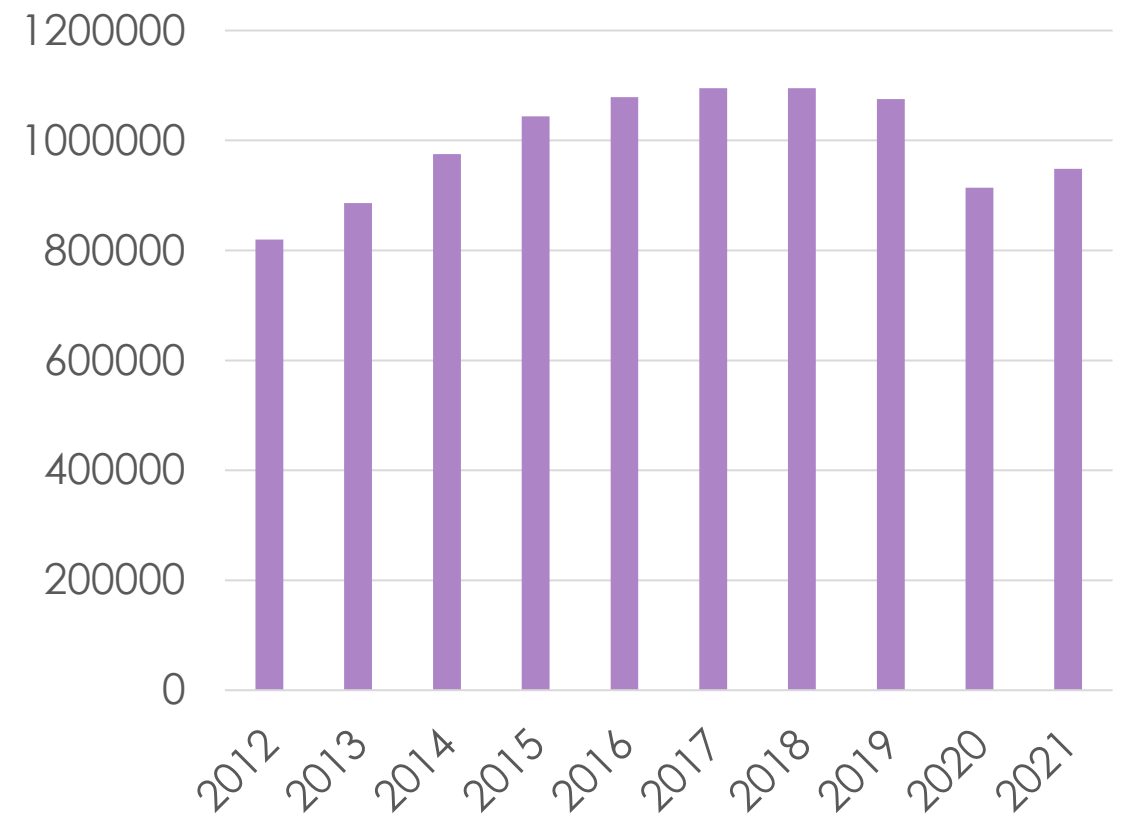
- Ballakrishnen and Silver, *Language, Culture, and the Culture of Language* (2020)
- Ballakrishnen and Silver, *A New Minority? International JD Students in US Law Schools* (2019)
- Silver and Ballakrishnen, *Sticky Floors, Springboards, Stairways & Slow Escalators: Mobility Pathways and Preferences of International Students in U.S. Law Schools* (2018)

Enrollment patterns: international enrollment in law school and in all fields/levels, 2012-2021

International students enrolled in law school, all programs+



Total international students all fields/levels*



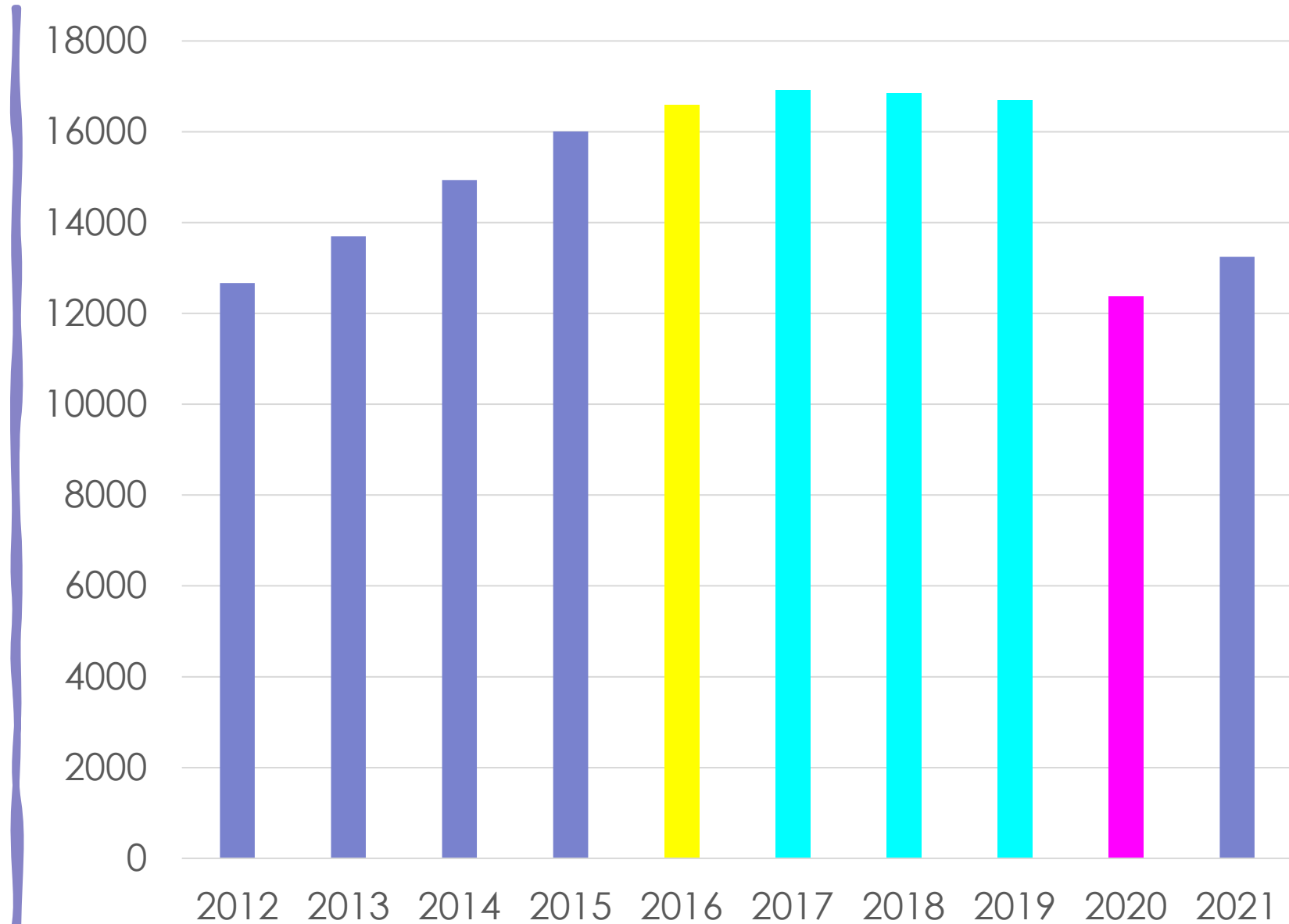
+ Visa data, includes exchange students

*Source: <https://opendoorsdata.org/data/international-students/enrollment-trends/>; includes OPT; for 2020 and 2021 includes those outside the US studying online in US institutions.

Is past
prologue?*

Political and
pandemic
trends

International law students, all programs

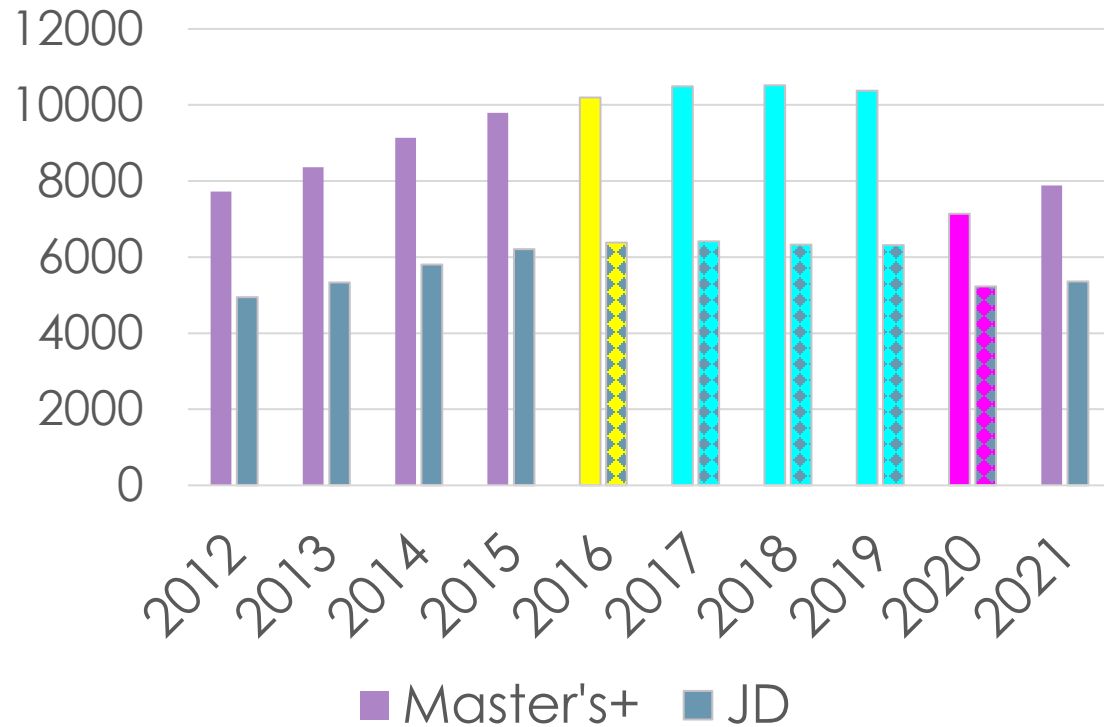


- Trump election, Trump administration, Covid

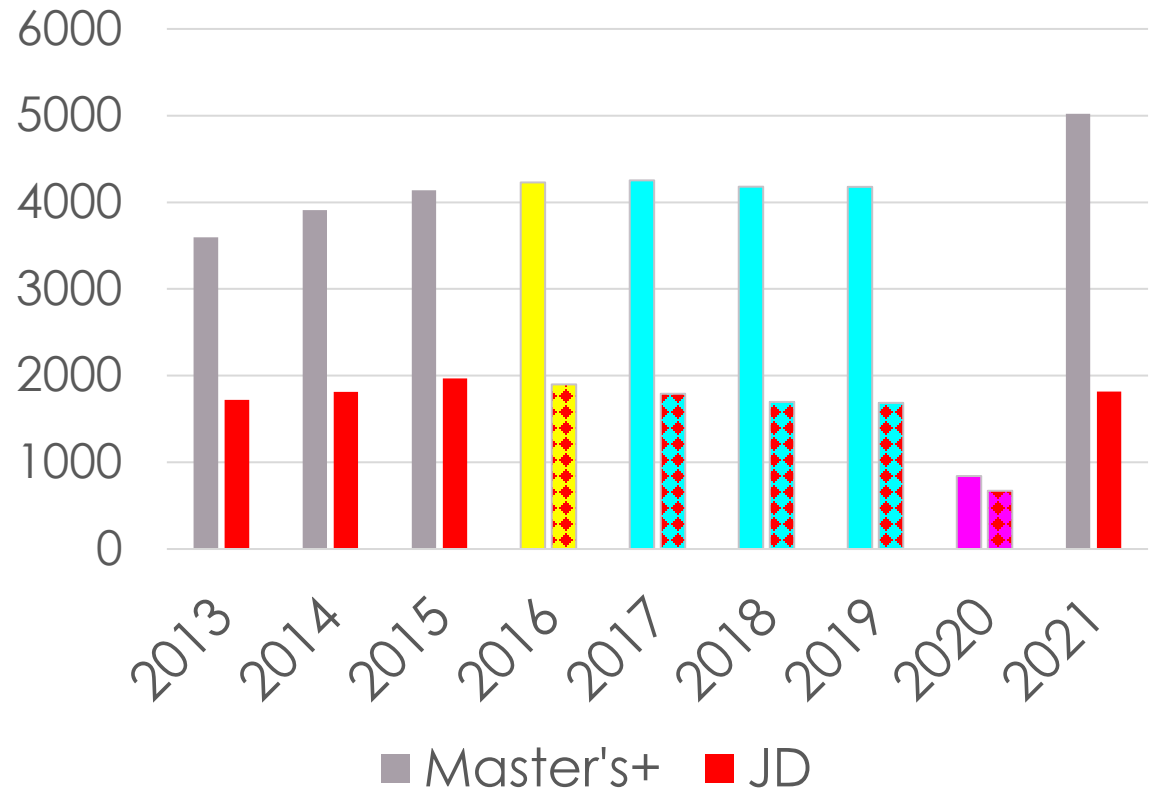
* Shakespeare, The Tempest

Is past prologue? additional detail

All international students, by program



Newly-enrolled students per year, by program



Trump election, Trump administration, Covid

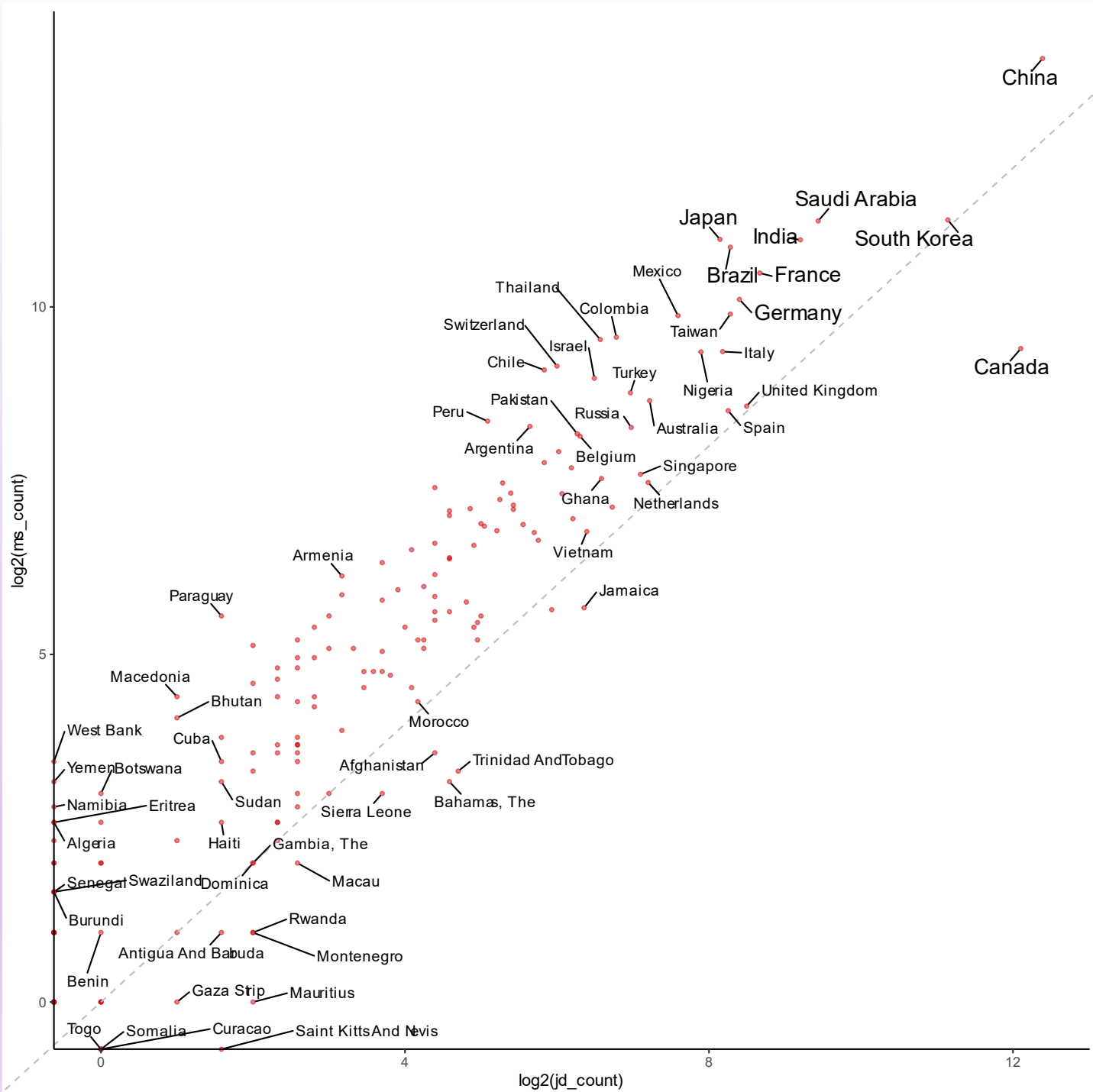
Home (citizenship) region, all years/programs

Home region (citizenship)	# of students
Asia	30132
Europe	10493
Latin America & Caribbean	6793
North America (Canada)	4900
Middle East & North Africa	4507
Africa, Sub-Saharan	2020
Oceania	699
Stateless	1

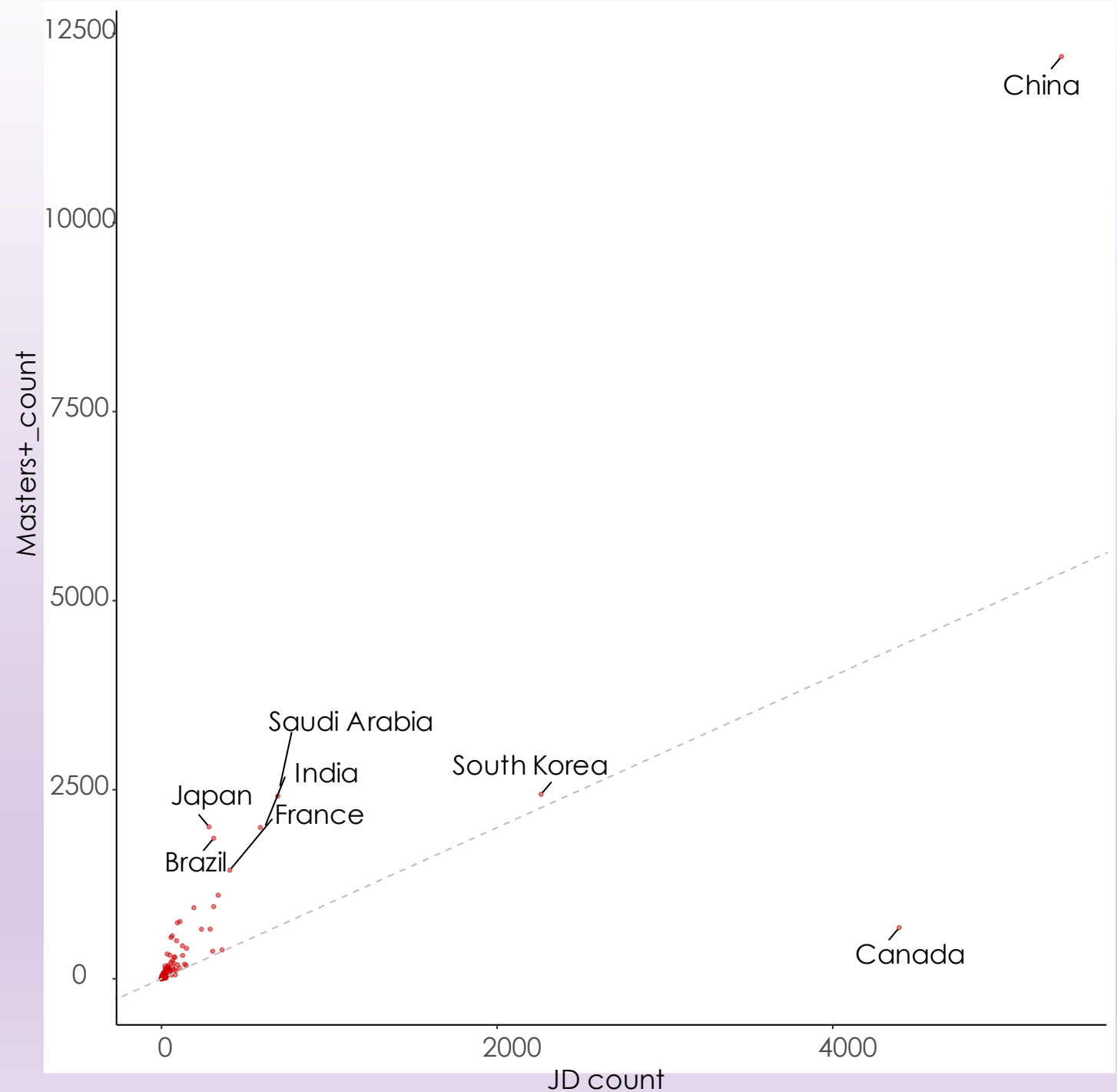
2021 Top 20 Sending Countries, by degree program group, and comparing Visa Data (law) to DHS (all fields/levels)

JD (2021)	Master's+ (2021)	DHS (2021) all fields/levels
China	China	China
Canada	Saudi Arabia	India
South Korea	India	South Korea
India	Japan	Canada
Saudi Arabia	South Korea	Brazil
Brazil	Brazil	Vietnam
UK	France	Saudi Arabia
France	Nigeria	Taiwan
Taiwan	Taiwan	Japan
Italy	Mexico	Mexico
Nigeria	Germany	Nigeria
Japan	Colombia	Nepal
Mexico	Italy	Colombia
Singapore	Canada	UK
Spain	Chile	Turkey
Germany	Argentina	Bangladesh
Australia	Thailand	France
Ghana	Switzerland	Germany
Turkey	UK	Spain
Vietnam	Peru	Iran

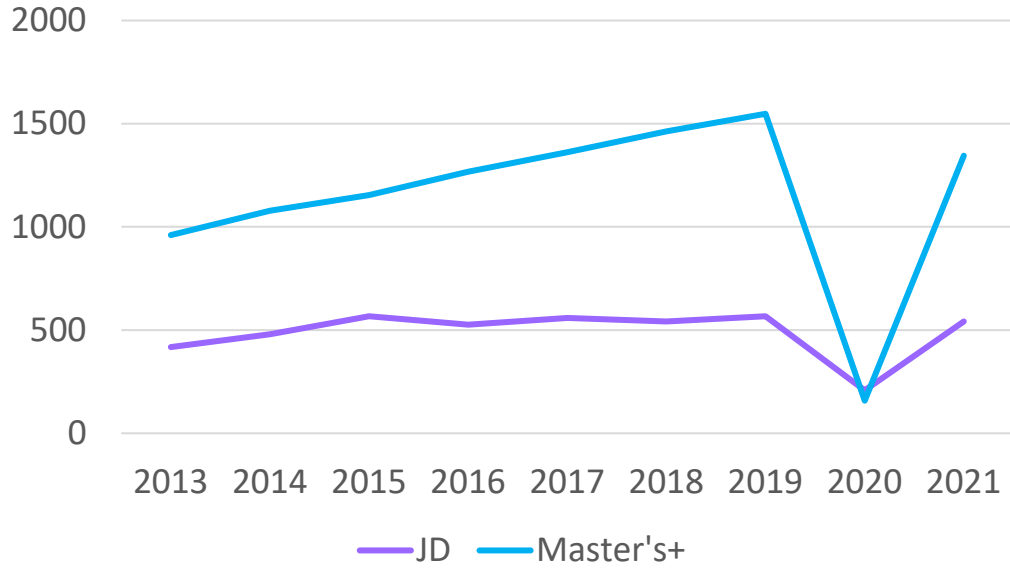
Sending country
detail:
JD (vertical axis)
and Master's+
(horizontal axis), all
years aggregated
($\log_2 2$ scale)



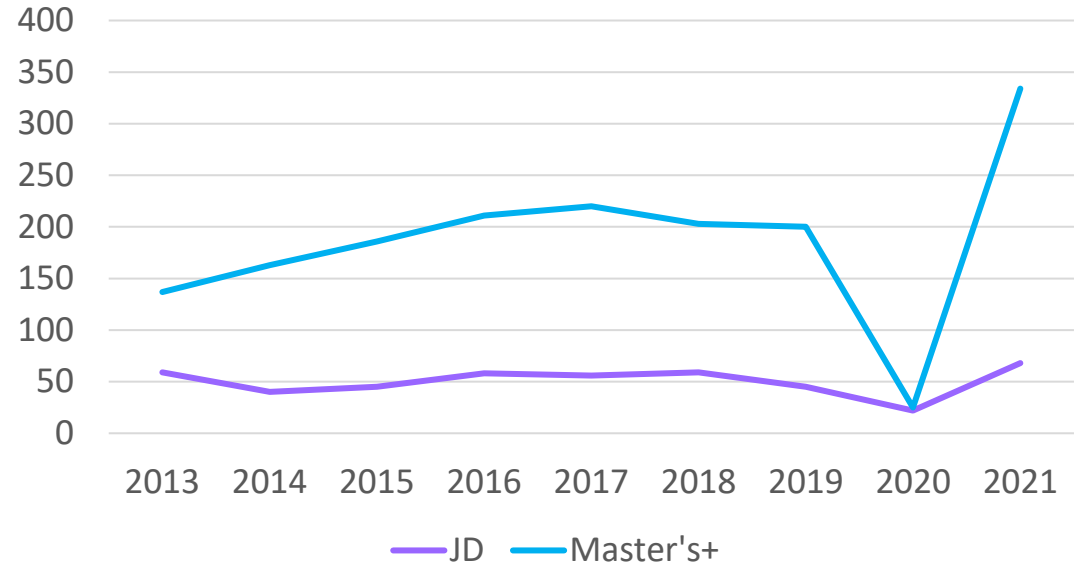
Sending country
detail: linear
scale degree
program and
home country,
all years
aggregated



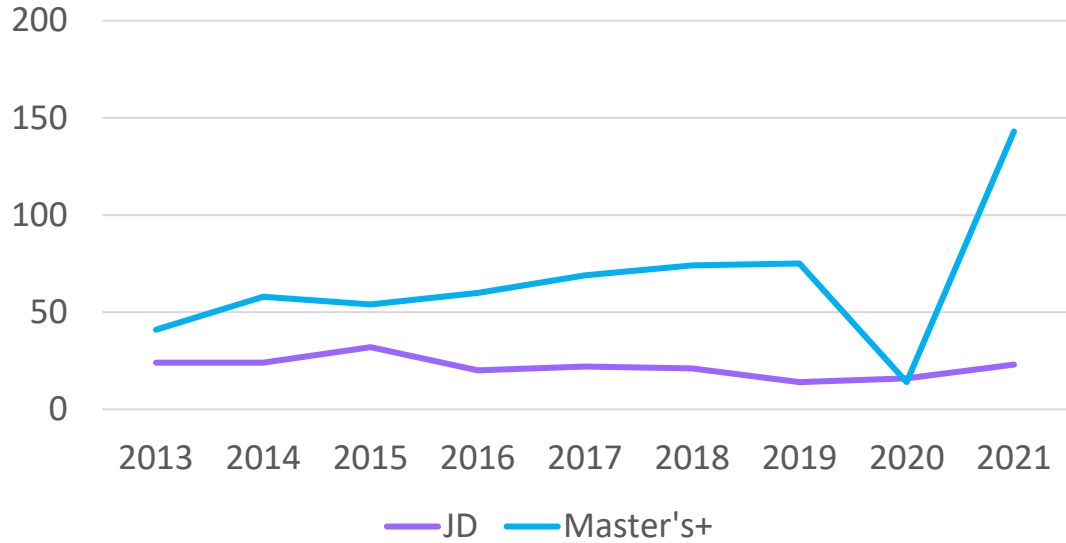
China Newly-Enrolled



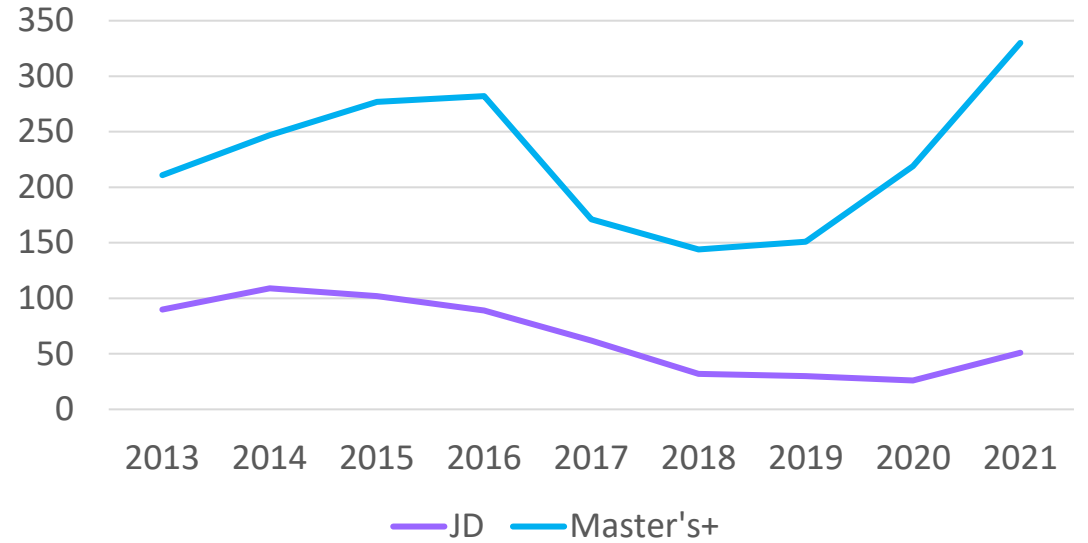
India Newly-Enrolled



Nigeria Newly-Enrolled



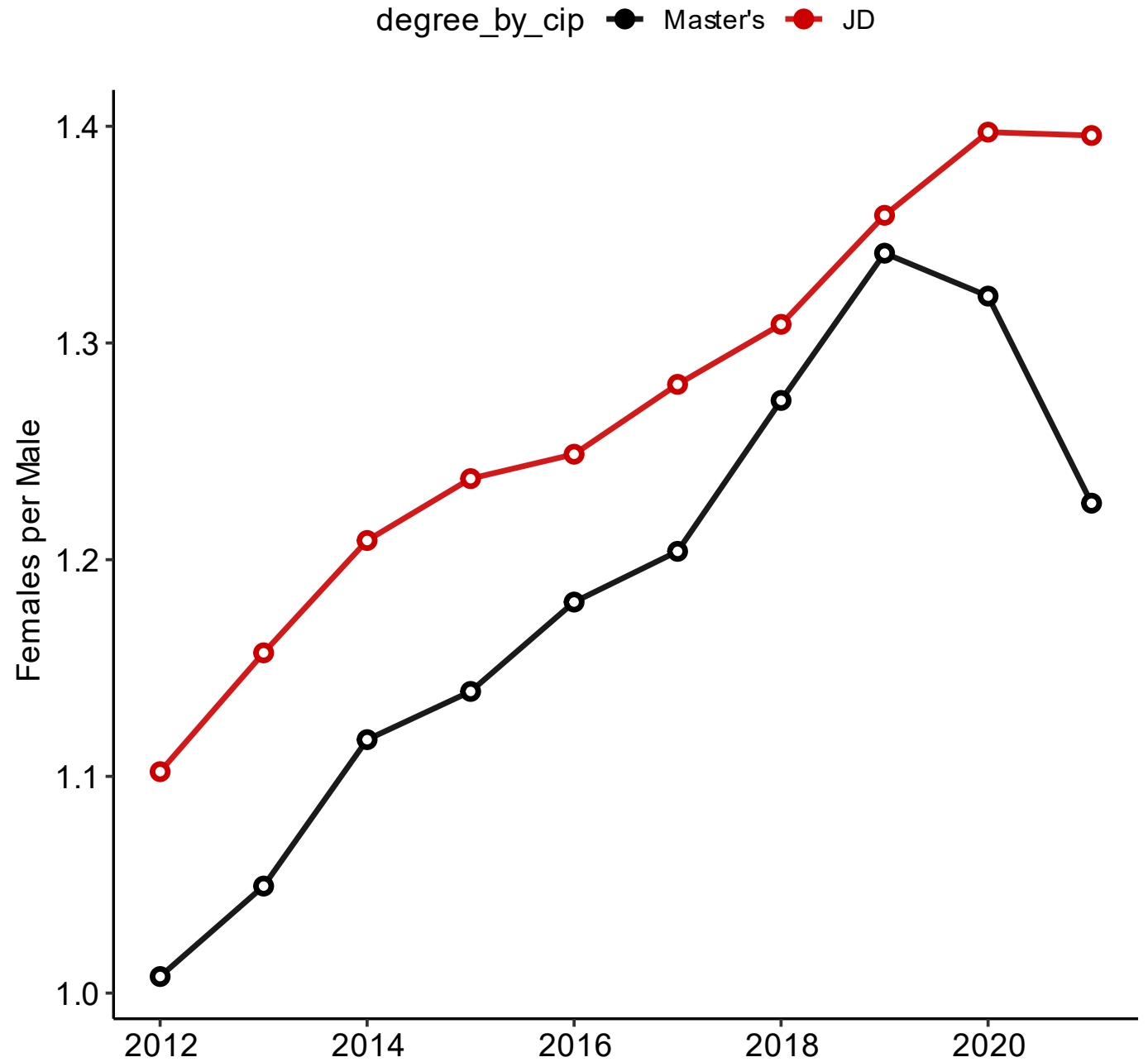
Saudi Arabia Newly-Enrolled



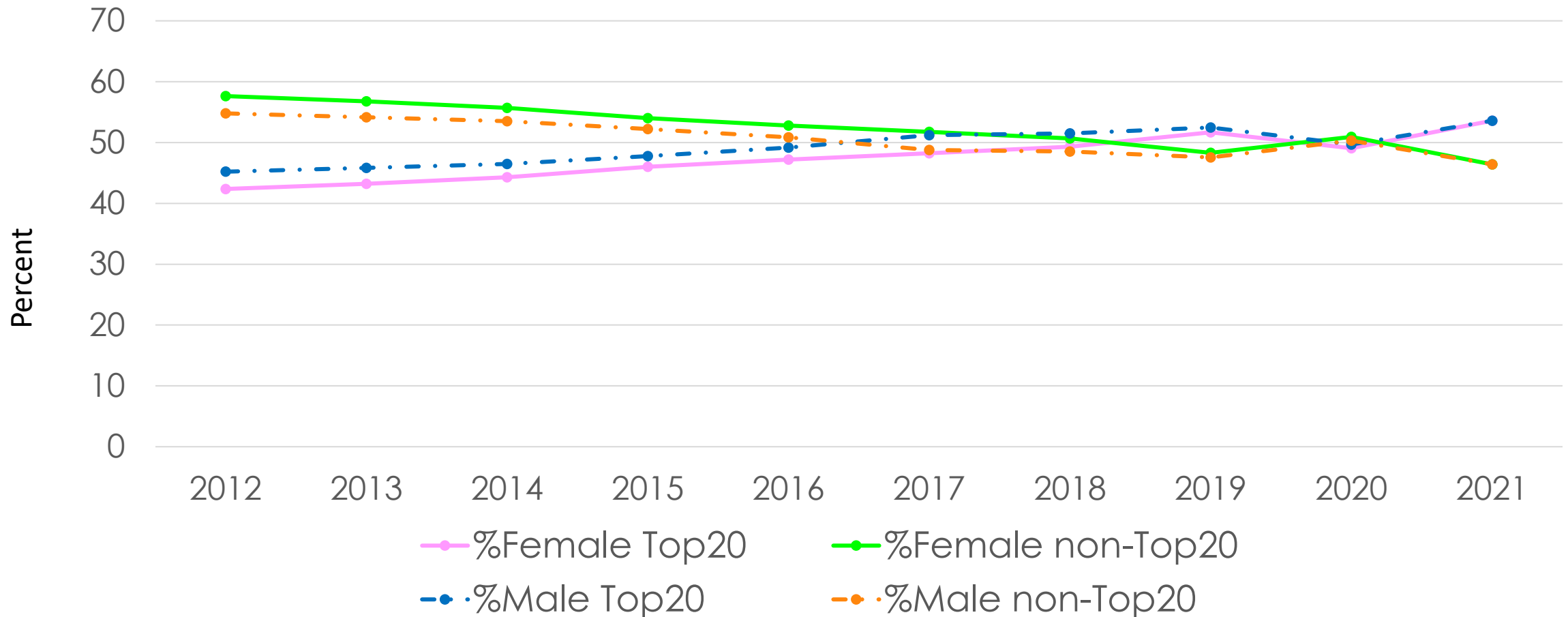
Gender

- In each year from 2012-2021, *women outnumbered men* overall and in each of the two program categories
- In all programs combined, from 2012 - 2021:
 - ♀ +15.5%
 - ♂ - 6.7%

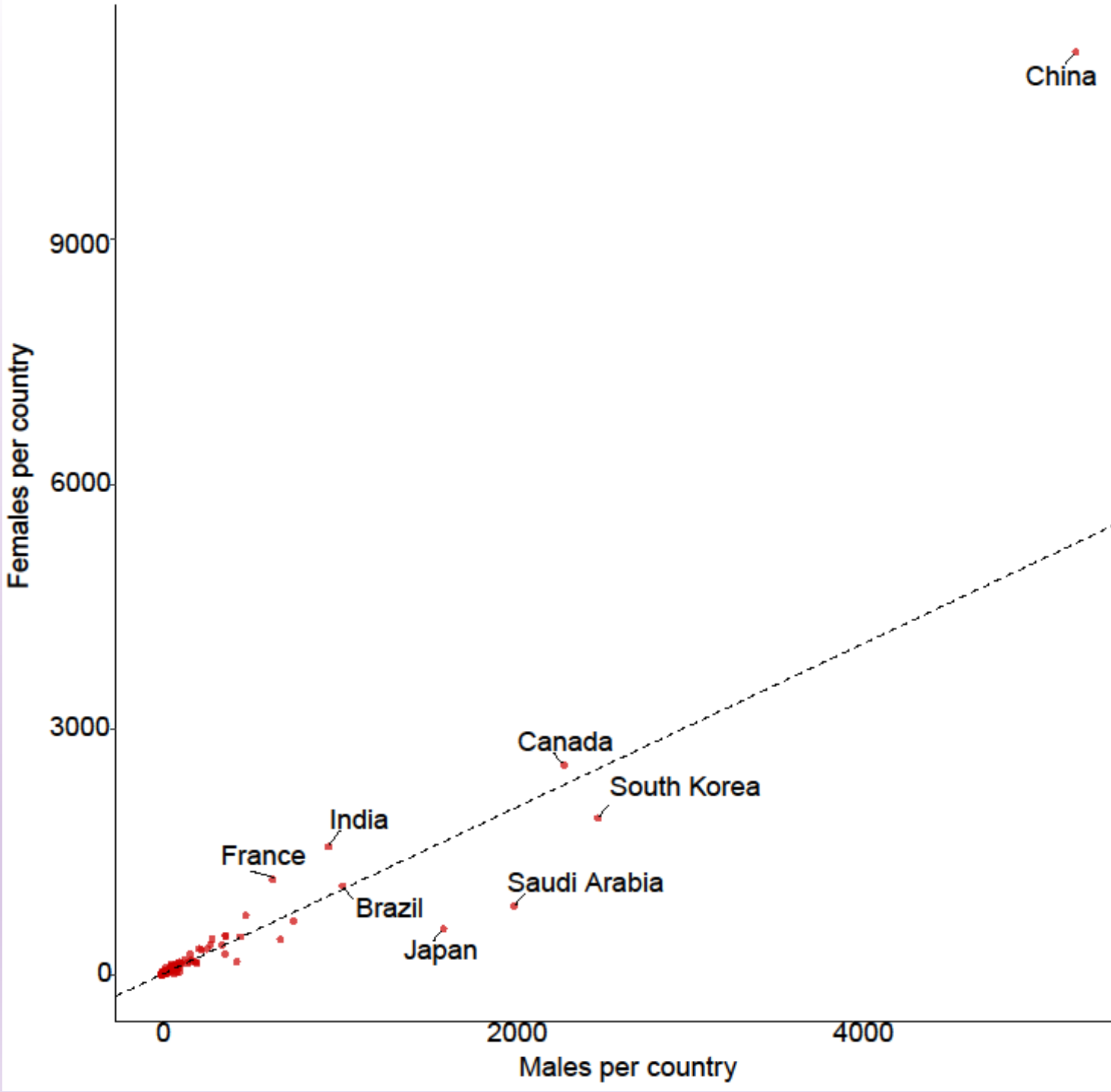
Females per male by degree program, by year



% of males and females in Top20 v. non-Top20 law schools, all programs, by year



Gender ratio by citizenship



Thank you!

