



Adjust

Embrace Change



IAESTE SWITZERLAND



Transform



Learn



Transition



# Annual Report 2024

## A year of transition

As we're closing another exchange year, it is time to reflect on the challenges we've faced, the progress we've made and what lies ahead.

The biggest challenge we are facing is that our outgoing exchange numbers remain significantly below pre-pandemic level. This is due to various factors. Internationally, many of our partner countries have not recovered as quickly as we had hoped; they are still struggling with limited internship offerings and the overall work environment remains difficult. The lack of resources in these countries has also made communication tougher, impacting our exchange efforts. Nationally, feedback and observations from the last couple of years post pandemic have shown us that the most significant effect of COVID was the loss of word-of-mouth. Students did not have the chance to leave during the pandemic and those who returned from their internship abroad did not have the opportunities to share their experience in the

same manner as before. Two generations of students were therefore not able to pass on knowledge of IAESTE.

As a result, we've put a lot of effort into promoting our program and getting the word out again. We have invested substantial resources into student raising initiatives and expanded our program promotion at universities. From setting up waffle stands to giving five-minute pitches at the beginning of lectures, we have actively worked to increase our visibility. We also hired a student assistant and created a newsletter to engage with students directly.

The initial outcomes from these efforts are promising, however there remains a persistent imbalance between our incoming (106 successful placements) and outgoing (67 successful placements) exchange which has significant implications for our financial sustainability. Inflation and rising costs are also contributing to this challenging situation. This has led us to revise our funding structure in collaboration with our

board and we have determined that some fee increases are necessary. We have also developed a new contribution model for schools that allows better resource and budget planning for the schools and us alike. You can read more about this change in our dedicated article.

We are fortunate to have continued support from partners, universities, and employers whose commitment is instrumental in sustaining our program. We are confident that we are on the right path and that the new directions taken will lead to a successful exchange year for all.



Andreas Hugli  
President of IAESTE Switzerland



## Your new IAESTE Switzerland team

After 13 years of providing great care for our incoming interns and Swiss employers, Gaby Hilpertshauer left our team at the end of July. We warmly thank her for her wonderful work during all these years!

Hannah Riemann has transitioned from outgoing to join the incoming team, replacing Gaby, and we have the pleasure of welcoming Valentina Preuhs, who has already been active with IAESTE Austria for several years, as our new Outgoing Exchange Coordinator.

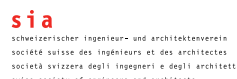
### PREMIUM PARTNERS



Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften



### PARTNERS



### SUPPORTED BY



# Two decades of commitment to international interns



HOME COUNTRIES  
OF IAESTE INTERNS  
AT HGPC

Hochstrasser Glaus & Partner Consulting AG (HGPC) and IAESTE have been working closely together for over 20 years. HGPC is a leading engineering company specializing in consulting and planning in the fields of air, heating, cooling, energy and measurement, control and instrumentation technology. Its strength lies in the planning and implementation of projects in the field of building technology.

## Commitment to IAESTE students

It is very important to HGPC to offer an encouraging and supportive work environment which includes promoting young talents and providing opportunities for their personal and professional development.

Ivana Aksic from HGPC is convinced that the benefits are mutual:

*"The exchange with international students enriches our company with fresh ideas and new perspectives. Our team appreciates the variety of cultural backgrounds. This diversity strengthens the team spirit and promotes an atmosphere of openness."*

## Maintaining long-lasting connections

The relationships that have developed over the years with former IAESTE interns often endure over time and distance and are actively cultivated within the company. Just last year for example, two alumni visited the company: William from China, who completed his IAESTE internship at HGPC 20 years ago, and Dmitry from Russia, who was able to benefit from this experience ten years later. Their careers have taken them both to Central Europe - William now lives in Zurich, Dmitry in Germany.

## Integration of international students

It is not required of students to speak German to intern at HGPC, but motivation to learn the language is appreciated. You may then wonder how they ensure the interns will be effective team players with such a language barrier. Ivana Aksic explains: *"In order to create a productive environment, the interns are quickly integrated into the day-to-day business and are given a personal 'buddy' who supports them during their induction and in their daily tasks. We also support the interns by offering them a voluntary German course. This not only helps to accustom them to Swiss culture, but also helps them develop the independence they need to find their bearings in their new environment."*

The long-standing collaboration with IAESTE shows how enriching the exchange between international students and established companies can be. HGPC benefits from the fresh energy and ideas of the interns, while they in turn gain valuable experience that has a lasting impact on their professional and personal development. The connections made and the diversity experienced within the company help to make HGPC fit for the challenges of a globalized world.

Watch Jup's  
testimonial  
here:



## IAESTE Internship at Technical University Eindhoven 1979

I grew up in Burgdorf, 20 km from the capital city of Bern. After the Gymnasium, I decided to attend the local State University of Applied Sciences, the second oldest of its kind in Switzerland after Winterthur. My personal interests were in electronics, having built my first circuitry project at the age of 12. The 70s was the revolution of integrated circuits, from discrete electronics to higher packaging and of course the arrival of 4 and 8 bit microprocessors. During my engineering studies, I started a project to build my own 8 bit computer with circuits and boards I ordered from the USA.

In 1978 when searching for a 3-4 months internship, the IAESTE coordinator at the ETH in Zurich came up with an opportunity at the Technical University Eindhoven. They needed a student, having hands-on programming experience with 8

bit microprocessors, to conduct a proof of concept for a research project at the institute for Analog Electronics. The project's objective was to create a reading 'apparatus' for the blind, detecting directly from the printed text (books, newspapers) to a paper tape imprint.

The following January I arrived by train from Switzerland to Eindhoven. It was one of the coldest winters on record in Brabant (the province of which Eindhoven is the capital). At the institute, they had already prepared and ordered my 'INTEL 8085 SDK', a single board development kit for the already advanced 2nd generation of 8 bit processor of Intel. I learnt quickly the assembler vocabulary, familiarized myself with all I/O issues, and started from scratch to design a real time mini-OS, so I could manage the events, from input, processing, to output. It was quite a challenge but after

nearly 3 months I was able to detect letters and have them processed and displayed.

The internship at the TU/e (as it is called today), had a lasting impact for my thirst of knowledge, and immersion into development, research and projects. The friendship of my guest family, and the various activities which the local IAESTE chapter in Eindhoven organized will never be forgotten. The internship taught me to think autonomously, tackle complex projects, and be perseverant. I wish for many more engineering students to take the opportunity and apply for such a once in a lifetime experience, it is a real boost in anybody's learning journey. Thanks IAESTE for the opportunity!



Thomas Wirth, Huntington NY



# The IAESTE Formula 1:1 = 2

The IAESTE exchange is always on a reciprocal basis, which means when receiving students from a certain country we can send students abroad as well.

Milan Krivanek, Czech Republic  
**Incoming Intern** at u-Blox  
Thalwil, Switzerland



Lara Murgrauer, Switzerland  
**Outgoing Intern** at University of Prague,  
Laboratory of Biomimetic Engineering  
Prague, Czech Republic

During my 10-months internship at u-Blox in Thalwil, Switzerland, I had the privilege of diving into the fascinating world of embedded systems and computer science. My main project involved creating software for a test board designed to test GNSS modules, which allowed me to work extensively with C and C++, Linux, Python, and STM32. Collaborating with a multicultural team, we tackled numerous challenges while developing specialized testing hardware.

My colleagues at u-Blox were incredibly supportive and friendly. This collaborative atmosphere was instrumental in my professional development, allowing me to gain hands-on experience and deepen my understanding of embedded systems.

In addition to professional growth, working in Thalwil offered me the opportunity to explore the natural beauty of the Swiss mountains. Almost every week, I embarked on trips and hikes, which provided a perfect balance to the rigorous demands of the internship.

Moreover, the internship allowed me to forge strong connections with people from diverse backgrounds, including Australia, Finland, and Poland. These friendships, built on shared experiences and mutual respect, are among the most cherished takeaways from my time at u-Blox.

In summary, my internship at u-Blox was a period of significant professional growth and personal enrichment. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to u-Blox and for the chance to explore such a magnificent country. The skills I acquired, the challenges I overcame, and the friendships I made have profoundly influenced my career path and personal life. The memories and learnings from this experience will undoubtedly shape my future endeavors, extending far beyond the field of embedded systems.

My journey to the beautiful city of Prague (Czech Republic) started with lots of new experiences, including my first-ever solo flight. But right from the beginning, I felt well looked after by IAESTE. Someone picked me up from the airport and accompanied me to the dorms, where he even carried all my bags for me, and showed me the way to the university on my first day of work.

I was very lucky to join an incredibly welcoming and supporting group (Laboratory of Biomimetic Engineering). During the weekdays, I dedicated myself to the lab project which focused on particle technology, aiming to generate and analyze polymer nanoparticles containing molecules found in garlic (allicin and allinase). But the evenings and weekends on the other hand were dedicated to lots of fun activities together with the other IAESTE interns. The other interns were the highlight of my entire journey, as I made friends from all over the world: India, Russia, Austria, the United Arab Emirates, Spain, Turkey, Poland, Tunisia, Brazil, and more. Together, we had a lot of fun and being able to learn about the different cultures was a very valuable learning experience for me. We spent our evenings enjoying various activities, such as watching sunsets on the Vltava River from pedal boats, having game nights in pubs, as well as exploring Prague. On weekends, we went on trips to explore the Czech Republic and neighboring countries, visiting places like Český Krumlov, Dresden, Vienna, Budapest, and more.

All in all, the IAESTE internship was an extraordinary journey for me with three main takeaways: a) You get to know people from many different and interesting cultures and realize, that at the core we are all very similar; b) I developed a deeper appreciation for academic research, gaining valuable lab-experiences; c) Prague's famous beer culture made me develop an appreciation for beer for the first time :)





# CoCon in Chamonix

Have you ever wanted to organize a conference? The Connect Conference is the annual highlight for members of the Connect Region, an IAESTE Regional Initiative of nine IAESTE countries that focuses on connecting and exchanging ideas with each other. It brings together representatives from all member countries for a unique blend of learning, networking, and cultural exchange.

This year, Switzerland and France joined forces to host the event in the picturesque setting of Chamonix, a location that added a touch of alpine magic to the experience. The adventure began with a city tour of Geneva, offering participants a glimpse into the rich history and vibrant

culture of this iconic city. The group then traveled to Chamonix, where the conference officially kicked off. The first evening set the tone with a vibrant national evening. Attendees were treated to a lively French cancan performance, followed by a traditional alphorn demonstration, blending the cultures of the two host nations. The evening concluded with the start of our own IAESTE Olympic games, where participants tested their knowledge in a quiz about the member countries.

Beyond the fun and games, the conference also offered a range of engaging workshops, providing valuable insights and fostering professional growth. The second evening was highlighted by the

international evening, where each country showcased its traditional food and drinks. This event provided a fantastic opportunity for cultural exchange and building new friendships. For those lucky enough to catch clear skies, a visit to Chamonix's Mont Blanc offered a breathtaking view. The conference concluded with a visit to the charming town of Annecy to round off an unforgettable conference weekend.

We'd like to say a big thank you to all those who attended and helped make this event so special, and especially to all those who helped organize it. Your hard work and dedication made this an memorable experience!



## Changes for financial sustainability

As mentioned in the introduction to this report, IAESTE Switzerland is facing financial difficulties due to several factors, both on the organisation's international and national level. With the support of the board, these challenges are being addressed through various means:

**Visa service fees:** As a first step, a logical increase in the visa service fees has been implemented. These fees are now tiered based on the duration of the internship, as different processes are involved with Swiss authorities depending on the length of the stay. The fees had not been raised in the past ten years, so this adjustment is appropriate given the rising operational costs.

**Successful placement fees for employers:** Public institutions and non-profit organizations that previously participated in the exchange program for free will now be subject to fees as well. Unfortunately, it is no longer sustainable for our organization to offer the service for free, especially since the original concept of a 1:1 exchange can no longer be ensured.

**New fee structure for outgoing placements:** During the summer months, meetings were held with all cooperating Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences to discuss a new fee structure. We have introduced a higher base fee (amount billed in the event there is no successful student placement) and participation fees are now set according to tiers of exchange numbers (1-3 / 4-5 / etc). This new model establishes a clear minimum and maximum amount the schools pay each year, allowing them, as well as IAESTE Switzerland, to plan and budget accurately. Additionally, the base fee guarantees a more equitable allocation of resources between the cooperating institutions, whereas the tiers provide an incentive and advantage for schools to send more students.

Discover the many ways  
you can SUPPORT US:



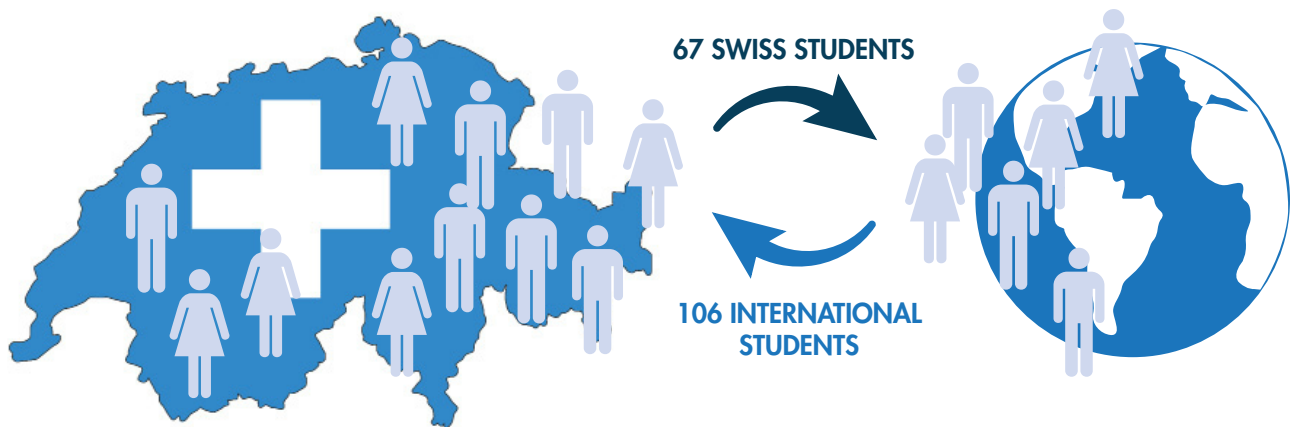
# Exchange Figures 2024

**IN: 106**

2023: 115

**OUT: 67**

2023: 75



## Countries

Students sent & received

	2023		2024	
	sent	received	sent	received
Afghanistan	0	0	0	0
Albania	0	0	0	0
Argentina	2	4	0	0
Australia	2	1	1	0
Austria	4	5	1	9
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	0	0	0	0
Belarus	0	0	0	0
Benin	0	0	0	0
Belgium	4	2	2	2
Bolivia	0	9	0	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	1
Botswana	0	0	0	0
Brazil	6	9	7	6
Canada	2	1	2	3
Chile	0	0	0	1
China incl. HK & MO	0	0	0	0
Colombia	3	2	1	2
Croatia	0	1	0	0
Czech Republic	2	5	5	4
Ecuador	3	4	5	4
Egypt	0	1	0	0
France	0	1	0	1
Gambia	0	0	1	0
Germany	3	7	1	6
Ghana	0	0	1	1
Greece	1	4	2	5
Hungary	0	0	0	0
India	3	4	6	7
Indonesia	0	0	0	0
Iran	1	4	1	0

	2023		2024	
	sent	received	sent	received
Iraq	0	0	0	0
Japan	2	1	1	2
Jordan	1	2	1	0
Kazakhstan	0	0	0	0
Kenya	8	5	6	6
Korea, Republic of	0	0	0	0
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	0	0
Lebanon	0	0	0	0
Malta	0	1	1	0
Mexico	0	0	0	2
Mongolia	1	0	0	0
Nepal	0	1	0	0
Nicaragua	1	1	1	0
Nigeria	0	1	0	0
North Macedonia	0	2	1	0
Norway	3	3	0	3
Oman	1	1	1	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	0
Palestine	0	0	0	0
Panama	1	1	1	1
Peru	0	0	1	0
Philippines	0	0	0	0
Poland	5	12	0	9
Qatar	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	0	1	3
Russia	0	0	0	0
Serbia	0	1	0	1
Sierra Leone	0	0	0	0
Slovakia	1	1	1	0
Slovenia	0	1	1	1
Spain	3	6	2	5

	2023		2024	
	sent	received	sent	received
Sri Lanka	1	0	0	0
Sweden	2	1	1	3
Syria	0	0	0	0
Tajikistan	2	1	1	2
Tanzania	0	0	1	0
Thailand	2	0	1	0
Tunisia	1	1	2	3
Turkey	0	3	0	1
Uganda	0	0	0	0
United Arab Emirates	2	1	2	3
United Kingdom	0	0	1	1
United States	0	1	1	1
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	0
Vietnam	2	2	2	2
Yemen	0	0	0	0
Non-Member Country	0	1	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>106</b>

## Top countries

### Out

Students sent

**1** Brazil

**2** India

**3** Kenia

### IN

Students received

**1** Poland & Austria

**2** India

**3** Kenia, Germany, Brazil



## Top Study Fields 2024

Students sent & received

IN



20

Chemistry & Chemical Engineering



16

Architecture



12

Computer Science



12

Mechanical Engineering



8

Electrical Engineering

OUT



8

Biology



8

Environmental Engineering / Sciences



7

Electrical Engineering



6

Food Technology



5

Computer Science

## Exchange by gender 2024

Students sent & received

IN

43 %



OUT

58 %

57 %



42 %

## Swiss Employers offering Internships in 2024

- A** Agroscope Zurich  
atelier ww Architekten SIA AG Zurich  
Atus AG Lufingen  
Avantama Stäfa
- B** Bachema AG Schlieren  
BFH - Berner Fachhochschule, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology Burgdorf  
Burckhardt Architektur AG Basel / Bern / Zurich
- C** Caprez Ingenieure AG Chur  
CAScination AG Bern  
CERN Geneva  
CORPUS architecture urbanisme Geneva
- D** Datahouse Zurich
- E** Eawag - Eidgenössische Anstalt für Wasserversorgung, Abwasserreinigung und Gewässerschutz Dübendorf  
Empa - Eidgenössische Materialprüfungs- und Forschungsanstalt Dübendorf / St. Gallen  
Ericsson AG Bern  
ETHZ - Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich, Institute of Energy and Process Engineering Zurich  
ETHZ, Institute of Agricultural Sciences Zurich / Lindau-Eschikon  
ETHZ, Institute for integrative Biology Zurich  
ETHZ, Social Networks Lab Zurich  
Evatec AG Trübbach
- F** FHNW - Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Institute for Interactive Technologies Brugg-Windisch  
FHNW - Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz, Institute of Polymer Engineering Brugg-Windisch  
Institute of Polymer Nanotechnology Brugg-Windisch  
FKH - Fachkommission für Hochspannungsfragen Zurich-Oerlikon
- G** Geoprofile GmbH Adligenswil
- H** HEIG VD - Haute Ecole d'Ingeniérie et de Gestion du Canton de Vaud, Institute for Information and Communication Technology Yverdon-les-Bains  
Hitachi Energy Ltd Baden-Dättwil  
Hochstrasser Glaus & Partner Consulting AG Zurich  
Hombrechtikon Systems Engineering AG Hombrechtikon
- I** intelliCard Solutions AG Rapperswil  
lonair ag Lucerne
- J** Julien Dubois Architectes SA La Chaux-de-Fonds
- K** Kanton Basel Stadt, Baudepartement Basel  
KRM Services AG Zurich  
Kunz Architekten AG Basel
- L** Lichtkompetenz GmbH Zurich  
Loepfe Brothers Ltd. Wetzikon  
Luca Selva AG Basel Lumiphase AG Stäfa  
Lüscher Bucher Theiler Architekten GmbH Lucerne
- M** Meister Abrasives AG Andelfingen
- N** Niutec AG Winterthur  
Novartis Pharma AG Basel  
NTI Audio AG Schaan, Liechtenstein
- O** OST - Ostschweizer Fachhochschule, Institut für Microtechnology and Photonics Buchs  
Ovivo Switzerland AG Witterswil
- P** Parit Immo Bau AG St. Gallen Planon Zurich  
PSI - Paul Scherrer Institut Villigen
- R** Rapp Architekten AG Münchenstein  
Reichel Architekten GmbH Zurich
- S** SAK St. Gallisch-Appenzellische Kraftwerke AG St. Gallen  
Schäublin Architekten AG Zurich  
Schenkel Vermessungen AG Zurich  
Siloxene AG Brüttsellen  
Société des Produits Nestlé SA Konolfingen  
Solcept AG Wetzikon  
Stücheli Architekten AG Zurich  
Supertext AG Zurich  
Swiss Fashion Time AG Möhlin
- T** Terraview GmbH Winterthur  
toolswiss AG Rotkreuz  
TreaTech SA Lausanne
- U** u-blox AG Thalwil  
Universität Basel, Biozentrum Basel  
Universität Bern, ARTORG Center for Biomedical Engineering Research Bern
- V** Vitaplant Uttwil
- W** Waldhauser + Hermann AG Münchenstein
- Z** ZHAW - Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften, Centre for Artificial Intelligence Winterthur  
ZHAW, Institute of Computational Physics Winterthur  
ZHAW, Institute of Computer Science Winterthur  
ZHAW, Institute of Energy Systems and Fluid Engineering Winterthur  
ZHAW, Institute of Mechatronic, Systems Winterthur  
ZHAW, Institute for Product and Process Development Winterthur  
Zulauf AG Schinznach Dorf