

A WORLD OF LEARNING

CANADA'S PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL
IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

2014



CBIE
Canadian Bureau for
International Education



BCEI
Bureau canadien de
l'éducation internationale



The Canadian Bureau for International Education

The Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) is Canada's national, bilingual, not-for-profit organization dedicated to making Canada a global leader in international education.

CBIE is the national voice promoting Canadian international education by mobilizing expertise, knowledge, opportunity and leadership.

CBIE's pan-Canadian membership comprises all levels of education, including schools and school boards, cégeps, colleges, polytechnics, language schools and universities, which enroll over 1.2 million students from coast to coast.

CBIE's activities comprise advocacy, research, training programs, scholarship management, knowledge transfer through technical assistance, supporting capacity for international educators, and engaging in cooperative projects in capacity building, institutional strengthening and human resource development.

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List of Acronyms Used in This Report

AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BCCIE	British Columbia Council for International Education
CAPS-I	Canadian Association of Public Schools — International
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education
CCIE	Canadian Consortium for International Education
CEC	Canadian Experience Class visa of Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CICan	Colleges and Institutes Canada
CMEC	Council of Ministers of Education of Canada
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DFATD	Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada
EAAC	Education Abroad Advisory Committee
EAIE	European Association for International Education
FPCCEIA	Federal-Provincial Consultative Committee on Education-Related International Activities
FSTP	Federal Skilled Trades Program
FSWP	Federal Skilled Worker Program
IAU	International Association of Universities
IES	International Education Strategy
IEASA	International Education Association of South Africa
ILN	CBIE's Internationalization Leaders' Network
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada)
ISP	International Student Program
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LMIA	Labour Market Impact Assessment
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
OCWP	Off-Campus Work Permit program of Citizenship and Immigration Canada
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PGWP	Post-Graduation Work Permit program of Citizenship and Immigration Canada
PNP	Provincial Nominee Program
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TVET	Technical/Vocational Education and Training

PREFACE

I am delighted to share with you the third edition of CBIE's flagship report on international education, *A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education 2014*, in this milestone year for the sector. This year, the federal government put forward its very first international education strategy. It's an ambitious strategy, with a goal to double the number of international students choosing to study here by 2022.

But the strategy doesn't yet go far enough. International students are a key component of international education and, as you will see in Chapter 3 of this report, we continue to experience strong growth in the number of international students in Canada. But they do not represent the full potential of internationalization and should be looked upon as only one factor in a comprehensive international education strategy. In Chapter 4, you will read that half of the international students who study here wish to stay after their studies. These students, however, are equally important ambassadors for Canada if they settle elsewhere. In a similar vein, while the federal strategy forms part of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada's Global Markets Action Plan, a trade strategy designed to increase Canada's economic prosperity and global position, it should be looked at in a broader context. It is important to consider not only how the strategy contributes to economic competitiveness, but how it can serve as a platform for addressing a wide range of Canada's foreign policy objectives, including fostering capacity building in developing countries and strengthening people-to-people linkages that will carry our relationships forward in all domains.

As you will see in Chapter 6, a number of our international peers are approaching their international education strategies in such a manner, and have put in place comprehensive programs that encourage more of their own nationals to have an educational experience abroad, valuing this type of globalizing experience as crucial to their future prosperity. We know that Canadians do not go abroad in great numbers, and we need a similarly ambitious program. Study abroad is proving to be the Achilles' heel in Canada's aspirations for greater global engagement and competitiveness — our Global Engagement Challenge that you will read more about in this report.

We have, however, come a long way. Internationalization permeates our schools and school boards, colleges, institutes, universities and other learning institutions. It forms an integral part of many provincial policy frameworks. And now, it is a priority at the federal level.

In Canada, we can be proud of our successes and our approach to moving forward. With an increasing number of international students, we need to regularly check in to ensure that they are having an extraordinary experience here. CBIE's International Student Survey continues to show that foreign students highly value their Canadian education experience and would recommend Canada as a study destination to fellow mobile students. But we learned over the past few years that international students are not interacting with Canadians in the strong numbers we would like to see. Chapter 4 explores this. This phenomenon is not unique to Canada, but it is nevertheless of concern, and is a missed opportunity

to benefit from the presence of international students across Canadian schools and campuses. Unsurprisingly, our institutions are responsive, and many have put together well-researched orientation and integration programs to address this issue — we have highlighted a few of them in Chapter 5.

And beyond international students, our institutions are building partnerships with international counterparts; setting ambitious goals for getting their students abroad (for example, the University of Calgary has set a goal of 50%); and increasingly have internationalized courses as part of core curriculums (such as international relations, global politics, etc.). These institutional activities should be supported by a robust, comprehensive federal engagement plan, and CBIE will continue to work with our partners to ensure that the international education strategy evolves to spur and support more of these important on the ground efforts.

International education is critical to the future of Canada and Canadians. I hope that this report on international education in Canada will be used by many and lend further impetus to outstanding current initiatives and new ambitious projects.

Karen McBride
President and CEO
Canadian Bureau for
International Education







INTRODUCTION

***A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education 2014* is the third edition of CBIE's global report on international education in Canada. It offers up-to-date indicators on major aspects of international education, including the policy framework, international mobility and the student experience.**

In 2014, Canada's first federal International Education Strategy (IES) was released. A key context-setting milestone in the education sector, the IES is considered throughout this report, including analysis and commentary with respect to its framing, objectives, targets and gaps. Also this year, there were significant regulatory changes to immigration programs and policies affecting international students. Chapter 2 discusses CBIE's role in advocating in the interests of our institutions and students, recognizing that great student services that weave together cultural and academic adaptation with student-focused immigration support are critical to Canada's success as a global leader in education.

There were 293,500 international students in Canada in 2013, across all levels of study, making Canada the world's seventh most popular destination country hosting 5% of internationally mobile students. International students comprise approximately 8% of undergraduate university enrolment and 16% of graduate level enrolment. At the doctoral level, international students account for 26% of enrolment. Approximately 50% of Canada's international students indicate that it is their long-term goal to gain permanent residency (see Chapter 4), suggesting that they are positioned to contribute to Canada's social, cultural and economic prosperity into the future. Those who choose to settle elsewhere will

also have strong linkages to Canada, and serve as strong Ambassadors for Canada and Canadian education.

There has been an 84% increase in the number of international students in Canada over the last decade, from 2003 to 2013, including an 11% increase over 2012. Though international students in Canada come from 194 different countries, the top five sending countries (China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and France) represent over half of the international students in Canada.

However, there are shifts that are suggestive of future trends. There have been noteworthy increases in the number

of international students from Nigeria, with a 29% increase over the previous year, Russia at +24%, Brazil +17%, Vietnam +16% and France +16%. The top country of origin, China, saw an 18% increase. These countries are key international education markets that provide linkages for future business, research and diplomatic partnerships.

CBIE's 2014 International Student Survey polled over 3,000 international students at 25 CBIE post-secondary member institutions across the country. This year's survey featured expanded focus on the student decision-making process, pre-arrival planning and satisfaction. As in previous surveys, the results are



encouraging. We found that the vast majority of students speak favourably about their time here — 90% of students were either satisfied or very satisfied with their educational experience in Canada.

Ensuring the continued well-being of international students in Canada is a major component of CBIE's work, and has been since our inception. Though 76% of students indicated that their perception of Canada as a tolerant, non-discriminatory society played a key role in their decision to study here, the data over two years of surveying international students showed that many were not making friends with Canadian students. Over 50% reported no Canadian friends at all — a troubling finding. While making friends is not a primary factor in choosing a study destination or even in having a satisfying study experience, when international students and their Canadian counterparts do not fully benefit from each other's presence through meaningful social interaction, everyone loses. CBIE has explored this issue and our analysis and results are detailed in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, Caroline Rueckert of the University of British Columbia reviews the Canadian approach to orientation

and integration of international students, noting that institutions are placing increased importance on providing the right kinds of support services to ensure academic and social success. A campus, she argues, that creates the conditions for the “gloriously diverse” international student body to contribute their unique gifts and that pays attention to helping students develop a sense of connectedness, belonging, resourcefulness and capability will enable students to thrive. Case studies contributed by CBIE members show how some institutions are attempting to do just that.

International students in Canada support the excellence and innovation of Canada's education and cultural landscape, and are a vital building block for internationalizing Canadian institutions. Canada has been successful in encouraging more and more international students worldwide to study here. But international mobility should be a two-way street. It is estimated that only 3% of Canadian students annually participate in study abroad while enrolled at their Canadian university and fewer who are in college and institute programs. This is a weakness that impedes Canada's aspirations for greater global engagement and competitiveness.

Internationalizing young people in preparation for a globalized society is strategic at a national level and outbound mobility is a critical part of a comprehensive approach. In CBIE's submission in August 2014 to the House of Commons Finance Committee, we stated that Canada's grand challenge is to get more of its students going international for educational experiences, including study abroad, work abroad or experiential learning. This critical component of a national international education strategy will require investment. In this report we look at the education abroad environment in Canada, and review the policies of international peers that are pursuing bold visions for education abroad for their citizens.

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By consulting external sources, reviewing current literature and analyzing CBIE's own original research, this comprehensive report aims to provide a resource for leaders, policy-makers and professionals across the education sphere, in government and the private sector, as well as fellow researchers in this country and abroad, and to advance our collective understanding of international education in Canada.

CHAPTER 1

INTERNATIONALIZATION IN CANADA



2014 marked a milestone in Canadian internationalization: the release of the first federal International Education Strategy (IES) “[Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Prosperity and Innovation](#).” The IES, released in January 2014 and discussed in detail below, represents a remarkable degree of consensus nationally, signalling the centrality of international education to Canada’s national prosperity and global position.

The IES centres on doubling the number of international students choosing Canada, particularly those who are qualified and would wish to stay on after completing their studies, seeing this cohort as one response to the widening gap between the number of occupations and the working population, commonly referred to as the “skills gap”.¹

The number of international students in Canada is likely to continue to increase. According to UNESCO, the number of internationally mobile students is rising, and in 2012, “... at least 4 million students went abroad to study, up from 2 million in 2000, representing 1.8% of all tertiary enrolments or 2 in 10 students globally” ([UNESCO, 2014](#)).

New and restructured economic immigration programs have been designed to encourage and facilitate smooth, efficient and increased transitions to permanent residency of international student graduates. Meanwhile, recent changes to Section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) limit the ability of International Student Advisers, those within educational institutions with the most direct access to international students, to provide these students with much-needed information on immigration matters. CBIE research shows that hiring an in-house immigration consultant was neither desired (no relevant expertise with this cohort), nor financially viable for many institutions. Restricting support services at institutions,

which have a front-line position with students, could be a deterrent to international student graduates wishing to stay, and could potentially have a long-term impact on Canada’s ability to attract and retain international students.²

With international students in Canada a national priority, it is important to ensure that while studying here this group has an excellent experience. In CBIE’s 2013 *A World of Learning*, a feature on discrimination found that though 82% of international students agree that Canada is a welcoming and tolerant society, many indicated that they had experienced racism or discrimination as a student here. A number of recommendations were made in this report. Results from the 2014 International Student Survey show that progress has been made --across all groups of individuals that students were asked to think about (faculty, institutional staff, other students and the broader community off-campus), levels of perception of racial discrimination had decreased by between 7% and 13%. This iteration of the report will highlight another area that Canadians can work together to address, namely the fact that international students are not making friends with Canadian students in great numbers. These results are not unique — the US, Australia and the UK are all experiencing this challenge. The feature in Chapter 4 titled “The integration challenge: connecting international students with their Canadian peers” gives fuller details on responses, as well as important recommendations.

Orientation and integration of international students is crucial not only to their experience in Canada, but also to their ability to internationalize our schools and campuses and, if they remain in Canada, our communities. Facilitating friendships between international students and Canadian students is central to having a truly internationalized school or campus, and forms an integral part of internationalization.

1. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada discusses the imbalances between labour demand and supply with projections to 2020 at <http://www23.hrsdc.gc.ca/l3bd.zt.i1shhtml@-eng.jsp?lid=16&fid=1&lang=en>.

2. For a more in-depth discussion on changes to immigration programs that affect international students, see Chapter 2.

Evolving Priorities

As discussed in the 2013 iteration of this publication, internationalization is undergoing a process of change. A “rethink” by CBIE, the International Association of Universities (IAU), the European Association for International Education (EAIE) and others place importance on wide-ranging internationalization. His Excellency David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and CBIE’s Patron has championed the concept of the diplomacy of knowledge, [defining](#) it as “our ability and willingness to work together and share our learning across disciplines and borders.... By practising the diplomacy of knowledge, we can open up relationships between peoples and foster harmony in an interconnected world” (Johnston, D., 2012). This notion, speaking squarely to internationalization, and coming from the highest levels of the Canadian government, gives all international education proponents a mandate: pursue internationalization, and pursue it energetically, working together to ensure its equitable benefits.

In January 2014 CBIE participated in the first of what promises to be a series of Global Dialogues on Higher Education Internationalization. This inaugural event held in Port Elizabeth, South Africa and hosted by CBIE’s sister organization the International Education association of South Africa (IEASA) launched an action plan (the [Nelson Mandela Bay Declaration](#)) towards a more equitable, diverse and ultimately useful expression of internationalization. CBIE is exploring the role of international education in shaping a sustainable common future for all in its 2014 annual conference in Ottawa.

While recognizing the vast contribution that increasing numbers of international students make to the Canadian society, there is a sense that Canada can approach internationalization in a unique fashion by ensuring that the decision to recruit students to Canada is made with ethical considerations in mind, and that there is equal value placed on the many other components of internationalization.

Canada’s institutional leaders in internationalization continue to discuss the “Canadian” approach, recently putting forward a set of Internationalization Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions.³

CBIE will continue to work with its Canadian partners in the Canadian Consortium for International Education (CCIE), as well as its other national and international partners, to:

1. Bring cohesion to internationalization, and
2. Make internationalization comprehensive and accessible.

3. The Principles will be published on CBIE’s website in 2014.

Leadership of International Education

In Canada, provinces and territories have constitutional responsibility for education. At the federal level Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has responsibility for issues related to international student immigration and the Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD) shares responsibility in the area of branding and promotion with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). The recently released federal International Education Strategy, outlined below, is a DFATD policy initiative, falling within the [Global Markets Action Plan](#).

International Education and the Federal Government

Following strong commitments to international education in [Advantage Canada](#) (2006), [Compete to Win](#) (2008) and support for internationalization through DFATD and CMEC’s partnerships to launch and jointly manage Canada’s education brand, “Education au/in Canada” in 2012, the Government of Canada committed \$10 million over two years to international education. The government named an Advisory Panel on Canada’s International Education Strategy with a mandate to [recommend](#) ways to strengthen international education as part of Canada’s national priorities. This resulted in the federal government’s strongest commitment to international education to date – a national International Education Strategy.

International Education Strategy

Canada’s federal International Education Strategy (IES) represents a remarkable degree of consensus in a country with no national education body, and is a milestone in the education sector.

The IES, titled *Canada’s International Education Strategy: Harnessing our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity*, has the following objectives:

- **Setting targets to attract international students.**

The primary goal of the IES is to double the number of international students in Canada to 450,000 by 2022. This will create at least 85,500 new jobs, see international student expenditures increase to \$16.1 billion, contribute almost \$10 billion to the Canadian economy and generate over \$900 million in tax revenues (IES, pg. 11).

■ **Focusing on priority education markets.**

The IES, which is a component of Canada's Global Markets Action Plan, focuses on the countries and regions identified as priorities for Canada under that Plan: Brazil, China, India, Mexico, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Vietnam. At the same time, there is recognition that relationships need to be maintained with established partners such as the US, France, Germany, the UK, Australia, Japan and Korea, and that the Strategy will be flexible to accommodate other areas of opportunity and global trends.

■ **Branding Canada to maximize success.**

The Government of Canada, in collaboration with CMEC, established Canada's education brand, [Education au/in Canada](#), in 2008, with the slogan "Imagine Studying in Canada." The slogan encourages potential students to realize their dreams and potential in Canada. This coordinated brand markets Canada internationally with one voice. The Advisory Panel called for a "...clear long-term strategy ...to ensure that Canada maintains and increases its market share of the best and brightest international students and researchers" (IES, pg. 10). To this end, the IES plans to refresh the "look" of the education brand, develop targeted branding materials customized for each priority area and further strengthen coordination for Canadian education marketing. Resources will be allocated primarily to the priority markets, including re-allocating diplomatic resources to achieve IES objectives in those markets.

■ **Strengthening institutional research partnerships and educational exchanges, and leveraging people-to-people ties.**

The IES emphasizes the importance of international research linkages to Canada's competitiveness, and discusses collaboration with stakeholders to support partnership activities. The IES suggests using Canada's international alumni to help expand strategic relationships, and track, with stakeholders, the development and expansion of educational partnerships.

■ **Supporting activities and leveraging resources to maximize results.**

At the federal level, DFATD, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), CIC, Industry Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada and other relevant federal divisions will work together on the national international education agenda, all the while working with international education partners outside of the federal government.

“As part of the Global Markets Action Plan we've also developed... the International Education Strategy, because we know that it is knowledge and innovation that are going to be critical in driving high-value economic growth in Canada. In a globalized marketplace, the winners are going to be those that have put a special focus on knowledge and innovation.”

— *Minister of International Trade Ed Fast, Embassy Magazine, May 7, 2014*

Canada's first federal International Education Strategy has been widely well-received, though a few gaps and imbalances have been noted.

For example, most objectives reinforce the primary goal of increased numbers of international students. It is necessary to recognize that inbound mobility is only one component of a comprehensive international education approach. Equally important is outbound mobility, supporting Canadian students to have educational experiences abroad to ensure that the next generation of leaders possesses the capacity to succeed in today's globalized environment.

In addition to more focus on education abroad, in future iterations it is hoped that the IES will include funded support for research and other international education connections. Doing so would complement and reinforce institutional investments, maximizing opportunities for Canada to leverage international education as a pillar of its international relationships.

All stakeholders have a role to play in implementing the IES. CBIE with the Canadian Consortium for International Education (CCIE) will continue to encourage stakeholders to work cohesively to maximize the IES's impact.

International Education Marketing

Marketing efforts to attract international students to Canada have been taking place at the national level prior to the establishment of the Education au/in Canada brand in 2008.

The Federal-Provincial Consultative Committee on Education-Related International Activities (FPCCERIA) connects the two levels of government and provides a forum for coordi-

nation of marketing messages and efforts. The CMEC website describes this longstanding committee as follows:

The Federal-Provincial Consultative Committee on Education-Related International Activities (FPCCERIA) was established in 1986 by CMEC and the Secretary of State for External Affairs as an advisory body that provides a forum for discussion of items of common concern to the federal and the provincial/territorial governments and refers to deputy ministers any items requiring decision.

The federal departments most often involved have been the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade [now the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada], Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration, Canadian International Development Agency, and Industry Canada.

The topics most frequently addressed in FPCCERIA meetings have been:

- foreign students in Canada
- marketing of Canadian education abroad
- recruitment of foreign students to Canada
- international student visas

The recent focus of FPCCERIA has been on the creation of an education brand that can be used for all international marketing of education in Canada, whether by the provinces, territories, federal government or educational bodies. The branding discussion has focused on brand ownership, management, usage and content. Promotional materials, including a logo, brochure, maps and usage guides have been developed.

An additional mechanism for coordination and discussion over several years has been the National Education Marketing Roundtable. This group is organized by DFATD and brings stakeholders of the sector together for information exchange.

International Education Week

International Education Week is a celebration of internationalization held annually in the fall in many countries and marked by events at schools and on campuses, with encouragement of ministries of education. In Canada the IE Week steering committee has been organized for several years by CMEC and engages federal, provincial and association representatives. It is currently co-chaired by CBIE which has proposed to host the IE Week online presence beginning in 2014.

Status Report on the Imagine Education au/in Canada

CBIE thanks CMEC and DFATD for providing this report.

The launch of the Imagine Education au/in Canada brand in September 2008 marked a new phase in Canada's engagement within the field of international education. The brand is a joint initiative of the provinces and territories (P/Ts) through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD), and it enables governments, educational institutions and organizations to speak to international students with a consistent voice and message.

In 2013-2014, over 170 promotional events in over 70 countries were held around the world under the Imagine Education au/in Canada brand umbrella, with over 1,560 institutions, associations, and government representatives participating. New promotional materials, such as an international student recruitment video and various sectoral brochures, have also been developed and are showcased at international events on a regular basis.

The brand has also seen a steady increase in internal adoption by Canadian institutions, with a total of 320 schools and non-governmental organizations at all levels currently brand-authorized, a 23% increase from the previous year. This includes 133 postsecondary institutions, 106 language schools, 68 elementary and secondary schools and 12 non-governmental organizations.

While the existing initiatives of the brand - the core activities as outlined above - have strengthened in 2013-2014, a number of developments on the policy front are also worth highlighting. The January 2014 release of the federal International Education Strategy (IES) proposed the development of a comprehensive three-year Integrated Marketing Plan for the promotion of Canada as a study and research destination, including a refresh of the Imagine Education au/in Canada brand. The process of the renewal of the marketing plan is now under way and it is expected that it will be released in mid-2015.

The implementation of regulations pertaining to the International Student Program (ISP) in June 2014 has raised important questions of policy coordination between brand eligibility and ISP designation. Policymakers at the federal and provincial/territorial levels are currently discussing this matter. It is expected that these discussions, once completed, will provide a base to strengthen the policy bedrock of the Imagine brand in the coming years.

Internationalization at the Provincial/Territorial Level

As detailed in previous *A World of Learning reports* (2012, 2013) most provinces have an internationalization strategy in place or are working towards one. The following provinces have provided updates on current efforts.

In 2012, as part of Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan, the Government of **British Columbia** announced its [International Education Strategy](#) to promote the two-way global flow of students. British Columbia continues to implement initiatives in support of the three Strategy goals — create a globally oriented education system, ensure that all students receive quality learning and life experiences, and maximize the benefits of international education, social, cultural and economic — for all BC communities, families and businesses.

Major developments since the release of the Strategy include:

- Contributed \$11 million in scholarship funding to Mitacs Inc. and the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society by the Government of BC to give more British Columbian students the chance to study abroad and to bring more international students to BC. To date, over 825 BC and international students have benefited from this funding.
- Strengthened the Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation to ensure that BC's post-secondary institutions wishing to host international students with study permits meet the highest quality standard and provide consumer protection. This confirms the Government's commitment for the BC education experience to remain among the world's best.
- Advanced BC's international education in priority markets through the presence of seven dedicated Education Marketing Managers in BC's overseas trade and investment offices in key target markets, including China, India, Korea, Japan and the UK. These individuals have supported over 50 education events, including the organization of education seminars, inbound and outbound delegation visits and the forging of partnerships.
- Promoted BC as a study destination by undertaking over 15 international missions and initiatives in key and emerging markets. The British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE), a key partner in advancing the international education priorities of government, supported the education sector by coordinating a Team BC presence.

- Reinvigorated the BC Study Abroad (BCSA) Consortium and launched a refreshed website in 2013. The BCSA website was created by BCCIE to connect students with Consortium institutions' short-term study-abroad programs, provide information on scholarships and other funding resources, and help students apply to their program of choice, with the aim of encouraging BC students to gain international academic experience.
- Initiated a second survey of international students, to be launched in fall 2014, to determine their overall satisfaction with their learning and living experiences in BC. The results will help institutions and government understand and enhance the study experience of international students.

British Columbia continues to collaborate with other provinces and territories and the federal government to advance collective interests in international education.

Alberta's International Strategy and Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education Business Plans provide direction for international education in the province. The government has the following priority objectives and strategies to support international education:

Objective 1: Diversify markets to expand the economy

Strategies:

- Support Government of Alberta strategies to expand market access.
- Build long-lasting, dynamic relationships with partners around the world.

Initiatives:

Alberta Designation Requirements (ADR) were developed in response to the revised federal international student program regulations published on Feb 12, 2014 by the Government of Canada.

Innovation and Advanced Education actively promoted Alberta as a premier destination for study and research through the following Study in Alberta initiatives:

- Coordinated missions to Mexico and Vietnam;
- Provided market research;
- Developed and delivered promotional activities and material;
- Managed the Alberta Education Centre in Jalisco, Mexico; and
- Attracted German students to Alberta for research/industry placements as part of the Alberta Saxony Intercultural Internship Alliance Program.

Innovation and Advanced Education managed several talent mobility programs that profile Alberta expertise and serve to develop and expand the key education markets of Brazil, China, Germany, India, Mexico and Vietnam, such as the Alberta Doctoral Awards for Chinese Students and participation in the MITACS Globalink Program attracting 50 top students from priority countries.

In addition, Alberta served as the host venue for the Third High-Level Consultation on Education Collaboration between the provinces and territories of Canada and the People's Republic of China. The event was held in Edmonton on February 24, 2014. As part of the event, Alberta's Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education announced 100 scholarships for Alberta post-secondary students to study in China in 2014.

Objective 2: Prepare Albertans for success in the global community

Strategy:

- Encourage a more global perspective through Alberta's education system.

Initiatives:

The Province provided funding and oversight for the management of several ongoing talent development programs that enrich the Campus Alberta learning environment, and provided special training and learning experiences abroad for more than 800 Albertans as part of the following programs:

- Alberta Saxony Intercultural Internship Alliance Program;
- The Washington Centre;
- The Alberta Smithsonian Internship Program; and
- The Campus Alberta Grant for International Learning.

In addition, funding has been approved for several new international pilot projects:

- Internationalization @Home — this project focuses on advancing science education in Alberta through international partnerships and cooperation;
- Graduate Education in Water — in cooperation with the province's research universities and centres;
- International Education and Intergovernmental Traineeships for Alberta Students; and
- Science Alliance — a suite of initiatives to support international cooperation.

Saskatchewan's Plan for Growth states that international education is an increased priority for the Government of Saskatchewan. It recognizes the value of international education in Saskatchewan's long-term economic prosperity and provides the following mandates:

- Work with the province's post-secondary institutions to increase the number of international post-secondary students studying in Saskatchewan by at least 50 % by 2020;
- Make the attraction and retention of international students a cornerstone of Saskatchewan's international immigration strategy;
- Encourage the study of international languages in Saskatchewan business schools in order to better equip students and the business community to engage internationally; and
- Establish the Saskatchewan International Future Scholarship to provide up to 20 students annually with the opportunity to study business at an international institution, provided that they return to Saskatchewan for at least five years after they graduate.

The Ministry of Advanced Education is developing a provincial post-secondary international education strategy, which will respond to priorities identified in the Plan for Growth and align Saskatchewan's efforts with the federal International Education Strategy by:

- Creating opportunities for more Saskatchewan's people to study and work abroad;
- Attracting more post-secondary international students to Saskatchewan; and
- Increasing the number and value of Saskatchewan's international research partnerships.

As part of the Saskatchewan post-secondary international education strategy, the Ministry of Advanced Education has implemented a *Saskatchewan Designation Framework for the International Student Program* in response to new federal immigration regulations. The framework provides a transparent process to designate Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions to host international students. It will ensure that international students are adequately supported and protected, as well as that Saskatchewan's post-secondary education reputation for excellence is maintained.

In addition to the supports provided by post-secondary institutions, Saskatchewan also supports the integration of international students through 11 Regional Newcomer Gateways across the province. International students and their families can access extensive information and services regarding language, settlement and employment to make a more successful transition to life in Saskatchewan.

Ontario's vision for postsecondary education is focused on putting students first, and providing the best possible learning experience and globally competitive outcomes for all learners. Ontario is committed to an inclusive and dynamic education system that supports the province's growth and provides the highest quality learning experience for domestic and international students studying in both English and French. International education contributes significantly to this vision. International students, exchanges and partnerships enhance the capacity of Ontario institutions, improve classroom diversity, and help develop globally minded citizens and communities.

The 2010 Open Ontario plan established a target to increase the number of international students in Ontario colleges and universities by 50 per cent to a total of 57,000 students by 2015, while guaranteeing spaces for qualified Ontario students. With over 66,000 international students enrolled in Ontario post-secondary education institutions in 2013-14, Ontario is pleased to have exceeded the target ahead of schedule.

Ontario continues to support the objectives outlined in the Council of the Federation's [International Education Marketing Action Plan](#). Key activities include supporting the Imagine Education in/au Canada brand, funding bilateral exchanges with partner jurisdictions and the Ontario Trillium Scholarships, which are awarded to the highest-ranking international PhD candidates recruited to Ontario universities.

Moving forward, Ontario will be developing new, sustainable targets for international enrolment in Ontario colleges and universities. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities continues to support the retention of international students through links with immigration policy at the provincial and federal level.

In **Nova Scotia**, a new program (The Nova Scotia Graduate Scholarship Program) of 310 Master's and PhD scholarships is open to all students, with 30 of these scholarships exclusively for international students.

At the Higher Education Branch, a 2012-2015 MOU with the universities calls for the development of an International Student Policy that will support the Province's population and immigration objectives. An International Student Policy working group, chaired by the Director of Universities and Colleges, is looking at critical features, including services, information and practices, in attracting and retaining international students in Nova Scotia.

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education has provided support and advice to EduNova, a non-profit consortium of the 10 Nova Scotia universities, NSCC, the private language schools, the P-12 international program and several private providers. EduNova's mandate is to support international student recruitment and project development by promoting Nova Scotia as a study destination. EduNova currently manages the \$998,000 Excellence and Innovation Fund (EIF) project that the universities successfully proposed to recruit students from India, China, Scandinavia and Africa, as well as a \$449,500 EIF-funded project designed to enhance US student recruitment.

Through the Higher Education Branch, an International Education Strategy Committee was established in order to communicate and coordinate international education related activities across government. The Committee is chaired by the Director, Universities and Colleges, and includes representatives from several provincial departments.

The Canadian Consortium for International Education

The Canadian Consortium for International Education (CCIE) was inaugurated in 2010 and signed a new three-year Memorandum of Understanding in August 2013. Starting in March 2014, a Trade Commissioner from DFATD has been embedded within CCIE for three years as an Insight Practice Lead in International Education. The goal is to foster enhanced understanding and cooperation between the federal government and the sector, and to support implementation of the IES. One of the first collaborative activities engaging the Trade Commissioner and CCIE is the development of market action plans in priority markets, with an initial focus on Brazil.

CCIE members represent more than 500 institutions and school boards across the country, covering the spectrum of Canadian education. Members are the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the Canadian Association of Public Schools — International (CAPS-I), CBIE, Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) and Languages Canada.

Internationalization at Canadian Institutions: Focus on Schools

The increase in internationalization efforts at the post-secondary level is reflected by the development and strengthening of programs for international students to study in Canada and for domestic students to study abroad.

Post-secondary institutions continue to develop specialized roles responsible for internationalization within their senior administration structure. In support of this expanding cadre of senior leaders, CBIE established the Internationalization Leaders Network (ILN) in 2012, which is exclusively focused on strategic-level discussion of internationalization issues. ILN meetings offer senior leaders an opportunity to discuss priority issues and collaboratively plan the future of internationalization in Canadian institutions.

In order to support the next generation of internationalization leaders, with a dedicated group of newcomers to the field, CBIE established the professional learning community International Network of Tomorrow's Leaders (INTL). The mission of the INTL is to provide an environment for new professionals and emerging leaders to cultivate professional networks and engage in the community of Canadian international education. Since its inception, the group has administered 15 bursaries for new professionals to attend CBIE's annual conference, engaged hundreds of new professionals through events and social media and matched thirty new professionals with senior mentors.

An increased number of Canadian schools have developed internationalization strategies or plans. In the past 10 years, there has been a 30% increase in the number of international students in Canadian Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools. In some school boards, this has resulted in an explosion in growth. In Ottawa, for example, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) has seen a 3,000% increase in international students over the past 15 years, from 35 in 1999 to over 1,000 currently. It is noteworthy that the OCDSB has also aimed at more comprehensive internationalization including development of an [International Certificate Program](#) for secondary students.

Schools offer entrée into Canadian post-secondary education. In a CBIE survey (Canada First, 2009) fully 30% of post-secondary international students had previously studied in a secondary school or language school in Canada before starting their current program of study. In efforts to formalize and bolster these pathways, there are a number of current and developing partnerships between post-secondary institutions and school boards.

It is clear that school boards are increasingly taking on the challenge of internationalizing their districts, and providing opportunities and strategies for the thousands of international students currently in Canada at the primary and secondary level.

CBIE members School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) and Calgary Board of Education have provided their internationalization strategies, which focus on the integration of international students and creating global citizens.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam): Integration of International Students in Canada

Submitted by Patricia Gartland, Assistant Superintendent, Global Engagement and Strategic Initiatives, School District No. 43 (Coquitlam)

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) in Greater Vancouver, British Columbia encompasses Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Anmore and Belcarra with 30,000 K-12 students, including 1,400 full year and 1,000 short-term international students.

International students are integrated immediately into the life of School District No. 43's schools and communities. The district addresses the inclusion of international students in these ways:

- District orientations with International Education Program staff — principal, teacher coordinators, youth workers, homestay families and student leaders
 - Topics: community facilities and services, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs for parents, strategies for school success.
- School-based orientations with administrators, counsellors, ESL teachers, student leaders and international coordinators
 - Topics: welcome assembly, school tour, code of conduct, ESL testing, course selection and timetabling, school involvement: clubs, teams, activities, attendance, making friends, buddy system.
- Homestay orientation
 - Topics: community, house rules, school drop-off/pickup, weekend activities, homework, meals.
- School-based group activities for international students: pizza and movie nights, cultural events and fairs, boat cruises, snowshoeing, pumpkin carving, Thanksgiving meals, potluck lunches, Remembrance Day, excursions.

- Pre-arrival orientation application for iPhone and Android: navigating Vancouver International Airport, customs and immigration, introduction to staff and contact information.
- Online ESL program for vocabulary-building.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) provides a safe and supportive English immersion atmosphere in which students learn English quickly with the support of excellent teachers. Coordinators help international students ease into their new school and educational environment academically and emotionally while providing them with excellent guidance throughout their stay.

With a focus on global citizenship, Coquitlam school board strives to equip all students with the skills to thrive and succeed as world leaders. Its 66 schools (eight high schools) are centres of excellence for teaching and learning, with libraries, wireless internet environments, science labs, theatres, fine arts rooms, athletic facilities and ESL. Its many and varied programs include Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, online, Montessori, career/vocational, foreign languages and specialty academies. SD No. 43 graduates are accepted at universities throughout North America and around the world.

Calgary Board of Education: Starting Young — How Pre- and Post-Secondary Students are Engaging with the World.

Submitted by Sheila McLeod, Director, Global Learning Services, Calgary Board of Education. CBE received CBIE's 2013 Excellence Award for Comprehensive Internationalization.

The **Calgary Board of Education** (CBE) serves over 110,000 students in 227 schools. Enabling the conditions for developing global citizens is paramount in the district. Its more than 800 international students per year come from over 40 different countries. More than 38,000 students are registered in language learning programs that range from Blackfoot, Cree and Sign Language to French, Spanish, German, Mandarin, Punjabi and Arabic. Young people in the CBE are engaged, curious and eager to change the world.

The CBE's ultimate goal is success for each student, every day, with no exceptions. The vision for this goal is defined by Alberta Education and is reflected in the CBE's three-year plan. The CBE Global Learning Strategy addresses each goal and aligns with provincial, federal and international efforts to ensure that students are engaged thinkers, ethical citizens and move forward with an entrepreneurial spirit. Through the Global Learning Strategy, the CBE intends to:

- Provide the values and underlying principles that form the foundation of a comprehensive Global Learning Strategy.
- Develop a structured process of generating, capturing, sharing and disseminating knowledge and providing opportunities to develop global and linguistic competencies for students and staff.
- Enable instructional leaders, students and staff across the system to embed Global Learning and Global Citizenship in the heart of every CBE classroom.

International, intercultural and global competence develops through the practice and subsequent reflection of engaging with diverse people, languages and experiences. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and all staff, certificated and non-certificated, are provided with opportunities to experience the world in many ways. This includes the International Youth Leadership Summit, International Virtual Twinning projects, international study tours for educators, international student exchange, internationalized courses and participatory research. All students have the opportunity to achieve the Calgary Board of Education International Certificate which recognizes students learning second languages, involvement in global citizenship both at home and/or internationally and building an international mindset through intentionally focusing on global issues.

CBE students, from the youngest to the graduating class, deserve to have the opportunity to practice, demonstrate and contribute to a comprehensive global learning strategy. CBE youth will take their place in an increasingly globalized world and the school board's mandate is to ensure they are prepared.

CHAPTER 2

IMMIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



Major changes in immigration policy and practice relating to international students were rolled out in 2014. Overall these were positive developments but a number of implementation issues caused difficulty for students and institutions during and at the outset of academic year 2014-2015.

At the same time, progress was made toward a new path enabling international student advisers (ISAs) to provide immigration support to their international students.

CBIE, its Immigration Advisory Committee (IAC), and CCIE members worked closely with the federal government and with the regulatory authority to facilitate and support the smooth flow of international students to Canada and enable their successful acculturation and, as appropriate, their transition to permanent resident status.

This chapter aims to provide a useful overview. However readers must refer to the website of Citizenship and Immigration Canada for comprehensive and up-to-date information on all CIC programs.

Opportunities for Work and Permanent Residence

Pathways to permanent immigration for international students as well as ensuring that they can have broad access to work while studying are integral parts of Canada's internationalization. Several CIC programs have been updated in ways that are supportive of international student transitions.⁴

The information in this section has been obtained from CIC and from immigration authorities of the provinces and territories, both from web-based documents and by direct inquiry.

1. Off-Campus Work Permit Program (OCWP)

- International students can work up to 20 hours per week.
- Between 2007 and 2012 there was nearly a 48% increase in the number of OCWP (17,255 in 2007 to 33,714 in 2012).
- As of June 2014, under the changes in CIC's International Student Program in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), study permits *automatically* authorize the holder to work off-campus, with no need for a separate application. This is limited to certain students in full-time degree or diploma programs at universities and colleges.

2. Post-Graduation Work Permit Program (PGWP)

- Following completion of studies, international students can work in Canada for up to a maximum of three years (dependent on the duration of their study program).
- Between 2007 and 2012, the number of first-time permits and extensions issued increased by 60% (from 10,872 to 27,341); between 2012 and 2013, the number of PGWPs and extensions increased by 21%.
- The government has made continuous enhancements to the program, including removing the requirement to have a job offer in order to obtain a PGWP.

4. At the time of publication, current (2013) Citizenship and Immigration data related to this section was unavailable.

3. Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)

- Applicants are scored against criteria on how well they would adapt to the Canadian labour market, which includes knowledge of one of Canada’s official languages (English or French), level and type of education and work experience.
- Candidates must have worked for at least one year in one of 50 “in-demand” occupations, have been pursuing a PhD program for a least two years or have graduated from a PhD program within 12 months of submitting their application, or have an offer of full-time, permanent employment.⁵
- Annually, the number of applications accepted through this program is 25,000 in the occupational stream, with further caps of 1,000 applications for each of the 50 in-demand occupations. Applicants with a job offer are not subject to the caps. There is provision for 500 additional applications specifically for international students who are pursuing or have recently completed a Canadian PhD.

4. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

- Provinces and territories (P/Ts) can nominate individuals for permanent residence that have the education, skills and/or work experience that meet the labour market needs of the P/T. Currently 11 P/Ts participate in the program; Nunavut does not participate, and Québec has a separate agreement under the Canada-Québec Accord.
- Applications to the PNP are prioritized, and have an acceptance rate of more than 95%.
- There are various streams under the PNP that vary by P/T, but generally pathways in this program fall into five streams: international students, skilled workers, semi-skilled workers, business/investors and family/community connections.
- The PNP is the second largest source of new economic immigrants to Canada; there has been a six fold increase in the number of provincial nominees since 2004, with 38,000 PNPs (including their spouses and children) admitted in 2011.
 - The PNP is the primary source of economic immigration for Prince Edward Island (98%), Manitoba (94%) and Saskatchewan (91%). Ontario has nearly doubled its target number of provincial nominees from 1,300 in 2013 to 2,500 in 2014. At CBIE’s regional meeting in Halifax in June 2014, Nova Scotia announced an enhanced pathway for international graduates within its PNP.
- P/Ts can recruit from the Express Entry pool candidates (see below) who meet their labour market needs.

“To ensure that immigration continues to support our future prosperity, our government is building a faster and more flexible immigration system that ensures this country attracts the best newcomers who are able to contribute to their communities and the Canadian economy while helping address Canada’s labour market needs. This includes the launch of Express Entry next January, which will revolutionize the way we attract skilled immigrants and get them working here faster.”

— *The Honourable Chris Alexander,
Minister of Citizenship and Immigration,
2014*

5. Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

Launched in 2008, the CEC allows skilled temporary foreign workers with Canadian work experience and international students with Canadian degrees, diplomas and work experience to apply for permanent residence.

- CIC [recently announced](#) a cap of 8,000 new applications under this program, effective May 1, 2014. After these applications, Express Entry will launch in January 2015.

Express Entry is a system which will prioritize applications for those with key skills who apply for the FSWP, Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP), the CEC or a PNP. The following are features of this forthcoming program:

- Prospective immigrants must first provide information online about their skills and work experience, as well as some biographical information.
- Candidates who meet the criteria for one of the economic immigration streams that are subject to Express Entry are scored and ranked against other applicants in the Express Entry “pool.”
- Those who rank the highest, and those who are either nominated by a P/T or who hold a valid job offer, will receive an Invitation to Apply (ITA) for permanent residence.
- Candidates will then have 60 days to apply for permanent residence; CIC will process 80% of completed applications in under six months.

5. Details on Canada’s 50 in-demand occupations can be found here: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/complete-applications.asp>

- A renewed Job Bank, which will include a coordinated Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) process, is a key feature of Express Entry. Through the Job Bank, an online search instrument, employers can connect with the pool of Express Entry candidates at no cost to the employer. In addition, in cases where one would be needed, there is no cost to the employer for the LMIA for permanent resident applications.

Regulatory Changes

In December 2012, proposed changes to international student regulations were published in the Canada Gazette.⁶ The changes covered study permits, off-campus work and monitoring and reporting on student status. Changes came into effect on June 1, 2014.⁷

The intent of the revisions was to enhance the integrity of Canada’s International Student Program (ISP) by reducing fraud both on the part of prospective students and of educational institutions seeking to enrol them. A critical element was the requirement by study permit holders to be studying. Prior to June 1, 2014, holders of a valid study permit were not required by law to be studying, and remained “in status” until the expiration date of the study permit.

As of June 2014, institutional compliance reporting on the matter of students’ statuses is required. This is part of an agreement with the P/Ts, which will in turn inform and make agreements with their institutions. Compliance reporting was piloted with a few institutions in March 2014, including institutions of different sizes, types and regions.

Another change is that institutions must be designated by their province or territory as “eligible to receive international students holding study permits.” Institutions not so designated can only receive students for up to six months of study (which does not require a study permit). Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools (both public and private) and school districts do not require designation and can continue to receive students on study permits. Language schools do require designation to receive students on study permits. An important next step will be to align those institutions on the [designated learning institution list](#) with those eligible for the Imagine Canada brand, a process that is ongoing.



The process of designation is dynamic and institutions that were not designated by June 1 but in process and approved later, and those that apply for designation later and are approved, will become eligible at that time.

Two highly positive changes are included in the revisions. As noted above, in most cases, a study permit holder at a public post-secondary institution is automatically entitled to work off-campus — there is no longer a need to apply for a work permit. Also, application for an initial study permit is allowed within Canada, making it easier for students to transition from short-term to long-term and full program studies. In the past, many students were required to travel to another country (often the United States) or return home to apply for a study permit. The change facilitates the transition of students from secondary to post-secondary studies, which necessitates a change in study permit conditions: students no longer need to leave Canada to obtain the post-secondary study permit.

Overall the transition on June 1 went smoothly, although a few issues emerged over the ensuing weeks. CBIE worked closely with CIC to provide insights and suggest solutions.

6. For further information see: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2012/2012-12-29/html/reg1-eng.html> and <http://www.cbie-bcei.ca/about-ie/policy-statements-and-briefs/>

7. For further information see: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-changes.asp> and <http://gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/2014/2014-02-12/html/sor-dors14-eng.php>

For example, students in Canada prior to June 1 and holding valid study permits were, as of that date, eligible to work off campus without a separate work permit. However their study permit did not indicate this. Following consultation with CBIE, CIC decided to provide a letter to students in this situation, on request, that enabled them to obtain a Social Insurance Number (SIN) through Service Canada and to engage in employment.

Further, an issue arose regarding on-campus employment. In fact this was not affected by the June 1 changes. However Service Canada information did not address the fact that many students who are eligible to work on campus do not have indication to that effect on their study permit, and some permits in fact state categorically that they cannot work. Now, even in cases where the study permit is silent or contradictory, if the student is indeed eligible to work on campus, they may obtain a SIN by providing to Service Canada the required documentation. CBIE and the CBIE IAC worked with CIC and Service Canada through August and September 2014 to clarify the process and enable students working on campus to obtain a SIN.

Overall the changes to the ISP are positive and supportive of Canada's excellent quality and reputation in international education.

Regulatory Requirements for ISAs

International Student Advisers (ISAs) play a central role in supporting the international student experience in Canada. Immigration guidance related to student status is far from their only role vis-à-vis international students, but it is an important one. Since CIC confirmed in May 2013 that ISAs fall under the jurisdiction of Section 91 of IRPA, ISAs have been required to restrict their advice to simply directing students to website information. This has negatively affected institutions' ability to offer international students the information and support they need to successfully navigate immigration processes.

CBIE, the CBIE IAC and CCIE colleagues have worked to find ways to assist member institutions in complying with Section 91. This included entering into discussions with the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council (ICCRC), with a view to developing a specialized stream for ISAs within the ICCRC framework. Institutions have indicated their interest in a focused, sustainable program enabling ISAs to provide guidance in the areas pertinent to student status — study permits, off-campus work permits and post-graduation work permits, in particular.

Through these discussions, ICCRC has heard the perspective of the international education sector, and ISAs in particular, and is in the process of balancing their own interest in a specialized program with their requirements as a regulatory body and as an organization with strong board and membership engagement. Further decisions are expected later this year. If the ICCRC is successful in obtaining approval for an ISA-focused program, it would be implemented beginning early in 2015.

Whatever the outcome of the ICCRC discussions, CBIE, the CBIE IAC and Consortium partners will continue to pursue avenues to enable educational institutions and ISAs to provide quality, comprehensive services to their international students. Great student services that provide pathways, not obstacles, are critical to Canada's success as an education destination for the world.

In addition, a number of ISAs have undertaken the existing ICCRC program and become Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants (RCICs). Given that institutions may wish to provide advice related to permanent residency, it is expected that the trend to engage one or more ISAs who have undertaken this broader program will continue.



CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

Students are crossing international borders in the pursuit of education in unprecedented numbers. It is estimated that this year alone the number of internationally mobile students will surpass the 5 million mark (ICEF, 2014). Students from Asia represent 53% of international students worldwide, with the vast majority of these students hailing from China, India and Korea (OECD, 2014).

International Student Mobility in Context

According to the OECD, in developed countries between 2008 and 2012 the proportion of youth (15-29 years) studying grew considerably as a result of the most recent economic crisis. When one considers demographic and economic shifts in tandem with social and technological advances, it is no surprise that there are more students worldwide than ever before.

As the global demand for education expands, the quality and prestige of a Canadian education continues to draw a healthy share of the world's best and brightest students. As a testament to this, North American countries (Canada, the US and Mexico) host the most diverse international student populations in terms of country of origin.⁸

The number of international students enrolled in Canada has nearly doubled in the last decade, representing approximately 5% of all internationally mobile students. In a global context, this puts Canada in seventh place as a receiving country of

international students following the US, the UK, China, France, Germany and Australia (Project Atlas, 2013). The US, UK, Australia, Canada, France and Germany host more than half of all international students in the OECD (OECD, 2014).

International students represent 8% of post-secondary enrolment in Canada (OECD, 2014). Figure 1 depicts the composition of post-secondary students according to the most recent data available in the *OECD 2014 Education at a Glance Report*.⁹

FIGURE 1: International student representation in post-secondary enrolment, by type and country

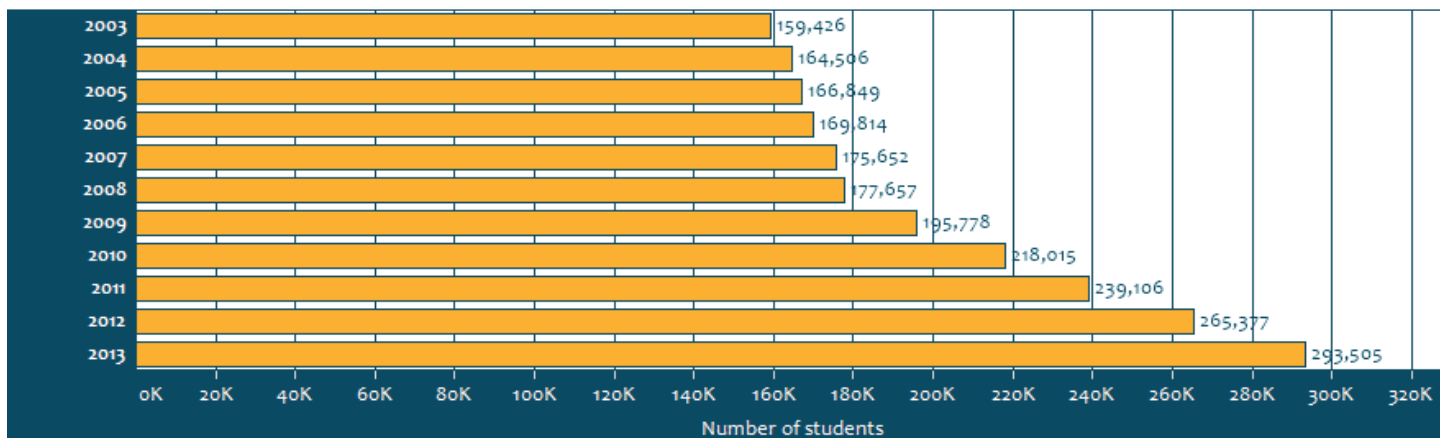
Country	Total tertiary (%)	Tertiary-type A (%)	Tertiary-type B (%)	Advanced Research Programs (%)
Australia	18	19	11	32
Canada	8	8	8	24
United Kingdom	17	18	6	41
United States	4	3	1	29
OECD average	4	3	1	29

The mobility of students enhances micro- and macro-level international relations in an ever-shrinking global community. As noted in Chapter 1, CBIE's patron and Canada's Governor General, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, has explained that the 'Diplomacy of Knowledge' fosters new ties and collaboration between nations academically, culturally, politically and economically. At the intersection of all of these trends, Canadian international education stakeholders continue to fulfill their mission of providing enriching educational

8. For a graphic illustrating global flows of students, visit: www.parthenon.com/ThoughtLeadership/WhereAreStudentsStudying

9. Tertiary-type A programs (International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 5A) are largely theory-based and are designed to provide sufficient qualifications for entry to advanced research programs and professions with high skill requirements, such as medicine, dentistry or architecture. Tertiary-type A programs have a minimum cumulative theoretical duration (at tertiary level) of three years' full-time equivalent, although they typically last four or more years. These programs are not exclusively offered at universities. Tertiary-type B programmes (ISCED 5B) are typically shorter than those of tertiary-type A and focus on practical, technical or occupational skills for direct entry into the labour market, although some theoretical foundations may be covered in the respective programs. They have a minimum duration of two years full-time equivalent at the tertiary level.

FIGURE 2: International students in Canada by year, 2003 to 2013, all levels of study



experiences while navigating the burgeoning opportunities (such as skilled immigration) and challenges that the rapid growth of international student mobility presents.

While there are some factors which could negatively impact the growth in student mobility such as economic and demographic transformations and scholarship availability, the forces that support international study remain diverse and strong and it is predicted that more and more students will recognize the value and seize the opportunity to pursue international education in the foreseeable future.

Canada’s International Students

Canada benefits academically, culturally and economically from receiving international students. They bring valuable global perspectives and insights in an era when diverse ideas, people, products and services circulate far more than ever before.

Examining international student purchasing power, a 2012 Roslyn Kunin and Associates Inc. [report](#) for the Canadian government estimated that international students in Canada spend over \$7.7 billion on tuition and living costs, supporting the employment of 81,000 people (RKA, Inc., 2012).

In addition to the in-flow of some of the best and brightest minds, approximately 50% of this population arrives in Canada

with the long-term goal of becoming a permanent resident (see Chapter 4), supporting Canada’s cultural and economic prosperity for many years to come.

International students in Canada support the excellence and innovation of Canada’s education and cultural landscape, and are a vital building block for internationalizing Canadian institutions. The following sections examine international students in Canada in terms of numbers, origins, regions of study and future intentions.

Number

In figures 2 to 5^{10,11} the population reported includes all programs of study and all provinces. Figures 6 to 11 provide a breakdown of the international student population in terms of their programs and regions of study. Figures 19 to 21 provide a breakdown in terms of student population growth and new entrants into Canada.

As can be seen in figure 2,¹² in 2013 there were 293,505 international students in Canada, an 84% increase over the last decade and an 11% increase over the previous year. Figure 2 shows that the rate of increase in international students in Canada has grown in recent years. Between 2010 and 2013, the number of international students in Canada increased by 35%, whereas between 2003 and 2009 the number increased by 23%.

10. CBIE uses Citizenship and Immigration Canada data; student numbers are based on valid study permits. Students in Canada for less than six months are not required to hold a study permit, and are therefore not counted. This includes many language school students and exchange students.

11. Note that the 2013 data provided by CIC is preliminary and may be adjusted slightly in future data sets.

12. Within charts in this chapter “K” is used to represent thousands.

Origin

International students from 194 different countries were studying in Canada in 2013.¹³ As can be seen in figure 3, students from East Asia make up almost half (48%) of the international student population in Canada. The vast majority of students from this region (~70%) are from China – the top country of origin of all international students in Canada (32%).

FIGURE 3: Regional breakdown of international student population in Canada (2013)



International students in Canada come from 194 different states and territories. Despite this diversity, in 2013 the top five sending countries (China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and France) made up over half (59%) of the total (see figure 4).¹⁴ As can be seen in figure 4,¹⁵ the top ten constitute 71%. This proportion remains relatively unchanged from the 2012 figure of 70%, indicating that in the past year there has been little change in the representational diversity of international students in Canada. However, figure 5 shows shifts suggestive of future trends. It is clear that the origin of international students is impacted by factors which are both internal (for example, institutional recruitment and marketing) and external (for example, source country demographics and economic indicators).

FIGURE 4: International students in Canada, top 30 sending countries, 2013

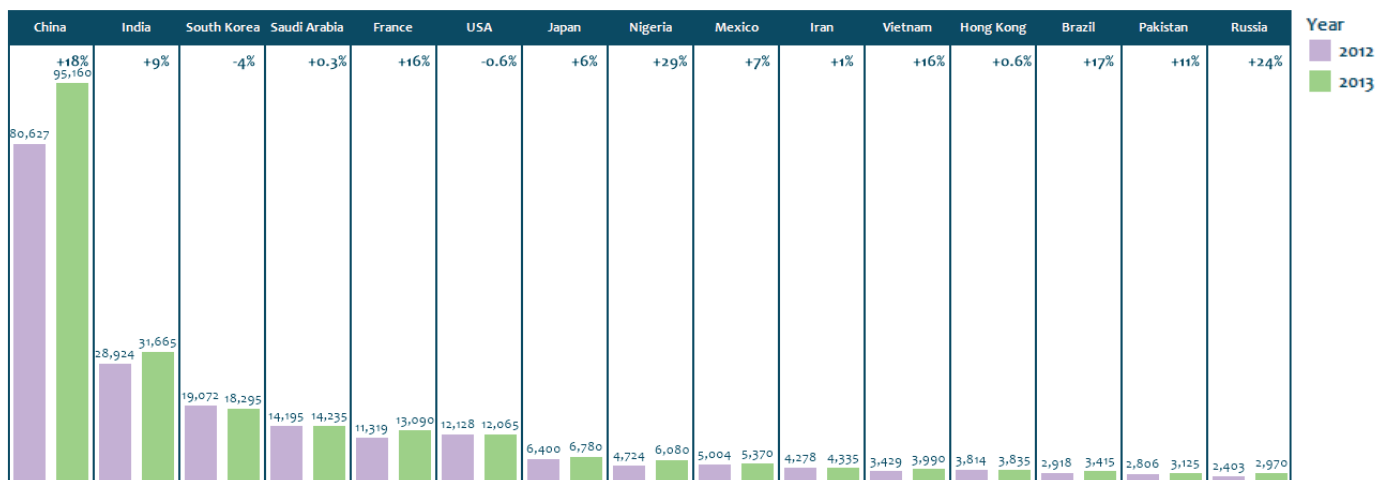
Source country	# of students (2013)	% of total IS population
China	95,160	32.42%
India	31,665	10.79%
South Korea	18,295	6.23%
Saudi Arabia	14,235	4.85%
France	13,090	4.46%
United States	12,065	4.11%
Japan	6,780	2.31%
Nigeria	6,080	2.07%
Mexico	5,370	1.83%
Iran	4,335	1.48%
Vietnam	3,990	1.36%
Hong Kong	3,835	1.31%
Brazil	3,415	1.16%
Pakistan	3,125	1.06%
Russia	2,970	1.01%
United Kingdom	2,775	0.95%
Taiwan	2,635	0.90%
Germany	2,605	0.89%
Morocco	2,140	0.73%
Bangladesh	2,120	0.72%
United Arab Emirates	1,960	0.67%
Turkey	1,875	0.64%
Philippines	1,785	0.61%
Malaysia	1,765	0.60%
Venezuela	1,610	0.55%
Ukraine	1,485	0.51%
Tunisia	1,360	0.46%
Thailand	1,330	0.45%
Colombia	1,305	0.44%
Libya	1,185	0.40%
Other source countries	41,140	14.03%
Grand Total	293,485	100.00%

13. Regions were designated using primarily World Bank classifications, with one notable exception: the authors disaggregated East Asia and Oceania and South Pacific. A full list of the countries within each category is provided in the appendix.

14. The difference between the total number of students presented in figure 2 (293,505) and figure 4 (293,485) is due to measures taken by CIC to ensure student privacy. CIC suppresses certain component cells in the data set, which results in individual components not summing to the total indicated.

15. As above.

FIGURE 5: International students in Canada, top 15 sending countries, 2012 and 2013



As can be seen in figure 5, there have been several noteworthy changes with respect to the top 15 countries of origin from 2012 to 2013. New to the top 15 is Russia with a 24% increase over the previous year. Other countries showing considerable growth are Brazil (+17%), Vietnam (+16%), Nigeria (+29%), France (+16%) and the top country of origin, China, which experienced another increase of 18%. The top ten countries of origin for international students remain unchanged.

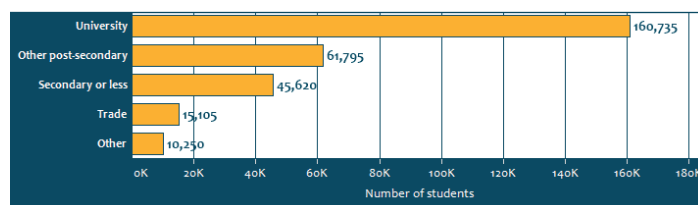
Despite overall increases, students from South Korea experienced negative growth, declining by 16% between 2011 and 2013. With one of the strongest growth rates in the top 15 countries, China continues to create a bigger margin, now surpassing the remaining top six countries of origin combined (India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, USA, France and Japan). Iran, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong all saw modest growth of equal or less than 1% in 2013 over the previous year.

The strong and sustained growth in the number of Brazilian students is in part attributable to the support of the Brazilian government, which continued to send students to Canada throughout 2013 as part of their *Ciência sem Fronteiras* (CsF) scholarship program. The considerable growth in the number of Russian students in 2013 may also be influenced by a new [government initiative](#) where graduates are supported to study in a foreign country, provided that they return to work for a Russian company.

Programs of Study

As shown in figure 6, 55% of international students in Canada (160,735) were studying at a university in 2013.¹⁶ The remainder were in: *Other post-secondary* programs, 21%; *Secondary or less* programs, 16%; *Trade* programs, 5%; and 3% were studying in the category *Other*.¹⁷ With regard to international student program composition in Canada, the proportion of students studying in *Other post-secondary* programs increased slightly (2%), the proportion studying in *Secondary or less* programs increased by a modest 1%, while the proportion in *Trade* declined 1% and the proportion in *University* programs remained stable at 55%. With regard to the rate of increase in the number of students in each program type between 2012 and 2013, the

FIGURE 6: International students in Canada by program type (2013)



16. Program of study is defined by CIC as follows: Secondary or less: primary or secondary educational institutions. Trade: vocational programs at non-university educational institutions (such as technical and vocational institutions, CEGEPs and colleges). University: undergraduate, postgraduate (master's and doctoral) and other studies at universities in Canada. Other post-secondary: post-secondary level of study, not at the university or trade level, including language institutions, private institutions and university qualifying programs. Other: foreign students not classified in any of the above levels of study.

17. It is important to note that the figures for students studying at the Trade level (including colleges) may be understated. The category Other post-secondary programs may include English as a Second Language (ESL) and français langue seconde (FLS) programs offered within colleges and universities.

proportion in *University* increased 11%, the proportion in *Other post-secondary* programs increased 21%, the proportion in *Secondary or less* programs increased 12%, the proportion in *Trade* programs saw a considerable decline (-28%) and the number in programs categorized as *Other* increased by 23%.¹⁸ According to the *Statistics Canada Postsecondary Student Information System*, the international student population studying in a university undergraduate program grew from 58,425 to 71,172 between 2009 and 2011 — a growth rate of

22%. During that same period the number of international students studying in graduate university programs also grew considerably from 26,061 to 32,226 — a growth rate of 24%.

The top source country of international students in each level of study varies. While China is the top source country for international students in Canada’s university, trade and secondary or less programs, international students in other post-secondary programs are more likely to be from India than any other country.

FIGURE 7: Top countries of origin, international students in Canadian university programs (2013)

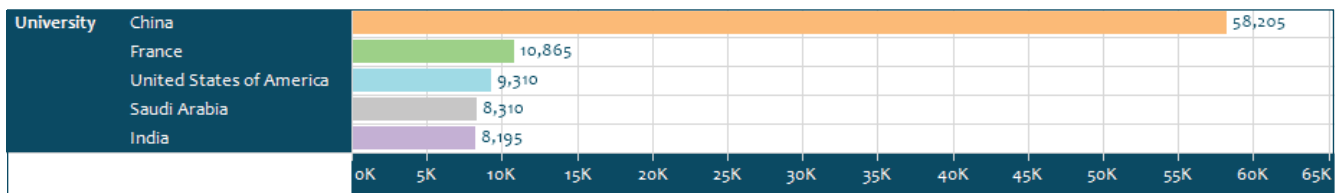


FIGURE 8: Top countries of origin, international students in Canadian secondary or less programs (2013)

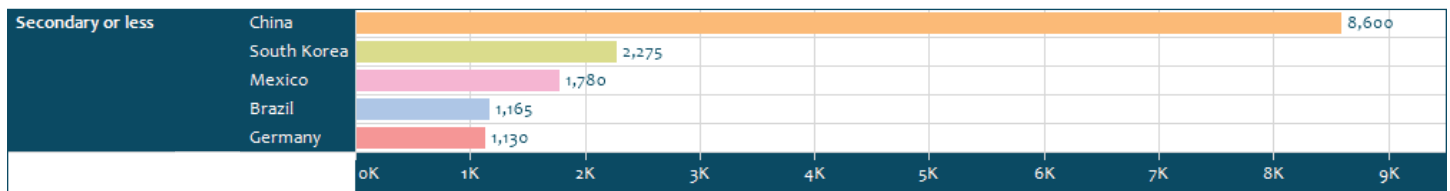


FIGURE 9: Top countries of origin, international students in Canadian other post-secondary programs (2013)

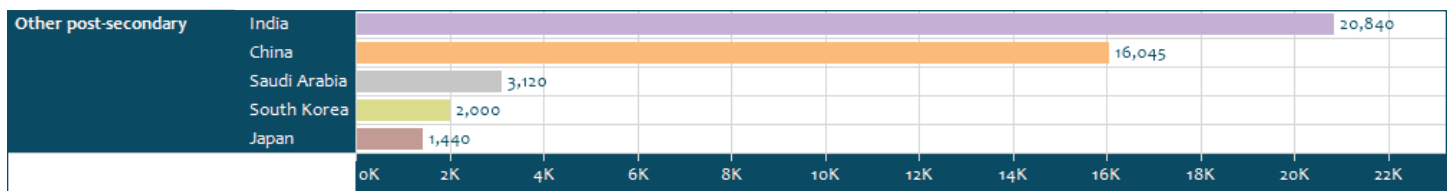
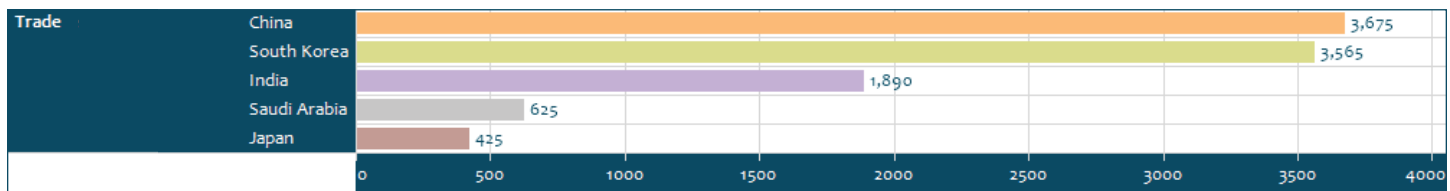
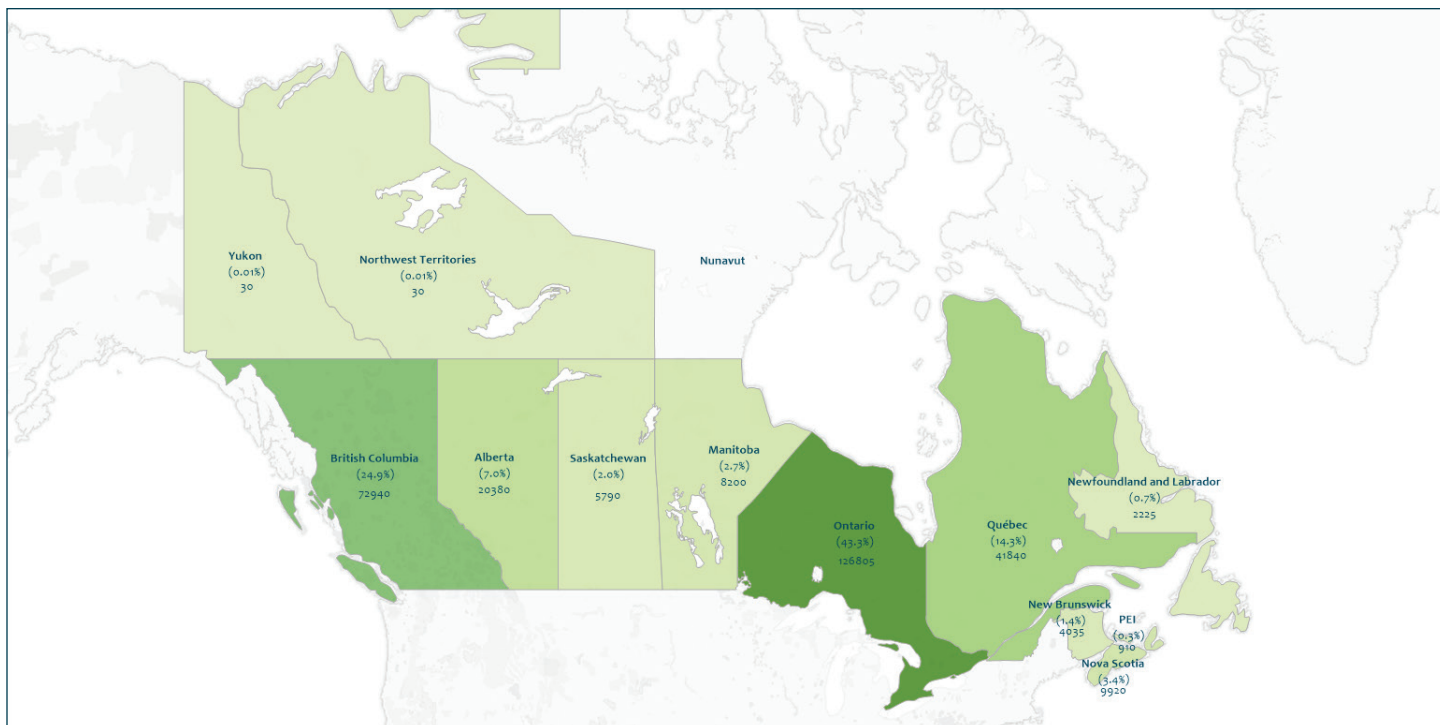


FIGURE 10: Top countries of origin, international students in Canadian trade programs (2013)



18. CBIE has made an inquiry to CIC regarding the cause of the dramatic increase in students as studying in programs classified as ‘Other.’ The Department has advised, ‘Due to operational adjustments to CIC’s administrative data files, data under the variable “Study Level” are preliminary estimates and are currently under review.’

FIGURE 11: Number and percent of international students in Canada, by region (2013)



Just fewer than 60,000 international students in Canada’s universities are from China, representing 36% of all international students in universities. France is the second highest source country of university international students in Canada, representing 7%, and the United States is the third highest source country with 6%.

At the *Secondary or less* level, students from China represent 34% of all international students in Canada, followed by South Korea (9%) and Mexico (7%).

India is the top source country of international students studying in *Other post-secondary* programs, representing 34% of all students in such programs. Students from China (25%) and Saudi Arabia (5%) round out the second and third top source countries in these programs.

China is also the top source country for students in *Trade* programs, representing 25% of all international students in such programs. Students from South Korea are a close second (24%), and India rounds out the top three in trade programs at 13%.

Where in Canada are International Students?

Figure 11 shows the proportion of international students across Canadian provinces and territories.¹⁹ As can be seen in figure 11, across Canada the provinces hosting the largest numbers of international students (Ontario, British Columbia and Québec) receive approximately 83% of all international students in Canada: Ontario leads the number of international student enrolment with 126,805 (43.3% of all students), British Columbia hosted 72,940 students (24.9% of all students) and 41,840 students were enrolled in Québec (14.3% of all students).

While all regions saw a growth in international students between 2012 and 2013, Ontario, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island have seen the strongest growth in the past year with the Ontario student population growing by 14.1%, the Manitoba population growing by 13.2% and Prince Edward Island’s population growing by 13.0%. There were no major changes in the share of international students studying in Canada’s provinces and territories during the period of 2012-2013.

19. According to the national data, there were no international students in Nunavut in 2013.

Focus on Mexico and the Pacific Alliance

In 2014, CBIE will host the Canada-Pacific Alliance Education Forum. This section takes a look at student mobility from the four Pacific Alliance countries.

In 2013 there were a total of 7,525 international students in Canada from Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru combined. A breakdown of this student population is illustrated in figure 12. In total, these countries represent just under 3% of all international students in Canada.

During the years 2009-2013, these countries saw an overall growth rate of international students of 34%. While Mexico is the largest sender of the four countries, with considerable growth of 32%, Colombia leads the region in growth, increasing its number of international students in Canada by 53% over the last five years.

Compared with the overall student population (figure 6), the Pacific Alliance countries have a fairly diverse composition of students with regard to level of study (see figure 13). The population has a fairly even split between university and secondary or less enrolment in Canada, each accounting for one-third of the student population.

As shown in figures 14–17, the majority of students from Peru are studying at the university level in Canada, while just under half (41%) of Mexican students are pursuing studies at the secondary or less level.

As is shown in figure 18, BC hosts the largest number of Mexican students (37%), and Ontario receives the largest number from the other three Pacific Alliance countries (42% of students from Chile, 43% from Colombia and 39% of Peruvian students).



FIGURE 12: Number of international students in Canada from Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru (2013)

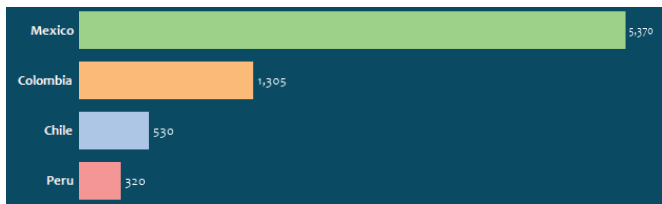
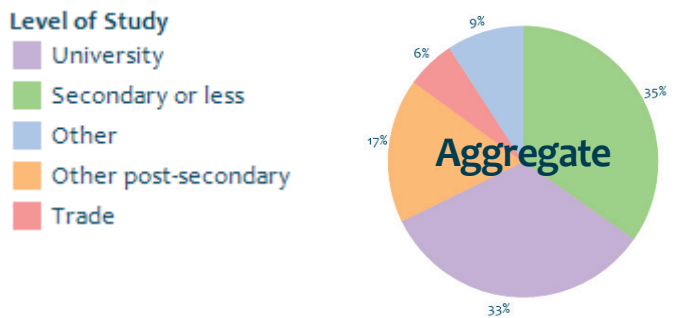


FIGURE 13: Program of study of international students from Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru (aggregate, 2013)



FIGURES 14–17: Canadian program of study of international students from Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru (by country, 2013)

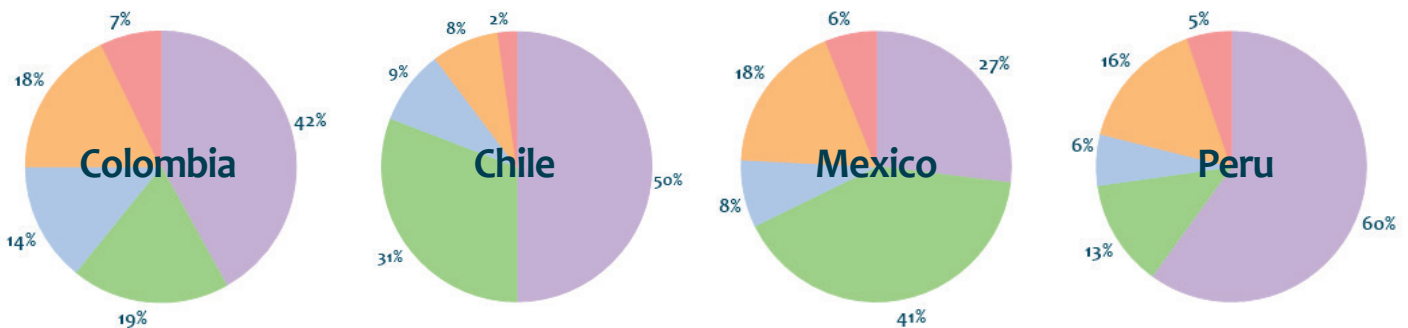


FIGURE 18: International students in Canada from Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru, by region (2013)

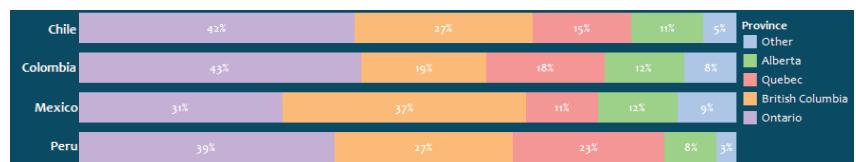
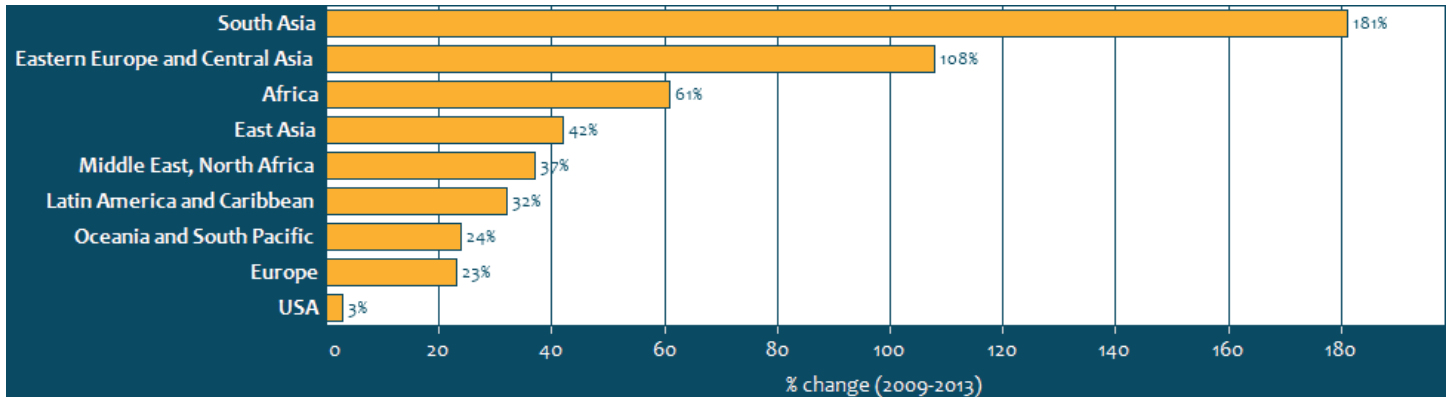


FIGURE 19: Growth in entry of international students to Canada, by region 2009 to 2013

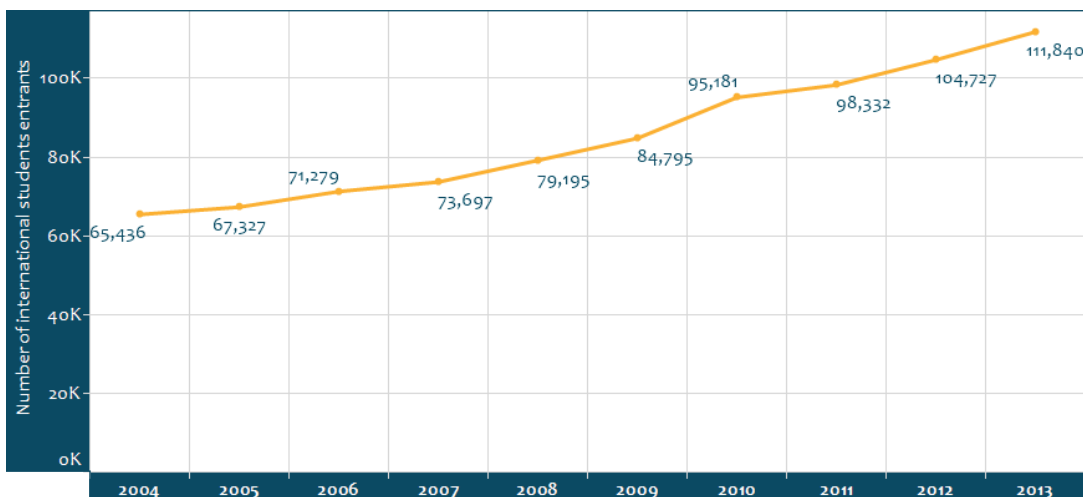


Tracking Growth and New Entrants

Figure 19 illustrates the percentage change in new entries of international students by region of origin during the past five years, from 2009 to 2013. The highest growth rate was seen in international students from South Asia, which increased by 181%. India is responsible for the majority of growth from this region, with the number of students from that country more than tripling from 2009 to 2013 (9,561 to 31,665). Eastern Europe and Central Asia is not a top source region of students to Canada, yet has the second highest regional growth rate after South Asia (108%). It is worth noting that during the period 2009-2013, the Ukrainian student population present in Canada grew by 145% (from 607 to 1,485) and the Kazakh population grew by 183% (from 269 to 760).

In 2013, the number of international students who entered Canada for study was 111,840. Over the past decade the average growth rate of new arrivals has shown moderate, sustained growth of about 6% per annum. During 2012 and 2013, the growth in the number of entrants slightly surpassed this average, coming in at 6.5% and 6.8% respectively. Assuming no major shifts in Canadian policy and practice or in prevailing political and economic reality in sending countries, continued modest growth is likely. If Canada — governments and institutions — expands its efforts to attract international students (through promotion, scholarships, etc.), aiming to achieve the International Education Strategy’s target of doubling by 2022, higher growth rates are also conceivable.

FIGURE 20: International student entrants into Canada per year, 2004 to 2013



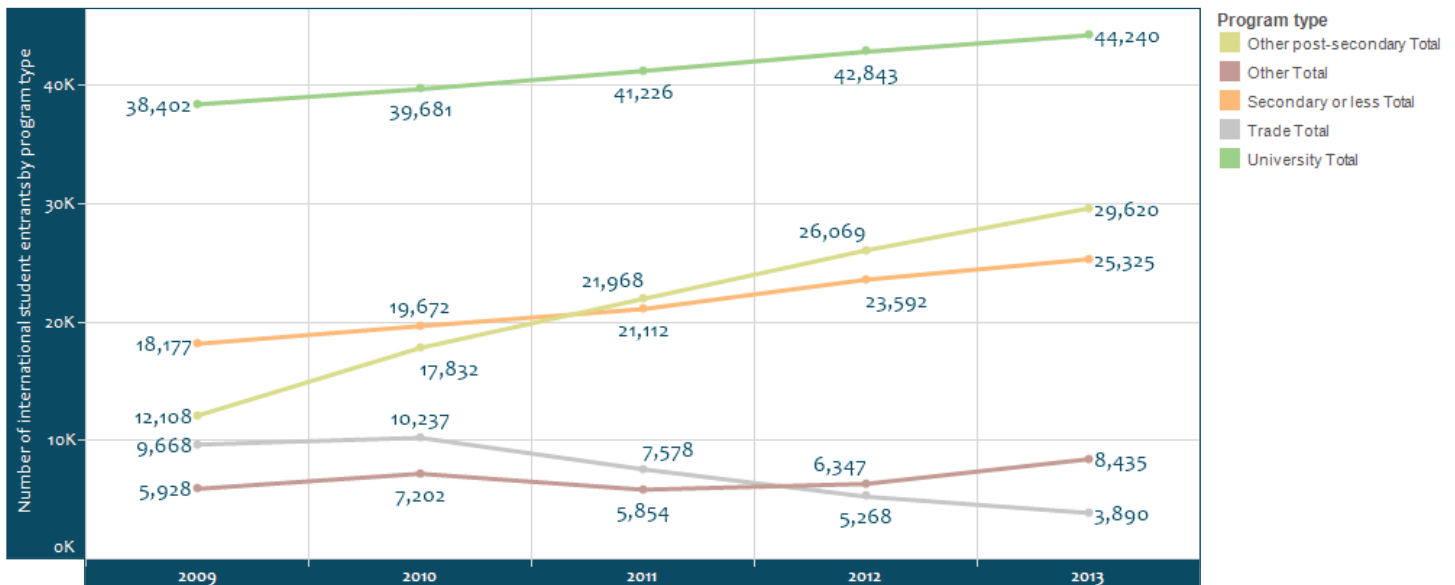
Examining annual entrants yields some trends to watch by country. While the top three source countries of new entrants to Canada mirrors the top three source countries of all international students in Canada (China 28,930, India 12,970 and South Korea 6,945), in 2013 two other top sources of new entrants merit attention: France and the United States. In sheer numbers, France was the fourth highest source country of students entering Canada to study in 2013 (6,410), compared with being the fifth overall source country of students present in Canada. While it appears that the US is declining in international student enrolment in Canada according to figure 6, in fact the US was the fifth top source country of international student entrants to Canada in 2013 (4,525), followed by the rapidly growing populations of students from Saudi Arabia (4,455), Japan (3,985), Mexico (3,555), Nigeria (2,255) and Brazil (2,415).

The number of French students choosing Canada may continue to be positively impacted by Québec policy. Currently French students and any international students pursuing French language, literature or Québec studies pay the same tuition

fees as Québec students.²⁰ At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year the University of Ottawa provided for the first time a similar tuition fee waiver for Francophone and Francophile students wishing to study in French.²¹

Programs of study represented by new entrants have not shifted significantly over the past five years, with one notable exception. As shown in figure 21, the program of study showing the most marked growth is *Other post-secondary*, which has more than doubled during the period, thanks in large part to the Student Partner Program (SPP), an administrative framework designed and implemented in partnership between CIC and CICan. Under this framework, Chinese and Indian students may apply directly to a participating college or polytechnic institute (*Other post-secondary*) and may be considered under the program if they meet specific criteria.

FIGURE 21: International student entrants into Canada per year by level of study, 2009 to 2013



20. For more information please visit the official website of the Province of Québec: <http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/en/students/studying-in-quebec/exemption-from-differential-tuition-fees/>

21. For more information visit the University of Ottawa website: <http://www.uottawa.ca/media/media-release-2852.html>

CHAPTER 4

THE STUDENTS' VOICE



CBIE has been studying, interpreting and sharing the experience of international students in Canada through a comprehensive national survey since 1988. The CBIE International Student Survey is a unique, national dataset which provides CBIE members and other Canadian international education stakeholders with critical, comprehensive insights on the international student experience in Canada's post-secondary educational institutions from pre-arrival planning through to study and post-study phases.

Since the inaugural edition of a shortened International Student Survey for *A World of Learning* in 2012, the number of student respondents and the scope of knowledge and trends illuminated through the use of the dataset have grown immensely. The survey increasingly supports the international education sector's capacity to drive informed, innovative practices through growing familiarity with the global market of international students, those who choose Canada and what stories they share with other prospective students.

This chapter reviews the findings of CBIE's 2014 International Student Survey.

The International Student Survey: Overview

The 2014 CBIE International Student Survey was conducted during April and May. In total, 25 of CBIE's university (16), college (10) and institutes/polytechnics (3) member institutions collaborated to survey their current international student populations, responding to an invitation to all member institutions at the post-secondary level.²²

This group of institutions is diverse and representative of the Canadian post-secondary landscape, yielding data that CBIE believes to be reliable and valid across the sector. Nevertheless there are undoubtedly variations that would arise in a fully comprehensive survey.

As a national body, CBIE strives for regional and linguistic representation in every data sampling exercise. In terms of language of study, the vast majority of 2014 responses come from institutions with English-language instruction. This is a concern and future surveys will seek to increase participation from French-language institutions.

22. Cambrian College, Camosun College, Cape Breton University, Capilano University, Concordia University, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, Langara College, MacEwan University, McGill University, McMaster University, Memorial University Newfoundland, Mount Saint Vincent University, New Brunswick Community College, North Island College, Okanagan College, Polytechnique Montréal, Qwest University Canada, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Thompson Rivers University, Université de Saint-Boniface, University of Calgary, University of Prince Edward Island, University of Regina and University of Windsor.

CBIE received 3,095 complete, useable responses. This sample is double that of the 2013 survey, offering a wealth of information, and providing Canada's education stakeholders with an unprecedented resource for analysis toward enhanced decision-making.

As shown in figure 22, the provincial representation of respondents is as follows: Quebec (1,251), Ontario (652), British Columbia (507), Saskatchewan (318), Alberta (166), Nova Scotia (126), Newfoundland (21), Manitoba (20), Prince Edward Island (18) and New Brunswick (16).

FIGURE 22: Surveys completed by province of study

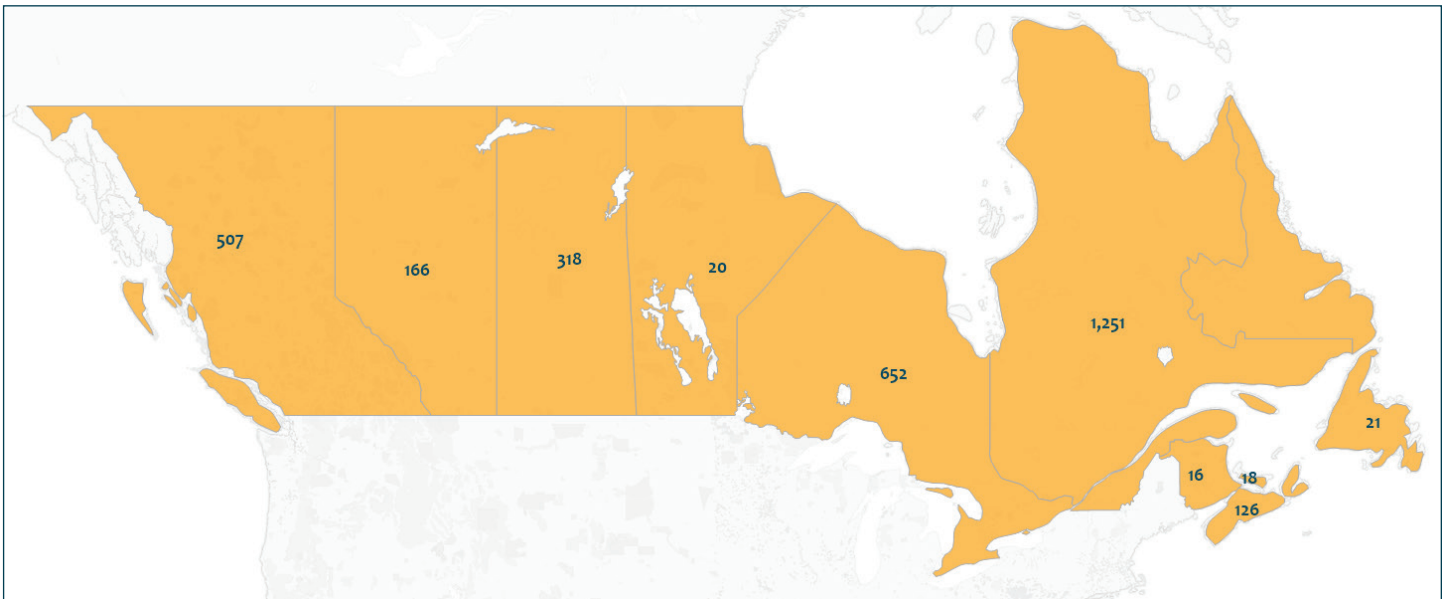
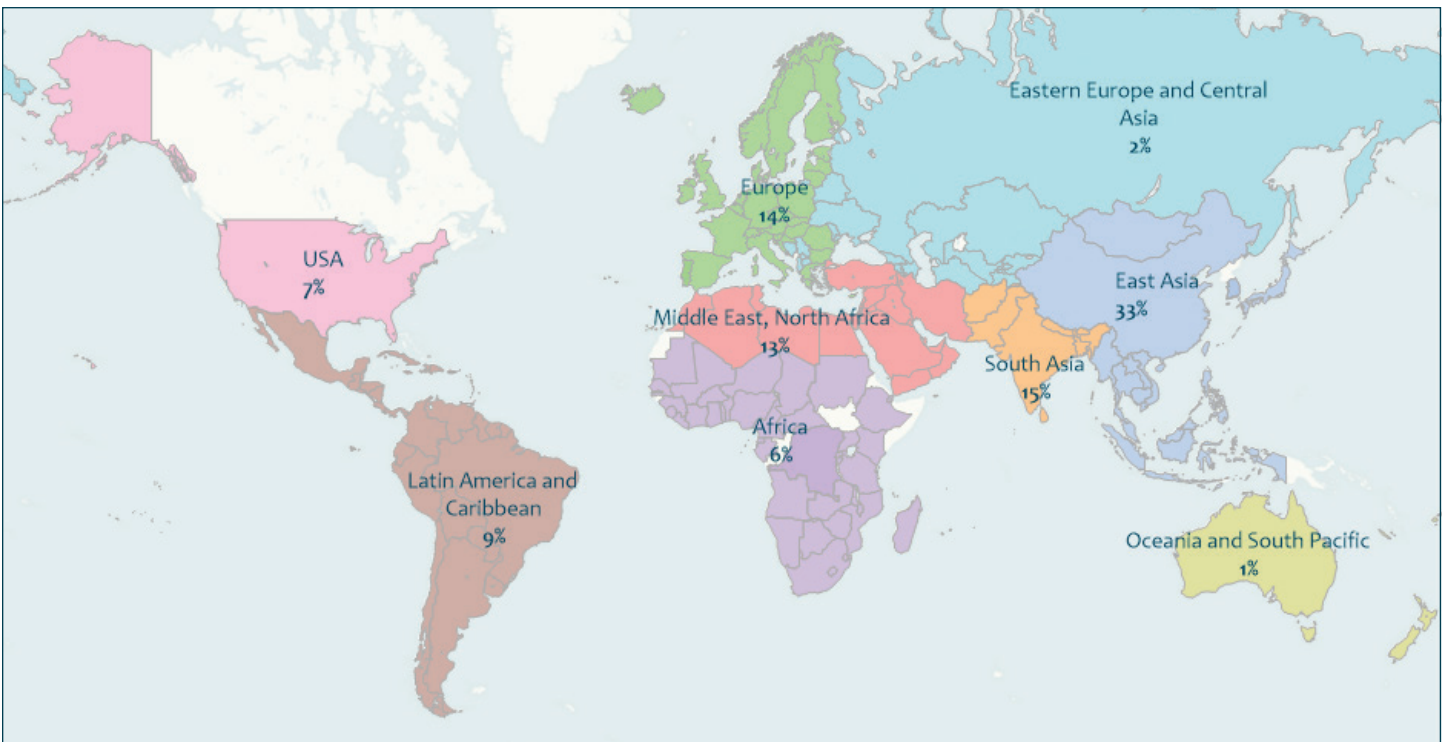


FIGURE 23: Region of origin of survey respondents



Characteristics

This survey of 3,095 post-secondary international students (52% male, 47% female, 1% not stated) represents 1.3% of this demographic overall.²³

As seen in figure 24, approximately 38% of respondents are studying toward a Bachelor’s degree, followed by 25% pursuing a Master’s degree and just fewer than 15% enrolled in a Doctoral program.

As shown in figure 25, respondents are generally in their first year (38.5%), second or third year of a multi-year program (32.6%) or final year of studies (22.3%). A smaller proportion of respondents are studying in a program that is less than one year (6.6%).

Figure 23 depicts the region-of-origin representation in the 2014 survey sample. Students from East Asia comprise the largest regional group in the sample (33%), followed by South Asia (15%) and Europe (14%).

Respondents are studying in various fields, with the majority in engineering and business. These two fields combined attract over half of Canada’s international post-secondary students. As shown in figure 26, 28.8% are in engineering, 22.4% in business, 8.2% in social sciences, 7.2% in natural sciences and 6.6% in computer science and information technology.

International Student Pathways

As shown in figure 27, 22% of respondents have attended an educational institution in Canada prior to their current institution. Approximately 29% of these students have attended a Canadian university, while 20% have attended a language school associated with a university/college and 15% have attended a college or institute (see figure 28).

FIGURE 24: Degree, diploma or certificate sought

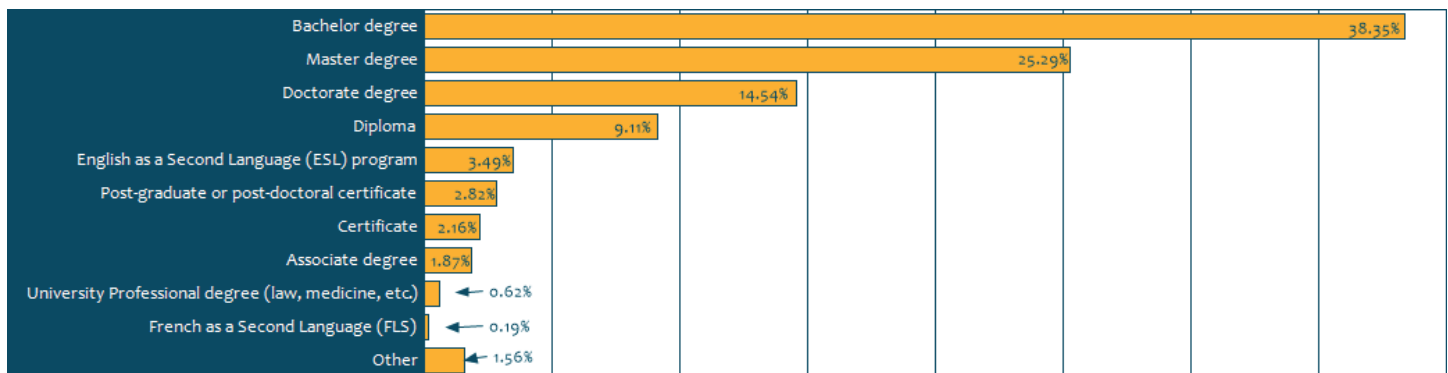


FIGURE 25: Year of study



23. This sample represents approximately 1.3% of all post-secondary international students in Canada according to 2013 data reported by CIC (237,635 students studying in University, Other post-secondary and Trade programs). Please see Chapter 3 of this report for more information.

FIGURE 26: What is your major field of study in Canada?

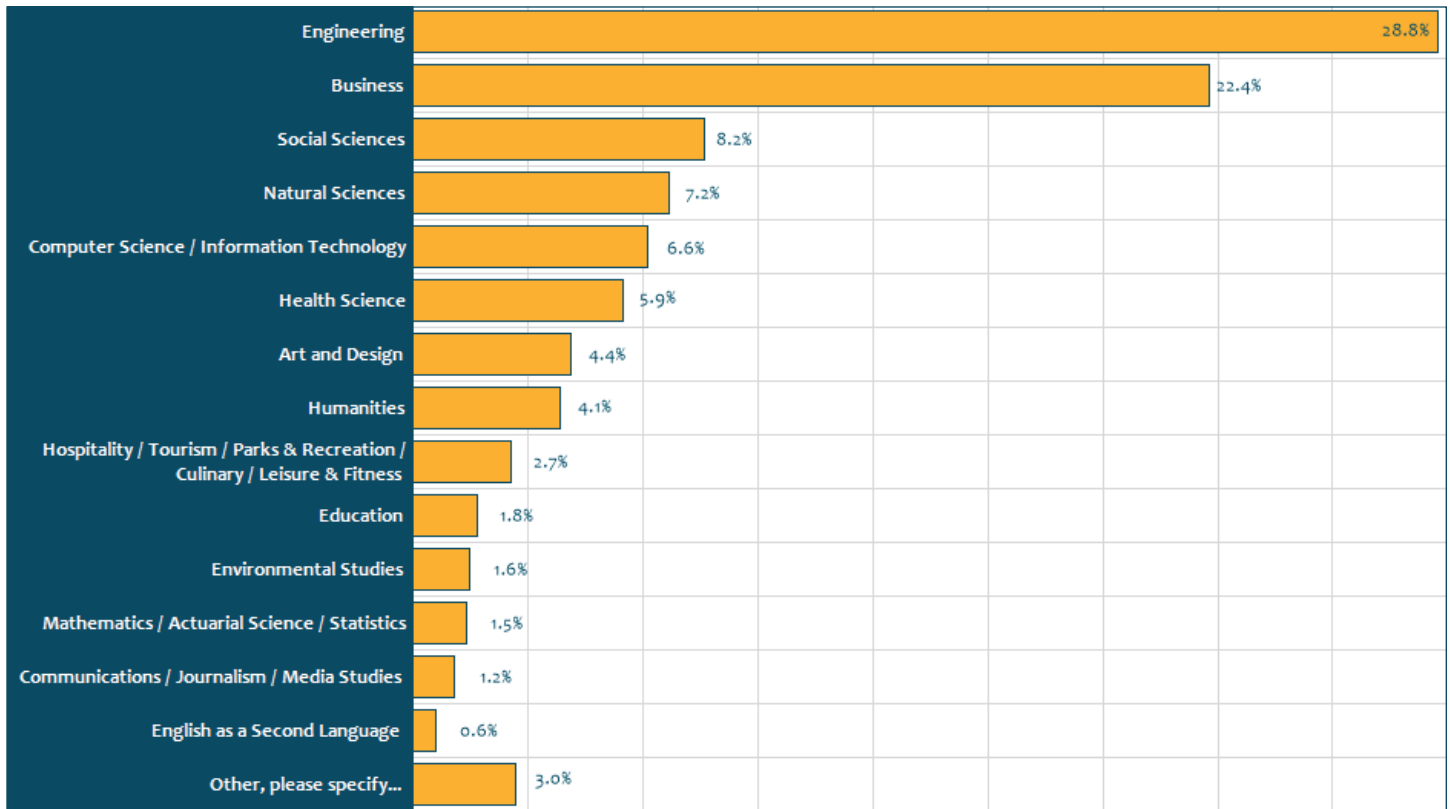
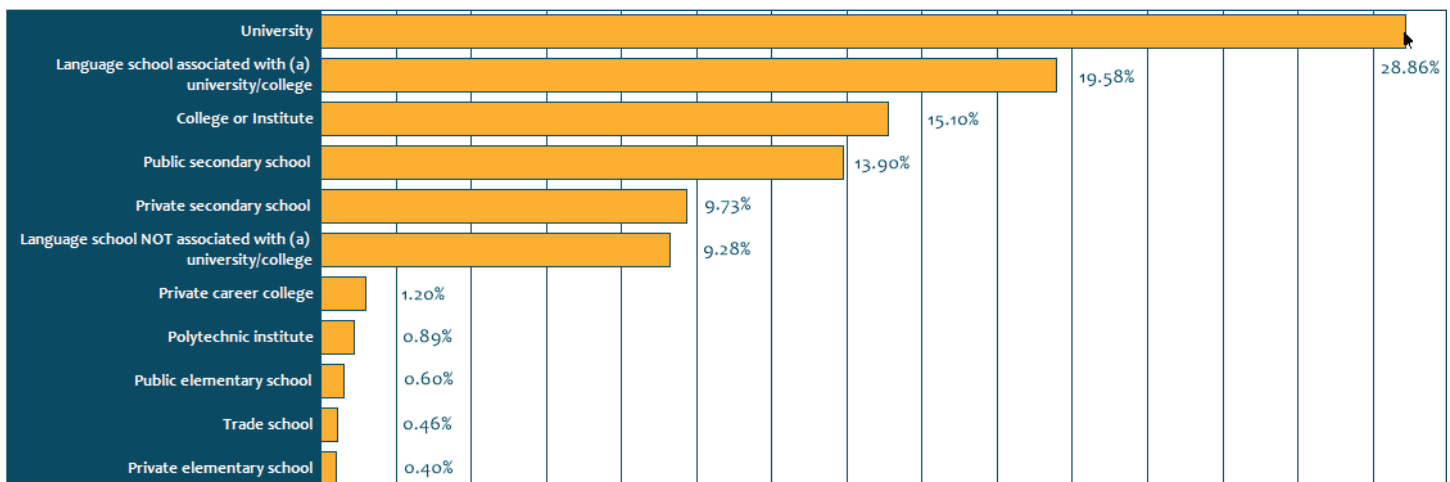


FIGURE 27: Have you ever attended an educational institution in Canada other than the one you are attending now?



FIGURE 28: Where else did you study in Canada?



Applications to Institutions in Other Countries

For the most part, the top receiving countries of international students have fairly similar enrolment patterns with regard to the region of origin of students. In 2013, according to [Project Atlas](#), China is the top country of origin of international students in the US, the UK, Australia, Canada and Japan, while India and South Korea are top countries of origin for six of the top eight receiving countries.

In the 2014 CBIE International Student Survey, approximately 28% of respondents had applied to countries other than Canada, a slight increase compared with 2013 (20%). Of these students who applied to study in another country, almost half (49%) applied to the US, 17% applied to the UK and 7% applied to Australia. Compared with 2013 data, there was an 11% increase in the number of students also considering the US. There was a slight decrease (-6%) in the number of students applying to the UK and Australia (-7%). Figure 29 shows the top ten countries to which respondents applied.

Why do International Students Choose to Study in Canada?

Students choose their study destination due to a variety of factors including academic reputation, flexibility and duration of programs, the international prestige of a degree or diploma from a particular country/institution, admission policies, permanent migration and employment opportunities, cultural/linguistic links and financial considerations (cost of study and scholarship availability).

In the Canadian context, the 2014 survey results show that students are slightly more likely to choose Canada as their study destination (55.5%) before selecting a particular institution within Canada (44.5%). In 2013, 60% of respondents had chosen Canada first, and then a particular institution. While perhaps not a major difference, it could be suggestive of a trend, possibly relating to the increasing prevalence and influence of international ranking schemes leading to the increased student focus on institutional choice. It may also be indicative of more effective institutional recruitment strategies.

FIGURE 29: To which other countries did you apply for study?

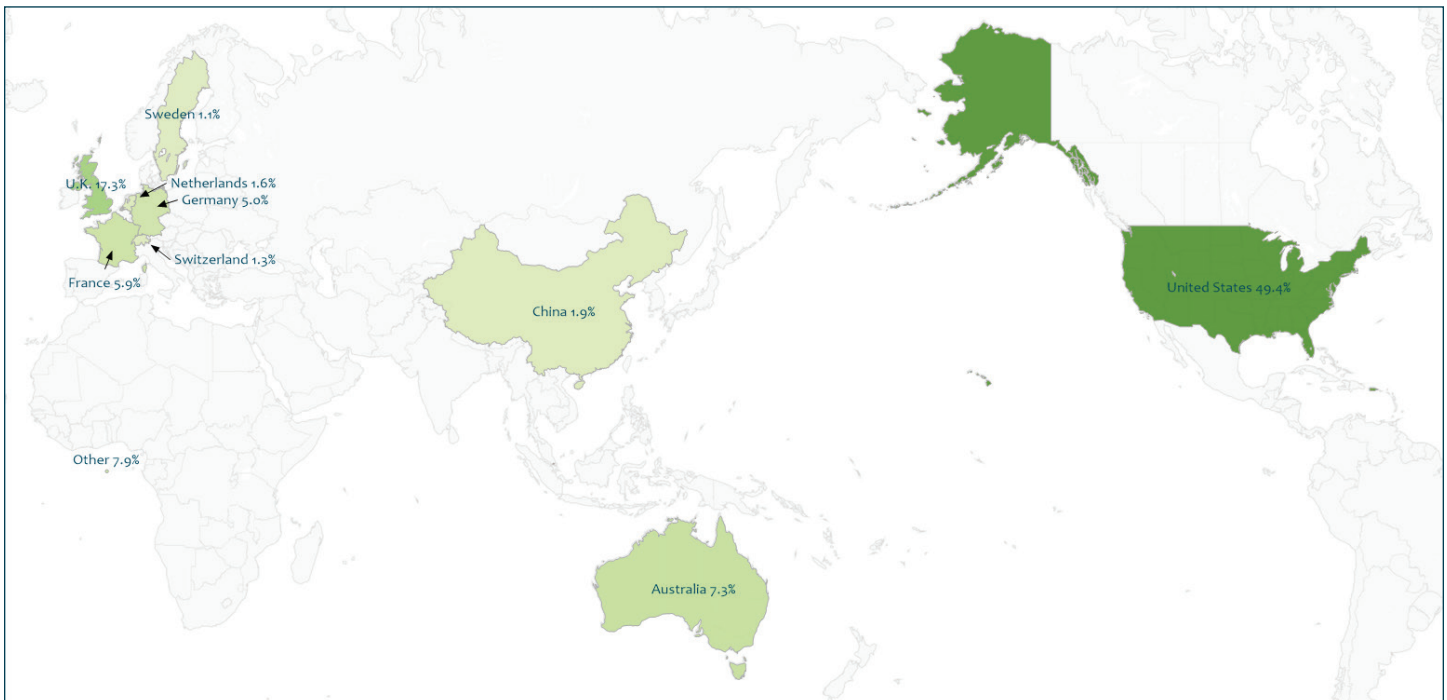
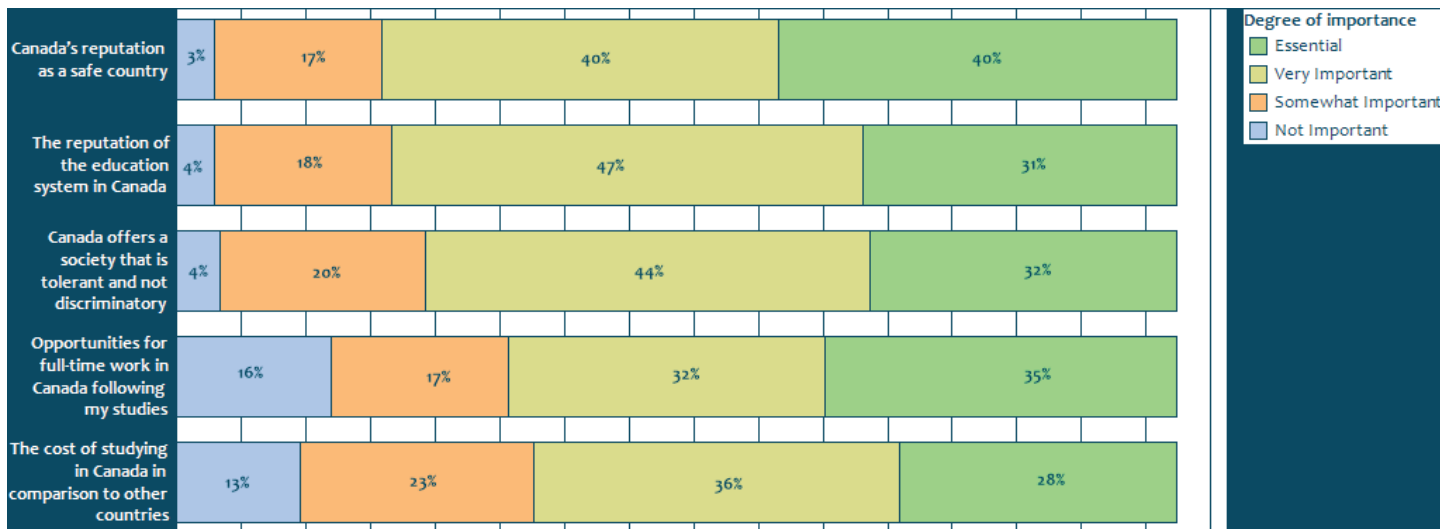


FIGURE 30: Top reasons for choosing Canada



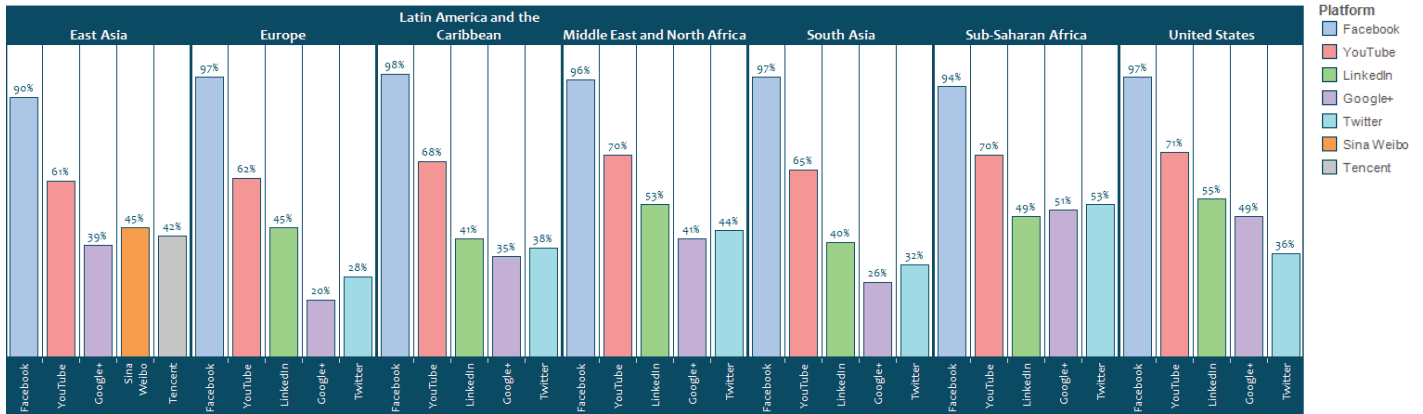
Students indicate that a variety of factors influenced their choice of Canada. Canada’s reputation as a safe country was the top factor with 80% of students indicating that this was essential or very important. The strong reputation for quality of Canada’s education system was a close second with 78% of respondents rating it as essential or very important. The third reason was the reputation of Canadian society as tolerant and not discriminatory: 76% of students indicated this was essential or very important. See figure 30 for the top five factors in students’ decision to study in Canada.

According to Statistics Canada, tuition fees for undergraduate international students have increased by 5.3% in 2014-2015 over 2013-2014 levels. The increase for graduate-level international students is 3.3%. The [Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives](#) predicts that the trend will continue for the foreseeable future.

The survey revealed that students are concerned about the cost of studying and living in Canada. Paying for tuition, books and other related study costs was the biggest financial concern for students, with 85% stating that they were either very (50%) or somewhat (31%) concerned with this cost. Accommodation was also a considerable concern for students with 83% expressing concern. Other costs associated with living in Canada such as food, clothing and transportation were of concern to 79% of international students.

While costs are up, a 2014 [study by HSBC](#) demonstrated that Canada continues to be more affordable than other top destinations, a message that students seem to be heeding.

FIGURE 31: Top five social media platforms of international students, by region



Social Media Engagement

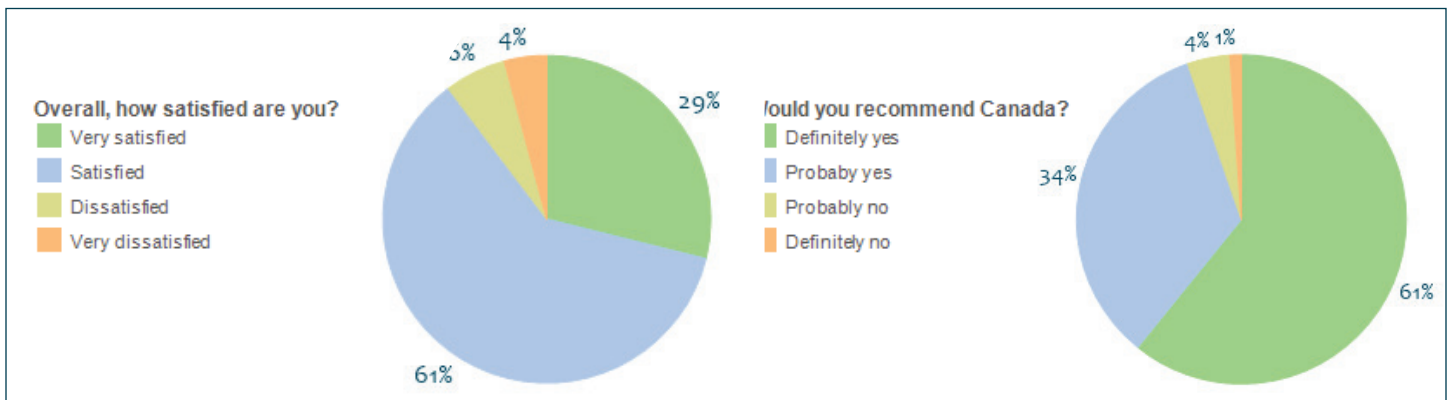
The overwhelming majority — 88% of students — indicated that they are active on social media. In a regional breakdown of social media activity, several noteworthy trends emerge.

For respondents who are active on social media, the top social media networks are Facebook (94%), YouTube (66%), LinkedIn (43%), Google+ (38%) and Twitter (34%). Facebook and YouTube are the two top social networks in every region in this analysis (see figure 31¹⁰). However, the level of engagement in the remaining top social networks varies by region. LinkedIn is the third most popular network in South Asia (53%), the Middle East and North Africa (53%), Europe (45%), Latin America and the Caribbean (41%), and the United States (40%). However, Twitter is more commonly used than LinkedIn in Sub-Saharan Africa (53%). Sina Weibo and Tencent also remain in the top four social networks of East Asian students (45% and 42% respectively).²⁴

Are Students Satisfied with their Decision to Study in Canada?

As shown in figure 32, the vast majority of international students are satisfied with their educational experience in Canada. Approximately 90% of students stated that they were either satisfied (61%) or very satisfied (29%), and 95% of students would definitely (61%) or probably (34%) recommend Canada as a study destination. Regarding the overall satisfaction of students across various regions, those from MENA had the lowest degree of satisfaction with 22% stating that they are very satisfied with their overall experience and 64% stating that they are satisfied. Conversely, students from Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest levels of satisfaction, with 41% expressing that they are very satisfied and 57% expressing that they are satisfied with their overall experience. This data is very similar to that elicited in the 2013 and 2012 surveys.

FIGURE 32: Overall, how satisfied are you with all aspects of your Canadian experience? Would you recommend Canada as a study destination to other students?



24. Oceania and South Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions were not included in the analysis due to the limited number of responses (under 100).

Students were asked to identify how beneficial their Canadian education has been in a variety of areas. Approximately 94% of students indicated that their Canadian education has been either very beneficial or somewhat beneficial with regard to making them a more educated person. In addition, approximately 89% indicated that their Canadian education was either very beneficial or somewhat beneficial with regard to acquiring employment-related knowledge and skills. Perhaps demonstrating the value of Canadian society’s multiculturalism and institutional internationalization, 91% of students stated that their Canadian education has helped them to better understand people of other backgrounds. As will be explored in a feature study later in this chapter, only 56% of international students counted Canadian students in their group of friends, however the qualitative portion of the study finds that international students do indeed form strong bonds with a diversity of students at their institutions, and have a deep appreciation for the unique multicultural experience that a Canadian education affords.

What Do International Students Plan to Do After Their Studies?

Future Citizens

As immigration policy and the international student experience become increasingly linked through federal and provincial policy mechanisms, trends related to the more permanent migration of international students merit more and more attention in the international education sector.

In the 2014 survey, 50% of all respondents indicated their intention to apply for permanent resident status in Canada in the future, compared with 57% in 2013. CBIE will be tracking changes in the level of interest of students to become permanent residents, as it is presumed that such intentions are impacted not only by transformations in Canadian immigration policy, but also by global demographic and economic shifts. As shown in figure 33, students in Western Canada were most

FIGURE 33: Intention to seek permanent resident status in Canada following studies, by region of study

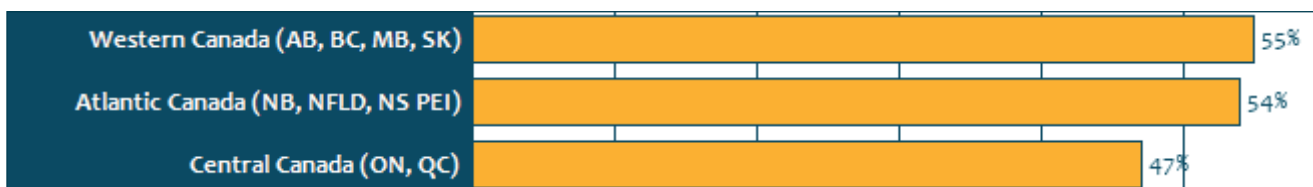


FIGURE 34: Intention to seek permanent resident status in Canada following studies, by region of origin

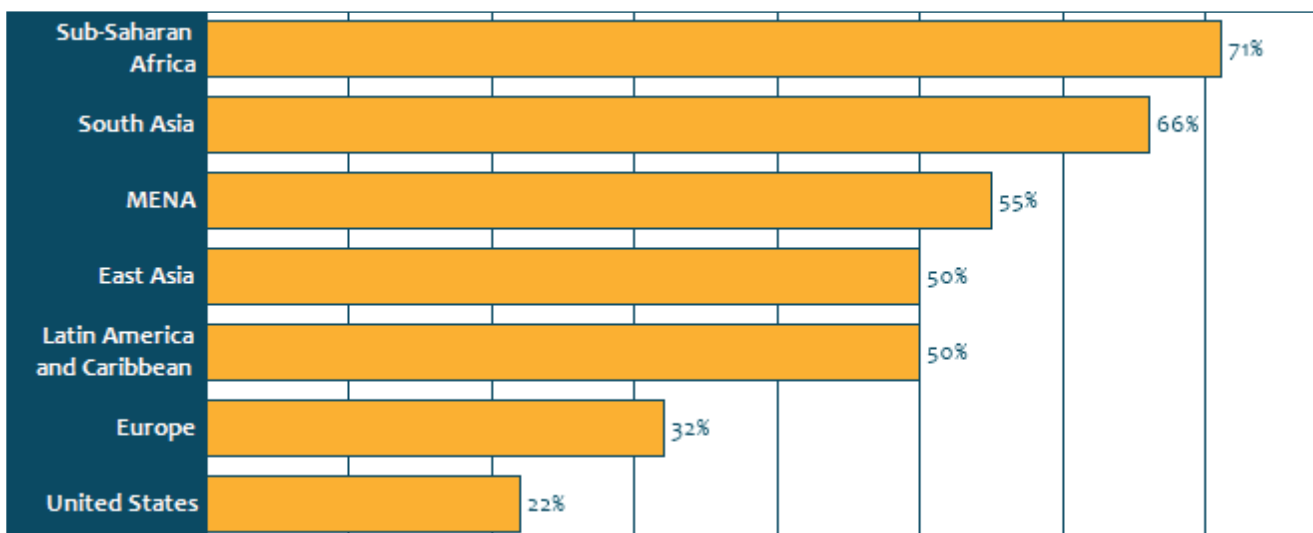


FIGURE 35: Study plans following current program of study (among 55% of respondents)



likely to express their intention to apply for permanent resident status in Canada (55%), followed closely by Atlantic Canada, while students in Central Canada expressed this interest to a slightly lower degree (47%).

The survey data revealed significant contrasts in the interest to become a permanent resident of Canada according to students' region of origin. As shown in figure 34, students from Sub-Saharan Africa were most likely to be interested in pursuing permanent migration to Canada (71%), followed by students from South Asia (66%) and MENA (55%).²⁵ Students from the US were least likely to express their intention to pursue permanent resident status in Canada in the future (22%).

The top three degree/diploma programs where students expressed interest in permanent resident status were those pursuing a certificate (70%), a diploma (70%) or a Doctoral degree (62%).

Study and Work Plans

Many students indicated an interest in working on a temporary basis (up to three years) before returning to their country of origin. Of all respondents who did not express their intention to apply for permanent resident status in Canada, 41% indicated their intention to work in Canada on a temporary basis following their studies. A considerable proportion of students did not have plans to work immediately following their studies (28%), while 23% planned to seek employment in their home country. A small proportion (7%) indicated that they planned to return to their previous employment in their home country.

Just over half (55%) of students indicated their intention to continue studying following their current program. Of those students who plan to continue their studies, 44% plan to continue to study at another institution in Canada, 25% plan to pursue further education at their current Canadian institution and 31% plan to study outside of Canada (see figure 35).

Observations

As Canada's international student population continues to grow and institutions increasingly prioritize internationalization, data — quantitative and qualitative — become increasingly important.

CBIE provides this data in order to better understand the international student experience and to support institutions, governments and the private sector to enhance this experience and, in so doing, realize their own objectives.

This year marked the third annual International Student Survey and a major increase in institutional participation and student response. Through the expanding longitudinal perspective and growing student sample over these three years, CBIE will gain opportunities to delve into major trends over time and conduct more detailed analysis. CBIE hopes that this will increase the capacity of the international education sector to make informed decisions and develop even stronger policies and programs.

The 2014 survey featured expanded focus on the student decision-making process and pre-arrival planning. With the increasing accessibility of communications across borders in this digital age, CBIE has found that students, their institutions and other resources are all communicating earlier, positioning students for success as they arrive, settle and study in Canada.

The year 2014 was a year of major governmental policy transformation with regard to international students as detailed in Chapters 1 and 2. The 2015 International Student Survey will look at the impacts and their influence on current and prospective international students' perceptions of the Canadian experience.

²⁵ Oceania and South Pacific and Eastern Europe and Central Asia regions were not included in the analysis due to the limited number of responses (under 100).

The Integration Challenge: Connecting International Students with their Canadian Peers

From the perspective of international students themselves, this study identifies both internal and external barriers that impede the formation of friendships between international students and their Canadian counterparts across Canada's post-secondary campuses. Shedding light on why international students do not make friends with Canadian students in greater numbers, this paper presents a number of recommendations that can be drawn on by institutions, policy makers and other stakeholders to support greater international student integration.

The number of foreign students in Canada continues to grow rapidly. In 2013, there were 293,500 international students in Canada, up 50% in the last five years.

The benefits of increased numbers of international students are clear: apart from contributing billions of dollars to the Canadian economy, international students bring a diverse set of experiences to the Canadian campus and community. This creates a high degree of exchange of ideas among different groups of people, has the potential to improve scholarship and foster a culture of global understanding, and forms an integral part of internationalization.

The internationalization of education can be defined as the process of integrating international, intercultural, and global dimensions and perspectives into the purpose, functions and delivery of education. It shapes institutional values, influences external relations and partnerships, and impacts upon the entire educational enterprise (Knight, 2003). Internationalization aims to educate students as global citizens, including developing attributes of openness to and understanding of other world views, empathy for people with different backgrounds and experience to oneself and the capacity to value diversity (CBIE, forthcoming Principles, 2014).

In the past two decades, Canada's post-secondary education institutions have become increasingly aware of the advantages of internationalizing their communities of learning. Indeed, the exponential growth of international students studying and graduating at Canadian institutions reflects both a catalyst for internationalization as well as an outcome of efforts to achieve it.

Yet emerging research indicates that one of the strategic advantages of an internationalized campus — the formation of social bonds between international students and their Canadian

counterparts — has been unsuccessful. In CBIE's 2014 survey of more than 3,000 post-secondary international students at 25 universities and colleges across Canada, 56% of respondents reported having no Canadian students as friends. Even those international students who plan to stay on in Canada after studying are no more likely to have Canadian friends — only 46% of them do. In addition, 36.6% indicated that it is difficult to get to know Canadian students. This follows similar results from CBIE's 2013 International Student Survey.

Recent statements on ethical internationalization emphasize the importance of international student integration. CBIE's Code of Ethical Practice details the importance of "Promot(ing) the interests of international students in the institutional community, and provid(ing) meaningful opportunities for interaction that promotes intercultural and mutual understanding between international students and other members of the institutional community and, to the extent possible, the surrounding community"(CBIE, 2013). The International Student Mobility Charter, developed by CBIE and several sister associations and adopted by the European Association for International Education (EAIE), states that: "When admitted to an education institution, international students are automatically also admitted to a country, a new community and its different culture. International students' integration and interaction with the academic as well as the wider community needs to be actively facilitated to maximize the value for all stakeholders" (EAIE, 2012).

However, countries are struggling with this aspect of internationalization. Canadian results mirror discouraging research reports elsewhere.

A recent US study (Gareis, 2012) found that almost 40% of international students in the US indicate that they have no close American friends and would like to have more meaningful interaction with Americans. Students highlighted internal as well as external factors for their lack of social bonds. Internal factors included "shyness" and lack of strong language proficiency. External factors included what is seen as a lack of interest in other cultures on the part of US students.

In Australia, the issue of international student integration has been studied for many years. In a 1973 study on loneliness, two-thirds of international students reported feeling loneliness and/or isolation during their studies (from Weiss, R., 1973, in Nuffic, 2007). In a 2011 study, many students indicated that they have only superficial interactions with Australian students (Gresham and Clayton, 2011).

Australia Education International's (AEI) 2006 International Student Survey found that 87% of international students at the school level, 80% of international students at the post-secondary

level and 91% of international students studying preparatory English language courses would like to have more Australian friends (AEI, 2012). AEI attributes this to Australian students having an existing circle of friends and not seeing a particular benefit to social bonds with international students.

In the UK, a 2004 survey jointly conducted by the British Council, Universities UK, UKCOSA and the Council for International Education found that two-thirds of international students have few or no British friends. The survey results show that most international students befriend students from their home country or other international students. In fact, nearly 60% of international students said that their friends were other international students only, including students from their home country; 32% said they have a mix of UK and international friends; and only 7% of international students said that the majority of their friends were British.

A survey by polling firm YouthSight of 500 international students at 105 post-secondary institutions in the UK elicited similar results. In the survey, 40% of international students indicated that they spend most of their time with students from their home country (The Huffington Post UK, June 2013).

While this disquieting global trend of lack of international student integration is increasingly recognized across Canada's campuses, the barriers to the formation of social bonds between international students and their Canadian counterparts, as well as best practices to address such challenges, remain only partly identified. Though Canadian institutions invest significant resources in orientation and integration programs, and many use researched best practice models, there remain both internal (student) and external (institutional, structural) factors which influence the formation of friendships between international and Canadian students.

Methodology

The present mixed methods study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods: analysis of results from CBIE's survey of international post-secondary students in Canada, semi-structured interviews with a subset of these students, and an extensive literature review.

CBIE's International Student Survey (ISS) is a unique, national dataset which provides holistic insights into the international student experience in Canada's post-secondary institutions from pre-arrival planning through to study and post-study phases. The 2014 survey was conducted during April and May and available in English and French.

The survey elicited 3,095 complete, useable responses from international students at 25 post-secondary institutions in ten provinces. Respondents come from 138 countries and were comprised of 52% males and 47% females; 1% did not state their gender.

We looked at survey questions about or related to the formation of social bonds and in particular these two:

1. Would you say that most of your friends here in Canada are:
 - a. Canadian students
 - b. mostly students from my home country
 - c. mostly international students
 - d. mostly a mixture of students from home country and other international students
 - e. mostly a mixture of Canadian and international students
2. Since arriving at your institution, which of the following student activities/groups have you been involved in?
 - a. International student group
 - b. Sports teams
 - c. Music/theatre/arts groups
 - d. General student orientation
 - e. International student orientation
 - f. Special interest clubs
 - g. Volunteer clubs
 - h. Student union
 - i. Program of study clubs
 - j. Multicultural associations
 - k. Other: students were given the opportunity to include any other activities not listed.

Interviewees were invited based on their responses to the above questions. Consideration was paid to language of study (English or French), country of origin, gender and provincial distribution. In an effort to ensure a sample representing a mix of views, students who had achieved success in forming social bonds with their Canadian counterparts as well as those who had struggled to form friendships were included in the group to be invited or interviewed. Students involved in "many, some or no student activities/groups" were also included.

Forty students were invited for interview; 16 responded. Interviewees were evenly balanced in terms of gender: eight women and eight men. They were enrolled at institutions located in seven different provinces and represented a variety of fields and levels of study. Three were studying towards a diploma, six were Bachelor's students, five were studying at the Master's level, one was studying English as a Second Language and one was studying French as a Second Language. The 16 students come from 11 different countries, in five regions: six are from East Asia, three from South Asia, three from Africa, three from South America and one from Europe.

Students were given the choice of being interviewed in either English or French. Thirteen interviews were conducted in English and three in French.

Prior to the interview students were asked to sign a consent form which ensured their anonymity but allowed CBIE to quote them using the pseudonym of their choice.

During webcam, recorded, semi-structured interviews conducted between June and August 2014, participants were asked to reflect on their social integration in Canada. Specifically, interviewees were asked to discuss the following:

- Their comfort level in interacting with various groups of individuals, namely other genders, other sexual orientations, other cultures, other religions, other races and other nationalities;
- How they met most of their friends;
- The type, depth and breadth of their participation in various activities, and the extent of their interaction with Canadians in these activities, namely sports or sporting events; cultural groups or events; religious groups or events; social settings; and coursework or study;
- If they find Canadian students hard to get to know, and if so, they were asked to discuss a time they attempted to connect with a Canadian student and how the interaction made them feel;
- Whether they think there are challenges and benefits to making friends with Canadian students, other international students, and students from their home country, and what these challenges and benefits may be;
- Whether they believe that it is important to make friends with Canadian students; and
- Their experience participating in an institution-led international student orientation program, or if they declined to participate, why.

Participants were also asked to reflect on what specifically would make it easier to connect with Canadian students, and how Canadians might benefit more from the presence of international students on campus.

Quantitative data from the International Student Survey was cross-tabulated and analyzed with the results from individual interviews determined as having an impact on social bond formation between international and Canadian students.

Limitations

The present study is limited. While the first-hand perspective of international students provides a deep and unique understanding of the barriers international students face in forming social bonds with Canadian students, a notable absence from the study is the first-hand perspective of Canadian students and key stakeholders within institutions. More research needs to be done to understand the attitudes of domestic students towards international students and, where there is a lack of understanding, develop ways to bring the groups together for meaningful interaction.

In addition, international students who self-select to participate in interviews may do so because they have had either a particularly positive or an acutely negative experience and welcome the opportunity to share it. Nevertheless, the following results and analysis present a useful picture drawn from two rich datasets, and suggest a number of evidence-based recommendations — chiefly made by the interviewees themselves.

Results and Analysis

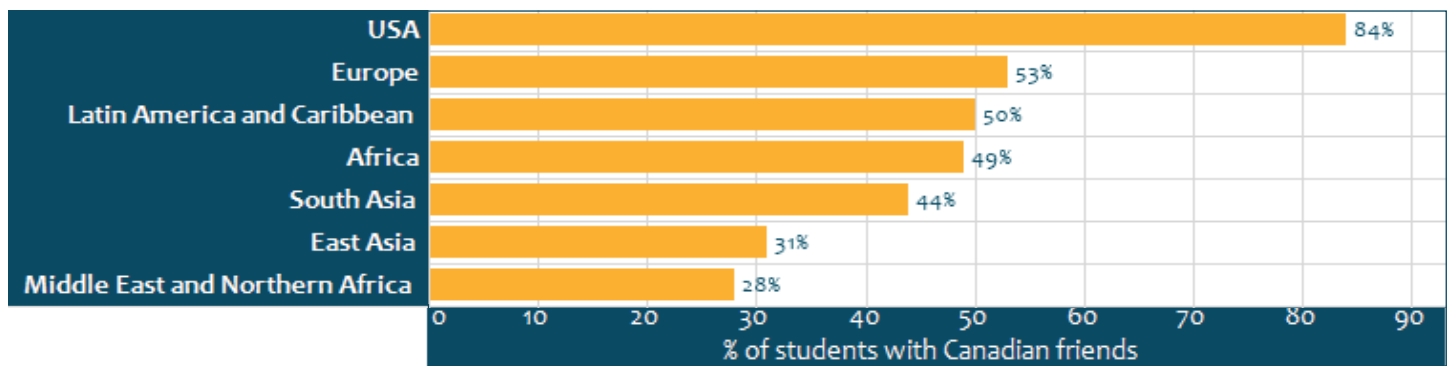
The following section will consider the results from both the 2014 CBIE International Student Survey and the 16 semi-structured student interviews in tandem. By reviewing the results and analysis through this holistic approach, we have identified barriers to the formation of social bonds, clues as to how barriers form, and how they might be diminished in order to foster more positive, meaningful relationships between Canadian students and their international peers.

International Students Struggle to Form Friendships with Canadian Students

As detailed above, CBIE's 2014 ISS revealed that just over one-third of international students in Canada find it difficult to get to know Canadian students. Furthermore, 56% of students reported that they do not count Canadian students among their friends in Canada, and one in every two students finds it difficult to meet Canadians outside of their university/college context.

While region of origin impacts the probability that an international student would have friendships with Canadians, several other variables examined in our study were surprisingly less impactful. For example, students who plan to pursue permanent residency in Canada following their studies were not significantly more likely to have friendships with Canadian students.

FIGURE 36



In the survey, the proportion of international students reporting friendships with Canadian students varies widely by region of origin, indicating that cultural and linguistic differences between students from different backgrounds play a role. As you can see in figure 36, students from the United States were most likely to report having Canadian friends in their social group (84%), followed by students from Europe (53%). Students least likely to form friendships with Canadians are those from the Middle East and Northern Africa, where only 28% counted Canadian students in their group of friends.²⁶

Despite these rather troubling figures, 82% of international students consider Canada to be a ‘...welcoming and tolerant society.’ Furthermore, the majority of students (76%) agree that ‘Canadians are friendly once you get to know them’ and 59% of students agreed that ‘Staff and students have shown an interest in my country and culture.’

Where are friendships formed?

Program of Study

Unsurprisingly, almost all international students participating in the semi-structured interviews indicated that they were most successful at meeting Canadians through their program of study: the classroom, study groups and group projects.

Extracurricular Activities

Students also indicated meeting Canadians through extracurricular activities including interest groups, religious groups, volunteering, employment, and sporting activities. In the 2014 ISS 81% of respondents indicated that they are involved in some form of extracurricular activity on-campus. The top three participation rates for international students outside of the international office were volunteering (21.9%), playing sports (14.5%) and being active in student union and governance structures (12.7%).

“I generally volunteered a lot in the city since I was new to the culture. I decided to find opportunities to interact with Canadian people.”
— Sujung, South Korea

Interviewees in this study are generally active in extracurricular pursuits, with a broad diversity of interests and hobbies reflected in the sample including LGBTQ groups, spiritual/religious associations, social justice movements, student governance, pickup sports and more. Students expressed that they were more likely to encounter Canadians in some activities than others. For example, one student found that his spiritual student association had almost no Canadians, whereas his business student society had many. One interviewee had a particularly noteworthy strategy to meet Canadians — by conducting a language exchange she was able to meet Canadian students while honing her English listening and speaking skills.

International Student Office

Nearly half (46%) of respondents in the 2014 ISS were participating in an international student group/association. Similarly, almost all interviewees described meeting and forming friendships with other international students through the international student community in some form, though according to the 2014 ISS a meagre 37% of international students participate in their institution’s international student orientation program.

Despite this small number, almost all interviewees felt that they were especially close with their fellow international students and reflected positively on their experiences at the international student office during their first days, where many of their first connections were formed.

Many students also reflected positively on the number of occasions (structured and unstructured) they have had to exchange and celebrate their cultures through food and dance, and welcomed the idea of having more opportunities to do so with Canadians.

26. Oceania and Eastern Europe regions were not included in the analysis due to the limited number of responses (under 100).

“Our school holds a lot of cultural diversity activities... you just go into the campus and there is lots of activity there.”

— *Sujung, South Korea*

The international student community was also a primary gathering point during the 2014 FIFA World Cup, taking place when this study was conducted; several interviewees mentioned gaining new friends while watching matches in communal campus spaces.

“The World Cup is happening right now so there are a lot of international students meeting to watch these games. I watch the games with them. It’s really exciting.”

— *Clara, Venezuela*

Student Residence Life

The 2014 ISS did not show a correlation between international students’ living in residence and being more likely to have Canadian friends. The semi-structured interviews support this finding. While several students did indicate that they formed friendships in their student residence, these friendships were generally balanced between Canadian students and other international students. Interviewees from some institutions indicated that residences were more likely to be occupied by international students, and that Canadians were more likely to live off-campus.

Employment

Many interviewees are working part-time during their studies. Some students cited this experience as an opportunity to meet Canadian friends, while others considered the time commitment as a barrier to forming friendships. Interviewees worked a variety of jobs on-and off-campus, such as alumni development, providing campus tours, being research assistants in laboratories and working in the food service industry.

“I have been working in the alumni development department in the call centre asking donations at night. I have realized that most of the people working there have been nice. There is a lot of cultural diversity so I have made a lot of friends there, it’s great I love that job and I have met a lot of people.”

— *Adriana, Venezuela*

Social Opportunities

A small number of interviewees also reported forming friendships with Canadians in informal settings such as pubs, coffee shops and parties — however, in nearly all cases such encounters happened through a pre-established network of friends (meeting someone through a “friend-of-a-friend”).

“I go to some café and meet Canadians there. We have a lot of elder people here, and they love to talk to you. You just sit there drinking your coffee and they say, hey how are ya?”

— *Lea, China*

Barriers to friendship with Canadians

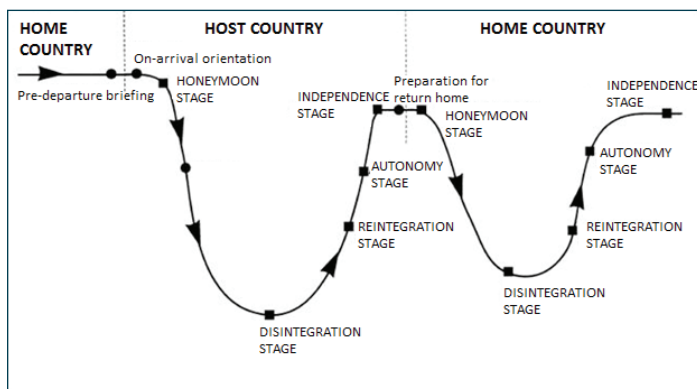
Interviewees cited a variety of barriers at play when it came to their efforts to form friendships with Canadians. These barriers often compounded upon one another, presenting multiple social challenges for international students.

Internal Barriers

Internal barriers are those that interviewees identified about themselves — their own characteristics and cultural traits which they self-identified as inhibiting their ability to form friendships with Canadian students. In the 2014 ISS, one-third (30%) of international students reported that they ‘prefer to mix with (their) own culture.’ Those students who were in agreement with this statement were considerably less likely to have Canadian friends (only 31% in contrast to 56% of all respondents). The likelihood of having friendships with Canadian students was also slightly negatively affected if the student did not participate in extracurricular activities. Among the group of “inactive” students, only 46% reported having Canadian friends.

It should be emphasized that international students in Canada are undergoing a significant process of cultural adaptation while at the same time striving for academic success in a new environment. Figure 37 depicts the well-known model of cultural adaptation (Barker, 1990), depicting the (often unpredictable and non-linear) highs and lows that international students feel as they integrate. Internal barriers are influenced by these drastic cultural changes, and should not be perceived as abnormal behaviour, but rather behaviour that evolves over time. As students confront these changes, the kind of moral support and cross-cultural understanding offered by institutional student services professionals is highly valuable. Of course, students need not only to be aware of these resources but to reach out to access them.

FIGURE 37



Many students shared that they felt too shy during their first days in Canada to fully participate in big activities organized by their campus, such as orientation week.

“Here, first year orientation is like a big party. Everyone will welcome you. They just stand in a line and say ‘Hi, how are you, welcome!’ It’s too overwhelming. A little scary...”

— *Lea, China*

Some students felt that their limited language skills and their accent contributed to their lack of confidence, as well as the challenge of navigating Canadian cultural nuances.

“Because we don’t know about the culture, and I am not confident with my English, so I don’t know what to talk to them. And I think that’s why it makes our conversation boring. So that’s why they don’t want, maybe they felt bored by me. That’s my challenge.”

— *Thu Phuong, Vietnam*

Feeling a lack of confidence in Canadian cultural contexts, many interviewees described how they at first gravitated towards peers who shared their cultural and linguistic background as a source of comfort and support. While such support was critical during times of distress, several students recognized the downside of only fraternizing with their familiar peers.

“A lot of my friends who have been here for three or four years still can’t speak English properly. I was a little bit surprised, but after I know them for a while I kind of understand because they just group, they just communicate with people in their small group.”

— *Jessica, China*

Institutional Barriers

In the 2014 ISS, nine out of ten students indicated that they were likely to recommend their institution to fellow international students. However, as Canadian campuses internationalize, interviewees identified some institutional barriers which they felt inhibited their ability to form friendships with Canadian students. These can be classified as those socio-cultural and physical barriers which are presented to students by their environment on-campus.

Interviewees who were involved in diversity events on-campus found that such activities were heavily promoted to and attended by international students — lacking a two-way cultural exchange with Canadian students.

“Most international students have international student organizations, or clubs and societies, specifically dedicated to international students. I have never seen Canadian students come to those. So even if you go to all the events organized by the university, you don’t get to meet Canadians.”

— *Palama, Sri Lanka*

Some interviewees lamented that they were unable to participate in their institution’s orientation activities, or that when they did so, they found such activities to be poorly timed and rushed — and ultimately not overly meaningful — as they were simultaneously experiencing visa processes, arrival and settlement processes and cultural adaptation.

The composition of students in certain programs of study was also cited as a challenge by a few interviewees. For these interviewees, their particular fields of study have a high proportion of international students, making it difficult to encounter Canadians in their academic spaces.

“... It’s difficult because most graduate students are in fact international students. In my department, we have I think 60 or 70 graduate students, out of them I know only three people are Canadians. In that respect, it is very difficult to get to know Canadians... unless you become friends with some of them or one of them through a course you are taking, where else can you find them? ... the structure is organized in such a way that international students always get to know international students, but not Canadians.”

— Palama, Sri Lanka

Canadian Students

In the survey, 74% of respondents said that they would like more opportunities to experience Canadian culture and family life. Unfortunately, some student interviewees cited negative social experiences with Canadian students, sharing that from time to time they sense Canadians are also shy or fearful of interacting with them. Some students surmised that Canadians in urban areas were more accustomed to cross-cultural experiences and were therefore more approachable than in rural regions.

“I realized it’s not their fault, it’s the culture, the location, people are not aware of many other countries because they are so immersed in their own culture... I bet in Toronto or Montreal it’s different, but here people are not that aware of other cultures.”

— Clara, Venezuela

Several interviewees referred to instances where they had begun to form friendships with Canadians in spaces outside of the classroom, only to have those relationships seemingly dissolve when they returned to the classroom.

“Sometimes you meet them (Canadians), they are in school, you see them every day. Then you meet them in a party and they are really friendly and they talk to you, but then you see them again at school and... when you say hi to them and they don’t - it’s like a Canadian thing. Us Latins, we always say hi, 20 times a day, just hi and leave it. But here it’s more like a distant relationship. You say hi one day and then another day they are too shy to say hi to you.”

— Clara, Venezuela

Where friendships with Canadians were formed, many interviewees underscored a sense of superficiality in such relationships.

“When you approach them, they are a really welcoming. But when you really want to become friends, it’s a little more difficult. They don’t go into things deeply; it always stays on the surface. They say hello, they are nice, but when you invite them to do something...that causes a little problem.”

— Maguet, France

In a similar way, several students described the ‘circle of Canadian friends’ as something that was difficult to penetrate.

“If they are by themselves they will talk to you, but if they are with their friends they will act differently. It is a little bit hard to join a group of friends who have been together since high school for example.”

— Clara, Venezuela

Some interviewees described the particularly challenging atmosphere in the classroom. One interviewee felt that he was resented by his classmates due to his position as top student, while another felt that Canadian students avoided doing group work with him and his international peers because of their lower level of English.

“They (Canadian classmates) want to learn and they find they’re competing with me so they’re not interested in being friends.”

— Larry, China

“I can feel that the local students don’t want to do group work with us because of our language barrier. So, doing group work with us may impact their academic mark so sometimes...”

— Jessica, China

Compounding Barriers

The following section sheds light on how internal and external barriers can become compounded, posing amplified challenges for international students as they integrate socially into their Canadian institution.

For example, interviewees shared that when cultural communication styles and the lack of familiarity between international students and Canadian students are apparent, this impedes the building of meaningful friendships between both parties.

“A challenge I want to mention... it’s also about me. I did not actively communicate with them (Canadian students) you know. Maybe they are not interested but I’m sure if I actively talk to them, it would be more fun. But when you find out people are not interested in you, you are also not interested in them. Things become difficult”

— *Larry, China*

“I realized that the way we express ourselves at home does not convey the same here, the same intensity. One of the difficulties might be saying what you mean and what others interpret it as. It’s a communication issue and I don’t think we can do much about it. It’s a reality of life that we perhaps have to live with. And as an international student I need to be aware of such differences.”

— *Khaleel, Pakistan*

Students also shared that even when they felt they had found a Canadian friend, the relationship remained superficial due to a lack of common interests and cultural references.

“We always have ‘shallow conversations’ — just small talk — the weather, and, you know, things like that.”

— *Clara, Venezuela*

Several students echoed this experience with their Canadian peers, regretting that the students did not have more in common culturally. For example, interviewees mentioned that if they were more interested in Canadian hockey and the local pubs, they might be able to relate more and build friendships from common interests.

Enabling factors for friendships

Internal enabling factors

Most interviewees employed strategies to address the barriers to forming friendships with Canadians. Many described themselves as outgoing, persistent and curious about other cultures in order to connect with Canadians. These three fundamental characteristics gave them success in engaging with Canadians, as well as other international students.

“If I come to Canada and I live in my group of people from a certain culture only, they will give me that space, but I take one step towards them, they take two towards me. You have to take the first step; otherwise they will just give you your space.”

— *Khaleel, Pakistan*

Some students intentionally limited their interaction with students from their home country in order to be more outgoing and form connections with Canadians.

“You have to step out of your comfort zone, and challenge yourself and talk to people that you don’t know. This is why I came here. Otherwise I’m just going to be comfortable and talking with the people who are like me and I don’t have to come to Canada.”

— *Jessica, China*

Many interviewees shared that the longer they were in Canada the more comfortable they felt in approaching and interacting with Canadians. This was mainly due to feeling more settled and feeling more knowledgeable and confident about Canadian culture and languages.

“With time, after living here for the past four years, it is getting easier for me. It’s easier to interact with people... now it’s easy so I don’t feel uncomfortable interacting with people here in Canada.”

— *Clara, Venezuela*

While cultural and linguistic differences were generally perceived as barriers to overcome in order to become friends with Canadians, some international students are able to find

Canadians who have an interest in their background and form meaningful friendships with them through language exchange and political discussion. In these cases, cultural and linguistic differences served as conduits to friendships between students rather than barriers. At first, some interviewees found it difficult to discern which Canadian students they would best connect with, but found that once the connection was made the relationship grew easily.

“When you come to a country to study, part of the integration process is getting close to the culture in which you live. The best thing is to become friends with Canadians who understand that.”

— Maguet, France

“I was doing international politics and she was there too and we have a really good friendship and we still talk today because we like international politics and we always talk about those things. Maybe that opened our friendship... ya she is a really good friend of mine.”

— Clara, Venezuela

External enabling factors

In addition to the support received through international student services which facilitated friendships between international students, several interviewees noted that their professors and Canadian students played a key role in creating an inclusive social atmosphere.

Within the classroom, interviewees found that when their instructor played an active role in encouraging students to interact with one another through group work and debate, international students were able to engage with their classmates and contribute their international perspective to the learning.

“I think, in the courses, the instructor should do his or her effort to try to group international students with Canadian students. Most cases I know probably it’s a big worry for the instructors - usually they just let students work together by themselves but in that case most Canadian students will be with people they know most, or they know better. So international students have to do group work with international students. In worst case, probably people just group with people from the same country.”

— Jessica, China

Several instances of Canadian students extending a warm welcome to their international peers were also cited by interviewees, such as inviting them to join in a party, club, or other social activity.

“Canadians are very forthcoming people, they would take us to a German club or Italian club with those houses and where people celebrated that culture. Or just go to a bar or watch a movie or go to a park or watching the World Cup right now!”

— Khaleel, Pakistan

Advantages of friendship with Canadians

Interviewees were almost in universal agreement that there are unique advantages to forming friendships with Canadian students, particularly with regard to language acquisition and orientation to Canadian culture and lifestyle.

“At the beginning when I first came I was hanging out with a lot of my Latin friends so I didn’t practice my language too much. But after I’m hanging out with a lot of people that I have to speak English with so that’s one of the benefits.”

— Clara, Venezuela

“When you study here you have to know the rules, how to live here. The Canadians will give you the best idea of how to live here.”

— Lea, China

“Being friends with Canadians and in the same groups as them, if they [professors] use examples we don’t know I can ask them to explain to me. It helps me to get along with students. There is a difference in our educational system, and they understand the Canadian system more than us, so if we have problems I can ask my friends in the same class as me to explain it to me and that will help me move on.”

— Musa, Nigeria

When diversity is valued, rather than perceived as a barrier between classmates, it can lead to better outcomes. One interviewee recounted a group project experience where the background of his Canadian classmates, coupled with his own unique perspective was instrumental in the success of the group.

“My Canadian friends are doing executive MBAs while they are working. So they of course are experienced and they have global experiences. We have some fellows from Canada that had their own experiences. So when we were working on a case study we were able to come together with our different experiences and benefitted from that.”

— *Khaleel, Pakistan*

In the ISS, 65% of respondents shared their intention to find work in Canada following their studies. Participants in the semi-structured interviews were keenly aware of the value of having a Canadian professional network to support them in their job search.

“For example, in the case of internships. You don’t have time to spend three days on the internet. But if you have a Canadian friend here, it would be enough to connect with them and ask them a simple and precise question to supplement some of the information.”

— *Pierre Paul, Cameroon*

“It’s a small world in the engineering industry; I’m interested in oil and gas, which is a small world. Everyone knows someone somewhere else. It might happen that my classmates they will be my future coworkers...”

— *Clara, Venezuela*

Several interview participants highlighted the value that they found in experiencing a multicultural society through meeting diverse Canadians. Such students were able to learn about new cultures and many shared that this has fostered in them a stronger appreciation for diversity and global citizenship. Many students considered this a unique opportunity that Canada afforded them that would not be available elsewhere. In keeping with this sentiment, in the 2014 CBIE International Student Survey 91% of respondents indicated that studying in Canada had helped them to better understand people of different backgrounds.

“People think different ways. You have a set of rules and a paradigm that you live with, in your home country. When you go outside, you tend to think whether that is correct, whether the way you live is correct. It is interesting to get to know how other people live and think, not only Canadians, but people from other countries.”

— *Palama, Sri Lanka*

Recommendations

The 16 participants in the semi-structured interviews were asked for their recommendations on how institutions and individuals might facilitate a greater number of, and more meaningful friendships between Canadian and international students. The following section describes the most salient themes that emerged. In many instances interviewees qualified their recommendations with reference to their institution’s location, size and mission. The following recommendations should be viewed through the lens that there are unfortunately no one-size-fits-all solutions for institutions and communities, but that recommendations presented can be adapted to local contexts and available resources.

In offering these recommendations, we recognize that many institutions and professionals are already implementing their own highly effective practices to engage students and that some of these may seem simplistic to those who have been providing cross-cultural engagement programming for some time. Nevertheless the students interviewed suggested that there were gaps in the services and opportunities available to them and therefore we offer them for consideration.

1. *If you could recommend one thing to your institution that would make it easier for you to connect with Canadian students, what would that be?*

Consider a more integrated approach to student engagement

The most common recommendation for institutions was for international student offices and student life coordinators generally to create and facilitate more inclusive opportunities for international students and Canadian students, fostering greater multi-level exchange. For events that are traditionally directed towards international students, institutions may wish to consider promotion that is inclusive of Canadian students

and the broader academic — and surrounding — community. In addition, given that many students said their best relationships had developed with Canadian students who showed an interest in their culture and language, institutions might consider approaching Canadian students who are going abroad and/or studying languages and international subjects as ‘low-hanging fruit’ for greater engagement — to the benefit of all parties.

Incorporate cross-cultural awareness and skills-building into the global classroom

Throughout the interviews, there were several troubling examples of social situations that would have been better managed had the parties involved (instructors, Canadian students, and international students) had greater preparation in cross-cultural communication. As Canada’s campuses continue to internationalize, a culture that is simultaneously inclusive and appreciative of difference should permeate every aspect of the institution. In recent years many institutions have taken steps to address other social challenges such as sexual assault by incorporating awareness into orientation and core curriculum. In this era of rapid globalization, cross-cultural proficiency is a competency which is of universal benefit in both an economic and social sense, and should be considered an essential skill in the pedagogical approach.

Consider strategies for striking a balance of international and Canadian students

The number and concentration of international students from a particular country plays a role in integration. International Student Barometer data (2014) indicated that the higher the numbers of students from one country on a particular campus, the lower the degree of integration. This is particularly evident with respect to Chinese students (i-graduate, 2014). Students in this study noted that great numbers of students from their home country make it less necessary to seek out other types of friendships.

With the number of Chinese students in Canada, for example, growing by 160% in last ten years (from 36,532 in 2003 to 95,160 in 2013) it is important for institutions to carefully reflect on the value of a diverse campus, while opening their doors to the many qualified students from a range of countries including those with large populations and high demand for quality education experiences abroad. In the late 1970s, a CBIE taskforce called for the “right mix,” advocating that institutions pay attention to diversity in planning enrolments of international students and strike

a balance that works for their unique circumstances — this challenge persists today.

In addition, several interview participants recommended that institutions make an effort to strike a better ratio of international students and Canadian students within their program of study.

While these ideas raise serious cautions about discrimination and the trouble of ‘quotas,’ these were perspectives shared by a number of students and it is hoped that this suggestion may inspire creative solutions which are equitable and beneficial to all students.

Re-conceive student orientation as an ongoing, non-linear process for all students, and strategize around how to address barriers to participation for international students, especially at the beginning of the term

By giving international students an understanding of institutional and community processes, as well as the local culture, there is the potential for these types of programs to allow international students to integrate more smoothly into the campus and community.

While it is recognized that it is difficult to move formal student orientation dates, institutions could underscore to international students the value of arriving to campus early so that they might have more time to settle in and participate meaningfully in the activities.²⁷ Providing orientation-like socials and events throughout the year may also support international students to connect with Canadian students as they experience their cycle of cultural adaptation.

In addition, some students indicated that the orientation program was either too dense or too superficial, as they had varying levels of engagement with their present community, from students who had attended high school in Canada prior to their post-secondary studies, to those who arrived simply for their current program. Institutions may wish to consider a tiered orientation program with options for greater and lesser information.

In August of 2013, the Globe and Mail published an article on the efforts of Canadian schools in helping international students fit in ([How Canadian schools are helping international students fit in](#), August 2013). Citing CBIE’s 2013 *A World of Learning*, the article highlighted the University of Toronto Scarborough’s Green Path program and the University of British Columbia’s Jump Start program. Green Path is a summer program that allows students

27. A number of institutions already emphasize this in letters of acceptance and by other means. These best practices should be emulated by more Canadian institutions.

from Canada to spend three months prior to the school year improving their English language skills. The Jump Start program for international and Aboriginal students is also run prior to the beginning of the academic year, and features academic lectures, social events and workshops with students divided into groups led by a professor and two senior students. There are other Canadian institutions that have redesigned their orientation to address the issue of integration — Chapter five of this report highlights a number of innovative examples.

Encourage group work between international and Canadian students

As mentioned earlier, when all stakeholders have an appreciation for cross-cultural differences, group outcomes can be improved overall. As internationalized campuses would like to maximize the advantages of having a diverse student body, it is first imperative to ensure that all students are skilled in cross-cultural communication, and then exposed to real-world situations where they can collaborate and innovate with those who have different ideas and perspectives.

Admit students with high levels of Canada's official languages and who demonstrate a keen interest in learning

Some interviewees thought that their institution could benefit from being more selective with the international students they admit. As international students are faced with cultural and linguistic challenges in addition to the everyday stress of academic pursuit, some students encouraged institutions to be especially receptive of the high-calibre students who have demonstrated strength in adaptation as well as academics.

2. If there was one recommendation that you could make to Canadian students on how they might benefit more from your presence in the classroom, what would you say to them?

Access the cultural knowledge and perspective of international students

International students look to Canadian students for information on local language, culture and orientation. However, international student interviewees felt strongly that Canadians can seek out and benefit from the global perspective of international students on their campus. This perspective could support better global understanding and foster better international cooperation in all fields, especially those that involve social relations, international development, political studies, and international business and trade. Again, in

keeping with cross-cultural competencies, such endeavours would need to be supported by a general attitude by students that differences represent opportunities rather than risks. Some interviewees gave examples of instructors and Canadian classmates providing them with more space and patience to speak up in class.

Conclusion

While the prospect of making friends is not a primary factor in choosing a study destination, good relationships between Canadian and international students are an indicator of the cross-cultural social inclusion characteristic of an internationalized campus. When Canadian and international students do not fully benefit from each other's presence through meaningful social interaction, everyone loses. Moreover it is difficult to claim that internationalization has been truly achieved on a campus or in a school where, despite opportunities, connections between the two groups is rare.

Educational institutions are places where international students have their first exposure to Canadian culture — and some of these students will become future citizens of Canada. As the hypothesis that future permanent residents would be more successful at forming friendships with Canadians was dispelled in this study, understanding the key ingredients to form inclusive, cross-cultural campuses in Canada is crucial for not just international education stakeholders, but anyone in Canada who considers sustainable community-building a priority for Canadian society in the future.

There are many innovative programs at CBIE member institutions which seek to address the issue of international student integration, with particular attention paid to creating greater and deeper interactions with Canadians.²⁸ Though their results are encouraging, 56% of international students do not have Canadian friends. We have some distance to go. Clearly institutional research on the effectiveness of current programs and action based on the results should be considered by institutions aiming for comprehensive internationalization. And if increasing international enrolments is on the institutional agenda, enhanced resources for student services aimed at academic and social adaptation should be applied.

It is hoped that the results of this study will support a better understanding of the barriers to the formation of social bonds between international and Canadian students, and that recommendations put forward in this paper will be drawn on by professionals, institutions, policy makers and other stakeholders working to create inclusive, enriching educational experiences for all students in this era of rapid globalization.

²⁸. See Chapter 5 of this publication for examples of innovative orientation and integration programs at four CBIE member institutions.

CHAPTER 5

ORIENTATION AND INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN CANADA



The Changing Face of International Student Orientations in the Canadian Context

By Caroline Rueckert, Program Director, University of British Columbia

In recent years, Canada has seen a steady increase in the number of international students studying here, growing from 136,000 in 2001 to over 293,500 in 2014 (CBIE, 2014). At the same time, university and college campuses are placing an increasing emphasis on globalization as a value that defines both campus culture and the educational aspects of “global citizenship” (King, Marginson and Naidoo, 2011). With this rise of international student enrolments and focus on internationalization, universities and colleges are increasingly focusing on how best to provide the kinds of resources, services and programs to support international students in making successful transitions into university and college life (Leary, 2011). In particular, universities are seeking to design effective orientation and transition programs that help new students, in particular first year students, to develop the skills and perspectives they need to be successful at university and college. Correspondingly, much of the recent research into student services has been on establishing how best to design such programs in ways that are responsive to both changing demographics and shifting expectations of what a successful transition looks like.

If we do a survey of orientation programs across Canada, there is no one right way to design an orientation program, but the research emerging indicates that there are certain commonalities

that maximize the effectiveness of transition programs. With this in mind, I will outline here two key pieces associated with creating the conditions and environments for international (and other) students to thrive, and, once these are in place, the four key priorities that have been shown to help students navigate that environment effectively.

Moving beyond the “bureaucratic designation”

One of the challenges of the way universities and colleges frequently think about orientation programs for international students is that they tend to think of international students as a monolithic category: a homogenous group of students who belong within a single category (Kenyon, Frohard-Dourlent and Roth, 2012). After all, universities and colleges frequently charge all international students the same tuition fees, which are different from those of “domestic” students. However, it can be very useful to remember that the category of “international students” is more a “bureaucratic designation” than an accurate way of categorizing students, and one that is highly problematic as it fails to acknowledge the heterogeneity of these students or reflect how international students might perceive themselves (Kenyon et al., 2012). For example, within this single category, we have students who are not Canadian permanent residents but who have completed high school in Canada, native English or French speakers and additional language speakers, students from academic cultures very similar to Canada and students from academic cultures very dissimilar to Canada, refugee students, third culture students and others.²⁹ In some cases, these groups have little in common. At the same time, students categorized as “domestic” have equal heterogeneity — from students who have lived in Canada all their life to those who are designated

29. A ‘third culture’ individual is one who “has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture” (Pollock and Reken, 2009).

“domestic” but have in fact only just arrived in the country, with an equally diverse range of backgrounds, prior experiences and complex identities.

It is problematic, then, when we design services based on the category of “international student” assuming that those who fall into this “bureaucratic designation” share common needs (Kenyon et al., 2012). Often this leads to institutions providing services that are available exclusively to international students — ignoring the fact that not all international students will share the need or that domestic students might also have the same need. As a result, services can create separation and silo effects, simultaneously homogenizing a diverse group of students while also creating artificial distinctions and fragmentations between those in different designations (Kenyon et al., 2012). This is true even of something apparently as simple as the information on a website.

One of the strong recommendations in recent research is the importance of integrating resources for international students with those of other students, whether it is pre-arrival information, understanding Canadian academic culture or orientation programming (Leary, 2011). By designing programs based on need, rather than official demographic categories, students are supported in identifying for themselves how they wish to engage with their transition process. Researchers in the field are increasingly seeing this as an essential part of developing resources that are successful in helping international students to transition (Leary, 2011).

An asset-based approach

In the early days of orientation programs in Canada in the 1990s, the focus was usually on the need to “alleviate distress” of international students (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). This was driven by the idea that the movement across culture would create dissonance for students, and that the way to minimize culture shock and anxiety was to take steps to alleviate this distress (Leary, 2011). Orientations often focused on the problems associated with cross-cultural transition and how to overcome them, and the struggles that international students must necessarily be facing, with the solution being to provide students with large amounts of content to help “fill the gaps.” This often positioned international students in problematic ways, where they were seen as lacking and in need of help, specifically help that only members of the host community could provide. In other words, orientation programs were built on a “deficit model” where international students were seen as incomplete and requiring assistance to “catch up.”

Recent research into the field of student services in Canada has seen the emergence of a new paradigm — an “asset-based” approach that comes from the field of positive psychology (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). Rather than seeing the role of orientation programs as being to alleviate the distress of the international student and fill gaps in knowledge, this focus begins with the premise that all students have prior knowledge, expertise and bring enormous personal assets with them. Rather than providing a one-way dialogue where international students are educated about the host country, an asset-based approach creates opportunities for students to engage in dialogue, critically reflect on their own experiences, past and present, and to make meaning of their own transition experiences within the context of whatever they already know (rather than what they must still learn).

International students in this approach are not passive recipients of cultural knowledge that must be learnt, but rather active agents who are navigating their space and actively involved in making meaning of that space (Sawir, Marginson, Forbes-Mewett, Nyland and Ramia, 2012). For example, the focus is less on teaching them about a monolithic Canadian culture (which, of course, does not exist) and more about opening up opportunities for critical dialogue about the nature of culture within the learning environment of the college or university.

When these two conditions are created in orientation programs — an asset-based approach that acknowledges the heterogeneity of the international student demographic, while inviting students to actively choose how they will engage with their own transition experience, the groundwork is laid for a context and environment in which international students may thrive.

Once the foundation is laid, there are four key priorities which, when integrated into transitions programming, can pay huge dividends in terms of students’ success across a range of metrics, including academic success, mental health and well-being, satisfaction, retention numbers and overall student experience.

1. Connectedness

The research indicates the importance of designing orientation programs that give students a sense of connectedness and belonging (Lizzio, 2006); there is a strong link between a student’s connections with others and both their academic success and mental health (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). These connections are with a wide range of different groups on campus — domestic students, other international students, faculty and staff.

It has been shown that one of the key means through which international students learn to effectively navigate a new culture is through access to a “cultural guide” who helps them learn about the new culture (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). This is often one of the goals of peer mentoring initiatives that are so often part of orientation programs. What is less commonly recognized is that often other international students make the best cultural guides, even though they themselves might not have a comprehensive view of the host culture (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). This is because it is not only the relationship that makes the difference but also the *quality* of the relationship. Students gain the most benefit from a cultural guide when the relationship with that guide is one of mutual respect and reciprocity. In other words, they benefit most when are not merely “learning” about the culture from someone who has this knowledge to impart, but are actively involved in interpreting the aspects of culture they are exposed to, within a framework of reciprocity that brings their existing knowledge and prior experiences into the discussion. The higher the quality of the relationship, and the more an international student can engage in reciprocal cross-cultural dialogue that seeks to make meaning of the transition process, the more effective these connections are.

2. Academic culture

International students come from a wide range of academic backgrounds and learning cultures. An important part of developing a sense of belonging to an academic culture is understanding the unspoken assumptions and norms of that academic culture (Lizzio, 2006). Students are given the opportunity to engage in critical dialogue around the cultural norms of the Canadian classroom, giving them access to a deep understanding of everything from possible help-seeking behaviours, to how to develop relationships with faculty members, to the formal conventions of being part of a scholarly community (including such aspects as correct citation, avoiding plagiarism, academic collaboration and so on) (Lipson and Goodman, 2008; Grayson, 2008). This capacity to develop a sense of belonging to an academic culture, rather than only knowing what academic support resources are available to them, has proven to be a powerful part of making a successful transition into a new learning environment (Lizzio, 2006).

3. Resourcefulness

Rather than seeing students as passive recipients of information about the campus, students today develop a sense of resourcefulness through a two-pronged approach.

Firstly, they are introduced to the wide array of resources on campus. This is framed not as a set of answers to possible problems but as resources that can be utilized as and when students need them, thus creating an understanding of support as something that is not completed at orientation but that is an ongoing and changing process as the student moves through their time at university or college (Lizzio, 2006).

Secondly, they are given opportunities to develop a sense of their own resourcefulness — their capacity to solve problems, seek help when they need it, and find resources that are relevant to their needs at any given time. Students learn not only to be able to depend on the resources of the university or college but, more importantly, to depend on their own internal resources to find help and support. When this happens in the context of connectedness, the effect is often higher self-esteem, fewer feelings of powerlessness and less sense of isolation, all of which have been shown to be critical pieces in helping students make a positive transition into university and college life in a new country (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011; Swagler and Ellis, 2003).

4. Capability

Linked to a sense of resourcefulness is a sense of capability (Lizzio, 2006). Traditionally, orientations have often focused on what information international students are lacking, and students have frequently been made to feel less capable than their domestic counterparts by virtue of the gaps in their knowledge about the prevailing academic culture. We now recognize that it is imperative that students are supported in developing their own sense of capability through opportunities to actively engage in their learning and community-building (Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). This is often achieved through the embedding of intentional experiences within an experiential learning framework where students can make meaning of their transition for themselves.

Within the academic context, developing a sense of capability also means giving students opportunities to understand themselves as learners — to connect and build upon their own knowledge and prior experiences, to gain self-knowledge and awareness about, for example, work habits or learning preferences, and to identify and celebrate the strengths and assets they bring to the classroom and to their learning (Dweck, 2008). This helps to lay the foundation for their future learning, where they see themselves as active agents in their own learning, capable of growing and changing, and equal to anyone else on campus, not in spite of their background as international students but, at least in part, because of it.

When campuses can create environments where international students are not seen as homogenous and monolithic but rather gloriously diverse, with many unique strengths and assets that they bring to their communities, and where attention is paid to the four priority areas — helping students to develop a sense of connectedness, of belonging to an academic culture, of resource-

fulness and of capability (Lizzio, 2006) — orientation programs and other student resources can be highly effective in helping students thrive, academically, socially and personally. Ultimately, it is a win-win, representing happier, more resilient students, higher retention rates and significant strides towards campuses that can truly embrace the many benefits of internationalization.

Orientation and Integration: Case Studies

Many Canadian institutions have taken on the challenge of designing orientation programs with a goal of greater integration of international students. The following section features case studies that highlight some of these innovative programs across Canada.

Case Study



Transitional Programming at Capilano University: Innovation Made the Difference

Submitted by Lana Van Velthuizen, Manager, Centre for International Experience

Capilano University's Centre for International Experience (formerly The International Student Centre) has gone through a multifaceted transformation over the past three years. The elements of this evolution include a new all-encompassing name, a recently built, modern, student-friendly space which has been made possible as a result of a [private donation](#); a newly formed team of dedicated staff; an enhanced [New International Orientation Program](#); and an enriched [International Leadership and Mentorship Program](#), which evolved from the International Student Leadership Committee. The two most recent initiatives are discussed below.

New International Student Orientation Program (International Student Perspective)

Capilano University's previous orientation program consisted of a series of presentations in a linear format, and attendance rates were not officially tracked.

In an effort to change this, redesigned international orientation programs place a high emphasis on "experiential" activities such as a scavenger hunt which helps teams of new students visit the spaces (student services and campus facilities), meet the people (specific staff within various services and departments) and gain a comprehensive understanding of how the specific service could support them on campus, by engaging in an activity prepared by the service area. The scavenger hunt has been a successful

element of the international orientation program since 2012, and is currently being expanded to the campus-wide fall 2014 orientation program at Capilano U.

Innovative practices made the difference

Innovative practices were introduced to prepare international students for their time at Capilano U. For example:

- **A direct communication approach, referred to as "High Touch," was utilized from the moment of admission to the first day of classes, which begins with the international orientation program.** In fact, the international admission letters were modified to identify the first day of classes as the date of the New International Student Orientation. This helped to increase attendance at the International Orientation, and is easy to implement.

- **Peer to Peer contact during this time via phone and social media.** Peer to Peer contact was conducted by student mentors to applicants via a calling campaign and through the Centre for International Experience (CIE) Facebook group after admission and before arrival. This practice contributed to increased conversion of applicants to



IL&MP collaborated with business students on pumpkin carving and the Halloween carnival events.



Mentor Training during Student Leadership Launch 2013.



Diversity Day was an Ode to Spring event.

registrants; from 14% in September 2011, to 24% in September 2013. The same student mentors who made phone calls as part of the calling campaign, and engaged with new students prior to arrival via Facebook, engaged with new international students at the orientation and took an active part in the execution of the program.

International Leadership and Mentorship Program (Student Development Perspective)

The IL&MP brought together 42 domestic and international students as trained volunteer mentors, allowed for clusters of new international students to be mentored throughout their first semester, created opportunities for volunteers to develop new skills, and allowed for all those involved to engage in the campus, as well as the broader BC community.

Once again, Capilano U sought to innovate in order to improve outcomes. Some novel practices included:

- **High impact collaboration.** Events and activities were planned by the student leaders/mentors from idea to execution, and spanned across the Capilano U campus encompassing academic departments, service areas, student groups and clubs. Some of these groups included: the [Capilano Students' Union](#), a team of Business students from a Management class, a Ronald's Helping Heroes' student and faculty fundraising team for Ronald McDonald House BC, the PatchWorks Intern (Sustainability initiative), the Department of Athletics, the Food Bank, the Marketing Association of Capilano Students, and others. Mentors who organized events invited their international student mentees, and all international students to participate in events. Through these partnerships, collaborative initiatives and personal relationships and friendships between mentors and mentees, Capilano U has been able to link international students

to broader Capilano student groups and provincial and national movements and causes, which has proven to be rewarding for all students involved.

- **Everyone within a mentor team of six takes on a unique, equally important role.** There are a total of seven teams in the program. In each volunteer team, there is a team coordinator, marketing analyst, finance and sponsorship expert, internal and external communications representatives and a photographer/videographer. This creates a less hierarchical structure, where every team member has the opportunity to take on a leadership role within a certain event or initiative, and is able to focus on developing a specialized skill set. Volunteers have the option of changing roles for the spring semester to experience a new role.
- **Social media as an effective primary method of communication with student mentors.** By using the same mediums as today's technologically advanced students, the program was able to connect with a greater audience.
- **English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students are required to gain out of class English speaking practice for credit, as part of their course.** The IL&MP offers volunteer opportunities to students in the program and allows them to practice English in a safe environment, while being surrounded by students who are eager to develop international perspectives.

Capilano University counts as a success a 68% international orientation attendance rate during fall 2013. Out of 215 new international students enrolled during the week of international orientation, 147 participated in at least one of the two days of the program.

Case Study



Celebrating Diversity by Engaging Our Communities

Submitted by Ian Murdoch, International Projects and Marketing Specialist

Those first few steps off the plane at the Cranbrook international airport can cause a mix of thoughts and emotions for new students in Canada. Students may feel wonder, anxiety, excitement and nervousness as they peer over their shoulder at the majestic Rocky Mountains behind them. What are they leaving behind and what is ahead on their educational journey in Canada?

After a short, scenic drive through the valley into town, College of the Rockies (COTR) international students are warmly welcomed into the pristine beauty of southeastern BC. A friendly welcome is only one of the reasons COTR was recently ranked the top school in Canada and the world for international student satisfaction. Its engagement with a diverse student body and local community was another.

COTR welcomes approximately 200 international students from over 30 different countries each year. With a student body of around 2,500 full-time students and a regional population of 80,000, this diverse and relatively large international presence requires venues for integration into college and community life.

This diversity is best represented and integrated during COTR's annual International Week in March. By hosting a

week of international activities, cultural presentations and student displays, COTR has been able to facilitate learning and friendships between domestic students, local community and its international student body. This has given international students a deeper appreciation of Canadian values and enriched knowledge and understanding of other cultures and countries among domestic students and residents. This year the cafeteria provided unique daily specials from feature countries, local home-stay families gathered at a Dessert and Talent party, Cranbrook's Mayor and city councillors took in daily student performances, the library displayed various international tchotchkes and local Filipinos discussed Typhoon Haiyan's aftermath.

This annual event is organized by the International Department, though its sustainability rests on the participation of a diverse group of international students. By engaging students with support, activities and social events from the minute they arrive in Cranbrook, COTR ensures that its students are confident and prepared to showcase their talents and knowledge. This year, around three quarters of the international student body participated and the cafeteria was at maximum capacity for the Homestay Dessert and Talent Party.

As part of COTR International Week, engaging local community is the key to success. Each year, International Women's Day events are held during this week to celebrate women and raise awareness of women's issues. This year, the Cranbrook Women's Resource Centre and the Kootenay Haven Women's Transition House were invited to participate by setting up displays, sharing information on local resources for women, and raising money through a "Walk a Hall in Her Shoes" event. COTR international students, faculty and staff participated in the walk around the campus in red high heels, demonstrating a shared solidarity in raising awareness of violence against women.

Another key to success has been engaging with social media. This year's COTR International Week went digital in a big way as the International Student Social Media Ambassador took to the halls to interview students and gather photos from a handmade mobile #COTR_Intl photo frame, made by COTR carpentry students, to upload to YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. Videos of international students' dances, from Latin American to Jamaican Dancehall to Zambian to Japanese Fishermen, were uploaded and posted for the world to see. The Cultural Diversity Student Assistant wrote blogs that were posted on COTR International's

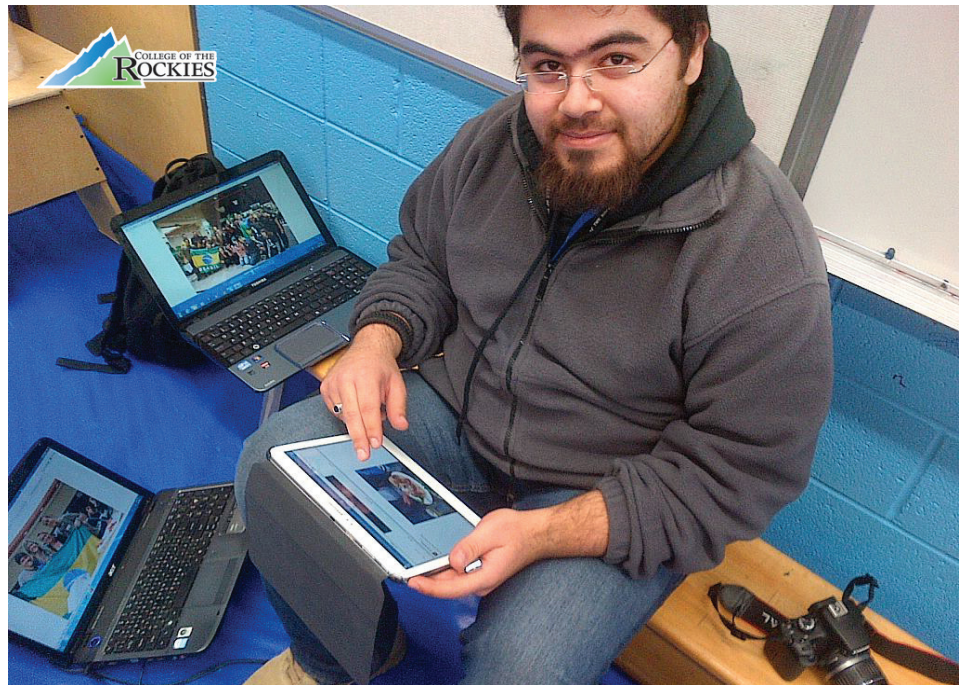
Word Press account and posted across numerous platforms using HootSuite. In sum, this small rural Canadian college was engaged with the world — in more ways than one.

COTR's International Week is also a great chance for its staff, students and the general public to explore and learn firsthand about many cultures and regions of the world. Passports were handed out to participants who then collected stamps at country display booths, staffed by international students. It was probably the easiest and most enlightening trip one could take around the world — all in one hallway.

Engaging as diverse a range of students as possible to showcase their countries and cultures has driven this process, while also including coordination and communication with the Student Association and Mayor's office. Local and online media have also helped promote the campus as a diverse venue where international and local students and community meet and share ideas.

As a result of efforts such as these, COTR was recently ranked #1 in Canada and #1 in the world for international student satisfaction by the International Student Barometer and awarded the 2014 ACCC (now Colleges and Institutes Canada) Gold Internationalization Excellence Award.³⁰

International Week at COTR has gone global by using online platforms, engaging local community, showcasing cultural performances and exhibits and celebrating unique diversity. As a small Canadian college, COTR is reaching well beyond borders and bringing these experiences back into its hallways, classrooms and communities. International students making that scenic drive through the valley into Cranbrook can rest assured that they are beginning a cosmopolitan journey at one of Canada's most diverse rural colleges.



Ahmed Al-Azzawi, Social Media Ambassador for COTR and international student from the United Arab Emirates, juggles multiple devices as he uploads content from COTR International Week.



Cranbrook's Mayor Wayne Stetski gets some information on Indian culture as he chats with a COTR international student. Over 30 countries were represented this year at COTR International Week.

30. COTR ranked #1 in Canada and #1 in the world for international student satisfaction (International Student Barometer, 2014).

Case Study



McGill

Just-in Time Pre-Arrival Orientation Webinars

Submitted by *Caroline Guay, International Student Advisor and Pauline L'Écuyer, Director, International Student Services*

The traditional format for orientation for international students — one where students arrive on campus and are invited to participate in a variety of informational workshops and socio-cultural activities in their first week before classes — is no longer meeting the needs of today's students. While program costs have continued to increase, student participation has significantly declined, and the very purpose and effectiveness of orientation is being called into question. In the current context, there is both the need, and technological ability, to provide students with the information they need, when they need it, in a way that is relevant, useful and immediately applicable: information that is provided “just in time.” As per Brandenburg and Ellinger (2003): “Just-in-Time (JIT) learning is broadly conceived as anywhere, anytime, anyhow learning that is just enough, just for me, and just in time” (p. 308).

Ideally, international students would be apprised of important non-academic information (for example, immigration and health insurance details) *before they arrive in Canada*, while they are still excited about their recent admission and highly receptive to new information. In addition, they are not yet grappling with all the demands of their new life and responsibilities in Canada while managing jet-lag and culture shock. Further, they are not yet overwhelmed by the plethora of new

experiences offered through orientation; navigating the intricacies of academic culture at McGill; and finding their bearings on campus and in Montréal.

Our 1.5-hour webinars consist of a live online presentation (including audio-visual media and PowerPoint slides) delivered via web-conferencing software. Students interact with presenters by using web-conferencing features such as raising their hand, typing in their questions and responding to polls. Sessions are offered at various times of day, to accommodate students in different time zones; they are recorded and then archived, to allow students unable to attend to view past sessions or allow attendees to review the material.

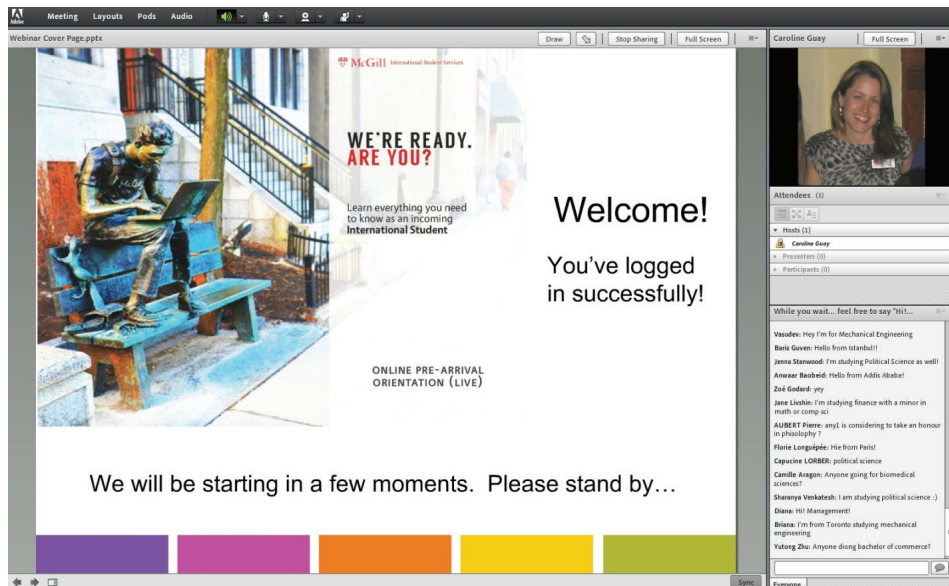
Between May and August 2013, McGill offered 10 webinars. 605 students registered; 361 participated; 164 completed the assessment survey; and over 2,000 consulted the webinar archive. Online surveys were administered after each webinar, allowing organizers to make instant adjustments to the content and format of presentations. This year, while only half-way through the webinar series at the time of writing, 443 students have already participated live, and a similar number are expected for Part II of the series. It is also expected that the video archives will prove at least as popular — if not more — for this year's series.

In terms of resources used, the webinars are very cost-effective. Two staff members created the content; a work-study student designed the presentation; and university-purchased software was used to complete the project (for example, PowerPoint, Camtasia and Adobe Connect). The webinars accommodate up to 93 students each (as the university purchased 95 licenses for Adobe Connect, two of which are used by presenters). The sessions are run by only two staff members: one to deliver the presentation, and the other to answer chat box questions, take notes and cue the speaker.

While the webinars were designed as a platform for students to interact primarily with advisers, it was pleasantly surprising to see students appropriate the question box (normally used to ask the presenter questions) to chat among themselves. Seeing an opportunity to promote connections between newly admitted students, it was decided to incorporate regional student chat rooms into the webinar agenda. At the end of the formal presentation, students are presented with a screen of eight chat boxes, one for each region (North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, etc.); they are then invited to introduce themselves, chat and exchange coordinates. Within seconds, the chat boxes start to fill up with messages — in a number of different languages — as students chat about

course selection, housing options, travel plans and a variety of other pre-arrival topics. Within the 15-20 minutes allotted, plans are made to meet up pre-departure; share accommodations in Montreal; meet up for coffee; or even explore campus together. In essence, through their live interactions with both McGill advisers and fellow students, a feeling of belonging is already taking shape and the transition to and integration into their new community is well underway.

Not only has the Pre-Arrival Orientation Webinar series proven to be a powerful and cost-effective means of delivering important information at a time when this information is most relevant, accessible, and likely to be integrated, it is also a



valuable way of stimulating authentic engagement, fostering an initial sense of belonging to the university and facilitating

the overall transition to the university and the city in a format that is quintessentially student-centric.

Case Study



Culture-to-Community Program

Submitted by Siti Rusnida Mohd Jalaluddin, Culture-to-Community Coordinator

The Culture-to-Community Program is an initiative of International Student Advising at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Through presentations delivered by newcomer student volunteers at Memorial University, this program provides first-hand experience about world cultures to school-aged students in rural schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. This program promotes interaction of provincial communities with a broader society outside of their racial and

cultural group; increases cross-cultural understanding about cultural differences; dispels racial or cultural stereotypes and misunderstandings; and offers provincial regions with little or no cultural diversity an opportunity to develop a greater understanding and respect for cultural differences and to build tolerance towards others.

To date, the Culture-to-Community program has already engaged 1,648

students in the kindergarten to grade 12 school system, through 88 presentations distributed among 19 schools throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The program just entered its third year and organizers are working together with schools to develop more connections with school-aged students and the community. From recruiting newcomer student volunteers to the delivery of the cultural presentation in the rural schools, there are many challenges faced throughout

in navigating the route to success. Some of the challenges encountered are meeting the changing needs of the newcomer student volunteers and a lack of cultural exposure among participating schools and newcomer student volunteers.

Each and every newcomer student volunteer in the program is unique, and each of them has different needs and expectations. Most of the newcomer student volunteers who sign up for this program are very eager to share their cultures with the schools in the province; however, many of them express the need for more assistance in improving their public speaking or presentation skills, boosting their confidence level, increasing their English language ability, and designing age-appropriate content for every presentation. These issues are common among new newcomer student volunteers; therefore these issues are addressed by providing them with quality training tailored specifically to meet their requests. The training sessions are divided into three topics:

1. Developing an Effective Presentation, and Presentation Strategies
2. Understanding Children's Cognitive Development and Meeting Needs Based on Different Age Groups; and
3. Improving Communication and Presentation Skills.

Once the newcomer student volunteers complete all of the training sessions, they go through the final stage of the program requirement which is a mock presentation. These training sessions and mock presentations provide newcomer student volunteers with necessary preparation and skills before going to the school for the cultural presentation.

A lack of cultural exposure among participating school communities and newcomer student volunteers creates a challenging interaction between these two parties. Most of the rural schools in the province that have little or no cultural diversity rarely get an opportunity to interact with people outside of their cultural or racial group. Similarly, many newcomer student

volunteers are new to the province and its cultures and some of them have never had the opportunity to interact extensively with locals in the province. Miscommunication or misunderstanding can exist when one party does not have a cultural understanding of the other party or is not aware of the other party's unique culture, leading to difficulty in making conversational connections. In order to overcome this issue, newcomer student volunteers are provided with information about the school, its location and its community, and general history of Newfoundland and Labrador before their visit. Participating schools are encouraged to organize a Newfoundland cultural experience for the newcomer student volunteers. These have included murmuring, traditional meals (Jiggs dinner, touton, partridgeberry pie), and folk stories.

This initiative can be replicated elsewhere in Canada where cultural diversity is low, giving opportunities for such communities to experience the unique cultures of the world and supporting newcomers' integration and engagement.



Chunxia Mao demonstrates how to make a Chinese paper lantern.



Stephanie Picard shares the Christmas traditions of France.

CHAPTER 6

EDUCATION ABROAD

Canada's Global Engagement Challenge

Canadian institutions, organizations and governments have had a great degree of success in attracting international students worldwide to Canada. Chapter 3 discussed the 295,000 international students who enhance Canada's research strength, bring fresh perspectives to Canada's institutions and communities, and make a significant monetary contribution to the Canadian economy.

Globally mobile students choosing to complete all or part of their education abroad are well aware of what those in the field of international education know definitively: an international experience is transformative. CBIE's findings in its 2009 report on Canadian Post-Secondary Students and the Study Abroad Experience, the Advisory Panel on International Education's recommendations and recent studies are all supportive of the capacity for education abroad to enhance a student's, and ultimately a country's, global competence. A recent study states that "... navigating multicultural environments builds the cultural awareness, creativity and problem-solving abilities necessary to compete in a culturally diverse global economy."³¹

However, it is estimated that only 3% of Canadian students annually participate in study abroad while enrolled at their Canadian university and fewer in college and institute programs (AUCC 2007, CICan, 2010).

There is a significant imbalance in young Canadians engaging with the world versus their international counterparts: there are four times as many international students enrolled in Canadian institutions as Canadians studying in full degree programs

“International education with all its benefits — leadership development, cross-cultural communication skills, second- and third-language proficiency — is a two-way street, and our students need to experience these gains.”

— Karen McBride, CBIE President and CEO

abroad (OECD, 2014). Furthermore, 75% of Canadians enrolled in post-secondary education abroad study in a country whose main language of instruction is English — more than 53% study in the US, 15% study in the UK and 8% study in Australia. Other countries are represented in much smaller numbers (OECD, 2014).

Internationalizing young people in preparation for a globalized society is strategic at a national level. Moreover, outbound mobility is a critical part of a comprehensive approach. As will be detailed below, other nations such as Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, the UK and the US, are pursuing bold visions for education abroad for their citizens.

In its submission in August 2014 to the House of Commons Finance Committee, CBIE stated that Canada's grand challenge is to get more of its students going international for educational experiences, including study abroad, work abroad or experiential learning. This critical component of a national international education strategy will require investment.

31. When in Rome, Learn why the Romans do What They Do: How Multicultural Learning Experiences Facilitate Creativity, Maddux, W, Hajo, A. and Galinsky, A. and Multicultural Experience Enhances Creativity, Leung, A., Maddux, W., Galinsky, A. and Chiu, C.

There has been some progress in national education abroad schemes, for example Mitacs' Globalinks international research internships program. Originally founded in 1999 as one of the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada, Mitacs is now a national not-for-profit research organization with strong ties to the Canadian federal government, provincial governments, companies and institutions. Mitacs supports innovation "by coordinating collaborative industry-university research projects with human capital development at their core." Its Globalinks program was launched in 2009, with 17 students from India travelling to BC for three-month research internships. In 2013, the Globalinks Research Award began funding Canadian senior undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research internships in these Mitacs partner countries: Brazil, mainland China, India, Mexico, Turkey and Vietnam. Currently (2014) there are 470 international Mitacs scholars in Canada, up from 283 in 2013, and 120 Canadian Mitacs scholars abroad.

In 2012, a federally appointed Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy recommended that, by 2022, 50,000 study abroad awards be offered to Canadian students each year in order to overcome Canada's critical international skills deficit.

CBIE is supportive of this target, recommending that the government invest in a major program that will progressively provide grants to Canadian secondary and post-secondary students. This would include a minimum of 10,000 awards of \$1,000 each to be offered in 2015 rising to 12,500 in 2016, and that Canada's 150th Anniversary is marked by 15,000 awards in 2017. Following

that CBIE urges that more awards are added each year to reach the 50,000 target by 2022 and that this number be maintained or increased in subsequent years.

In addition to government investment, CBIE has urged the private sector to see a globalized populace with international competencies as economically beneficial, and necessary for Canada to be competitive globally, and to therefore provide support for international internships for students.

These new efforts would bolster the strong investments by Canadian institutions across the country.

Education Abroad Advisory Committee: Toward a Common Language in Education Abroad

In 2014, CBIE established an Education Abroad Advisory Committee (EAAC) to address the challenges and opportunities for Canada in education abroad.

The EAAC will help CBIE identify ways to support international educators in Canada to:

- Develop a common vocabulary and definitions;
- Develop a system for collecting national statistics;
- Provide input on the research and support needed to mobilize a critical mass of students to participate in meaningful international experiences with clear and valuable learning outcomes.

Survey: Towards a common vocabulary

CBIE members were surveyed by the EAAC in 2014. They were asked: *Which of the following terms do you regularly use at your institution?*

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community engaged learning abroad | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent study abroad | <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas branch campus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-tutelle | <input type="checkbox"/> Intercultural learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Research abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dual degree | <input type="checkbox"/> International education | <input type="checkbox"/> Semester abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education abroad | <input type="checkbox"/> Internationalization | <input type="checkbox"/> Student exchange program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential education | <input type="checkbox"/> Internationalization-at-home | <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty-led program | <input type="checkbox"/> Internationalizing the curriculum | <input type="checkbox"/> Study tour abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field school | <input type="checkbox"/> Internship abroad | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer abroad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field study/trip | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter of Permission | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home-stay program | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint degree | |

The EAAC has proposed the following overarching definition of education abroad, which is adapted from the *Glossary of Education Abroad*, Forum on Education Abroad, 2011:

Education that occurs outside the country of the participant's home institution. Besides study abroad, examples include such international experiences as work, volunteering, non-credit internships and directed travel, as long as these programs are driven to a significant degree by learning goals.

Labour Market Advantages of Education Abroad

Though the personal benefits of an educational experience abroad are evident, the professional benefits for participants have in the past been less well known. Recent research suggests a number of positive results.

A 2014 study of MBA graduates found increased career outcomes: those with a multicultural experience (such as study abroad) had more job offers than those without (Maddux et al, 2014). The QS Global Employer Survey 2011 elicited a strong correlation between educational experiences abroad and employment. Ten thousand executives and hiring managers in 116 countries were asked whether they valued studies abroad. Fully 60% said that they “value an international study experience and the attributes that the experience may confer to mobile students” (QS, 2011).

“... In job interviews the interviewers always want to discuss my study abroad experiences and I am always happy to share. They are inquisitive as to what were the challenges and barriers and how was I able to overcome them. I think that these experiences tell a lot about our skills and personalities.”

— *Alumnus of study in France, Sweden, Brazil*

“Study abroad experiences have allowed me to hone skills I use every day as an educator and researcher: adaptability, understanding of different cultures, critical thinking, etc.”

— *Alumnus of study in Germany, France, Ecuador*

The 2014 [Erasmus impact study](#) found that one of the main motivations for mobile students choosing to study abroad was a desire to enhance their employability abroad, with 85% of students citing this as their reason to study abroad. Employers increasingly value experience abroad: from the Erasmus study, the share of employers who say that experience abroad is important to employability almost doubled from 37% to 64% between 2006 and 2013 (European Commission, 2014).

Education abroad experiences also offer clear advantages for Canadians in the labour market while fuelling Canada's global business advantage on a larger scale. In order to better understand the employment and business advantages for Canadians that education abroad can afford, in August 2014 CBIE surveyed 128 Canadian education abroad alumni who had participated in 181 experiences in 49 countries. Among the sample, 88.4% agreed that their education abroad experiences had contributed to their career achievements. In addition, many Canadians have found global careers as a result of their experiences, with 14% of respondents currently working outside of Canada.

Some of the most sought-after “soft-skills” required in today's knowledge economy are gained and/or advanced by educational experiences abroad. The EU impact study showed that Erasmus students had greater values in six personality traits that employers said were important to employability: tolerance of ambiguity, curiosity, confidence, serenity, decisiveness and problem-solving skills. Canadian education abroad alumni stated that interpersonal skills (89.8%), cross-cultural competency (89.8%), adaptability (89%), self-awareness (86.7%), and communication skills (84.3%) were the top “soft-skills” gained abroad.

Education abroad experiences also help Canadians to participate in international diplomacy and trade through building language skills. Of those students who pursued education in a country whose official language is not their first language, 85.3% said they had improved their language skills, with 50.5% continuing to apply these skills in their current job.

In total, 91.6% of all skills obtained or enhanced during study abroad experiences are still applied in respondents' current careers.

International Policies to Increase Outbound Mobility

In 2014, almost half of all globally mobile students were enrolled in five countries: the US (16%), the UK (13%), Germany (6%), France (6%) and Australia (6%) (OECD, 2014). In order to ensure two-way mobility, these countries have been putting into place ambitious education abroad strategies and programs at the national level. These strategies are discussed below.

The United States

Generation Study Abroad

Generation Study Abroad is a five-year initiative of the Institute of International Education (IIE), launched in 2014. It aims to double the participation of American students studying abroad in credit or non-credit programs to 600,000 by 2019 from 295,000 in 2011-2012. The nearly 300,000 students abroad represents fewer than 10% of the 2.6 million students graduating each year.

IIE is investing \$2 million in the initiative to provide scholarships to college and high school students, and grants to institutions. It is also seeking commitments of support from 500 institutions that will pledge to significantly expand study abroad, ten institutions that will require study abroad, 10,000 alumni and students joining the campaign, 1,000 high school teachers pledging to increase awareness of study abroad among their students and external funding for study abroad.

100,000 Strong Educational Exchange Initiatives

In 2009, US President Obama announced a “100,000 Strong” initiative to dramatically increase the number of American students studying in China within five years. At present, nearly 12 times more Chinese students study in America than Americans study in China. The American president cited this initiative as an effort to strengthen relations between the US and China.

As part of this effort, and a support to the American initiative, the Chinese government has committed to 10,000 “bridge scholarships” for American students to study in China.

Why Study Abroad?

Canadian students responding to CBIE’s alumni survey listed these as their top reasons:

- 1) Discover new perspectives, cultures and people; the #1 reason that Canadian students go abroad. “I wanted to gain a global perspective and wanted to travel while I was young” (Alumnus of study in India).
- 2) Learn a language: 8 in 10 Canadians who go abroad return with new language skills.
- 3) Catch the study abroad bug: Canadian students who go abroad during high school are much more likely to pursue another experience later on in life.
- 4) Know thyself: 85% of Canadians who go abroad say that the experience increased their self-awareness.
- 5) Learn skills for future career: 9 in 10 Canadians who have gone abroad say their experience has supported their career achievements.

In March 2011, President Obama launched the “100,000 Strong in the Americas” initiative in a similar vein, designed to increase the number of Americans studying in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the express goal of “foster(ing) region-wide prosperity through greater international exchange of students, who are our future leaders and innovators.”

In 2013, US Secretary of State Clinton launched the 100,000 Strong Foundation, a non-profit organization designed to engage the governments of the US and China as well as industry and academic partners to support the goals of the 100,000 Strong Initiative.

The United Kingdom

Outward Mobility Strategy

Data on UK students participating in educational experiences abroad is limited. There is, however, information on UK students in the EU's Erasmus Scheme — in 2010-2011, 12,800 UK students had an education experience through Erasmus. This compares with 24,500 EU students who had an educational experience in the UK through the same program. "Overall, only around 6% of those graduating from UK Higher Education Institutions in 2011/2012 had experience of mobility placements abroad, against an EU target for 2020 of 20%..." (HM Government, 2013).

Launched in 2013, the UK's Outward Student Mobility Strategy aims to increase to 20% the proportion of students who have an educational experience abroad. The Strategy is jointly funded by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

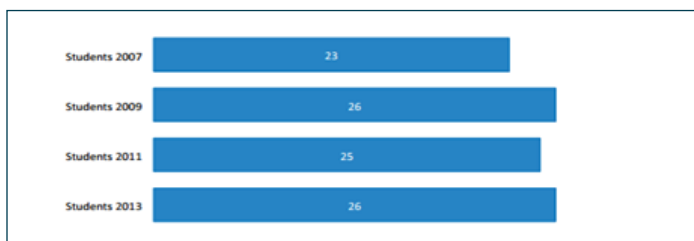
Germany

Strategy 2020 and Go out! Study abroad

Traditionally, German students have been highly internationally mobile. With 30% of German graduates having an educational experience abroad, they are among the top mobile students in the world.

However, in recent years, the German higher education landscape has undergone changes which are affecting the number of students who wish to study abroad. Figure 38 below shows that the number of German students with an education experience abroad has increased only slightly since 2007.

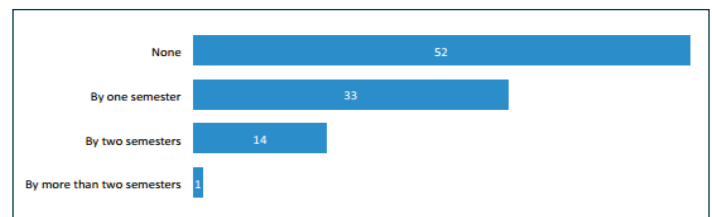
FIGURE 38: Percentage of German students with study abroad experience



HIS – Studie Internationale Mobilität 2013

This slow growth may be related to the implementation of the Bologna Process. In standardizing German degrees, and implementing Bachelor's and Master's degrees, the timeframe within which German students must complete their degree is constricted, compared with the previous structure, and students are becoming reluctant to take up experiences abroad which they feel may be impossible due to more rigid structures. Figure 39 shows, however, that this concern may be misplaced as over 50% of students having education experiences abroad had no increase to the length of time to complete their degree.

FIGURE 39: Extension of time to degree as a result of studying abroad



HIS – Studie Internationale Mobilität 2013

In 2006, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) launched the "Go Out! Study Abroad" campaign. It encouraged study in destinations that were not typical for Germans, such as Africa, China, Eastern Europe, India and Latin America. "Go Out!" began by awarding grants to institutions with innovative education abroad programs. The campaign also included biannual surveys of German student mobility. Recently the campaign is more focused on increasing visibility to a wider swath of students, including secondary school students, through an innovative communications strategy which includes a modern website with highly interactive tools.

In 2013 in its new strategy, the DAAD announced its goal of increasing the number of German graduates with an education abroad experience to 50% by 2020, calling on institutions and governments to put in place the necessary structures to support this ambitious goal.

France

National Strategy of European and International Mobility

There are 180,000 French young people who participate in an educational experience abroad annually through the EU's Erasmus Programs, as well as national programs, including training, internships, cultural exchanges and other endeavours. The Government's national strategy for European and international mobility, launched in 2013, aims to increase the number of young people having an educational experience abroad and diversify the type of recipients, so that young people from all backgrounds can also benefit from international experiences.

The strategy includes increasing the budget of Erasmus Plus 2014-2020 by more than 40%; focusing on technological and vocational education, a request from ministries; aiming to increase the number of students who take up international volunteerships by 25%; increasing the budget for the Franco-German Youth Office; strengthening Franco-Quebec programs through the Franco-Quebec Youth Office; and putting in place new coordinated methods of information young people of opportunities ([France diplomatie](#), February 2013).

Australia

The New Colombo Plan

The number of Australians taking up international education experiences more than doubled since 2007 (10,718 in 2007 and 24,763 in 2012) according to a 2013 [report](#) by the Australian Universities International Directors Forum.

Australia's New Colombo Plan, an initiative of the federal government, aims to increase knowledge of the Indo-Pacific region in Australia through educational experiences, study, work, internship or mentorship programs, by Australian undergraduates in the region. The Australian Government is funding the Plan to the tune of \$100 million in new funding over five years.

Launched in 2014, the Plan is currently in a pilot phase with 1,300 mobility grants and 40 scholarships to Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong. In 2015, the Plan will roll out across the Indo-Pacific region.

The Government has expressed its intention that the New Colombo Plan will be a transformational experience for those involved and deepen ties in the region at the individual as well as institutional level. The Government has called for a partnership between governments, institutions and industry to support the goals of the Plan.

“The Australian Government hopes to see study in the Indo-Pacific region become a “rite of passage” for Australian undergraduate grant recipients, and as an endeavour that is highly valued across the Australian community.”

— Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

World Class Website

The Australian government and university sector have also launched the World Class website (<http://world-class.com.au/>), a hub aimed at providing Australian students with information on student mobility programs and available financial aid.

Brazil

Ciências sem Fronteiras

Brazil's Ciências sem Fronteiras (CsF, Science without Borders) scholarship program aims to build theoretical knowledge and practical skills for 101,000 students. In June 2014 Brazil's President announced CsF's second phase, comprising a further 100,000 awards. CsF is designed to catapult Brazil into the knowledge economy.

Launched in December 2011, CsF 1.0 has already given 83,184 scholarships of the planned 101,000. To date, these countries have received the most students: the US (32%), the UK (11%), Canada (8%), France (8%) and Germany (7%). Engineering and Technology are the fields of the majority of CsF scholars (52%) followed by Biology, Biomedical Sciences and Health with 18%; Mathematics, Physics and Earth Sciences 8%; Computer Science and Information Technology 6%; Sustainable Agriculture 4%; Pharmacy and Biotechnology; 2% each; and Biodiversity, Bio-prospecting and Renewable Energy 1%.

Since 2012 CBIE has managed the largest component of the CsF in Canada on behalf of Brazil's granting agencies, CAPES and CNPq. To date CBIE has placed over 3,300 undergraduate students in programs across Canada and arranged internships for over 2,500 of these students.

CBIE's Pre-Budget Submission to the Finance Committee of the House of Commons, Aug. 2014 — Excerpt

Canada's Global Engagement Challenge

Canada faces a grand challenge: getting more of our students outbound for educational experiences in other countries and preparing them to become global citizens in the range of ways that the term implies.

Why is this so important?

For Canada, a major trading nation whose continued prosperity hinges on cross-border mobility of people, goods and services, ensuring we have a critical mass of professionals who are well prepared to navigate the risks and maximize the benefits of international business is essential. As the GMAP reports, international trade currently represents more than 60 percent of Canada's GDP and one in five jobs in Canada is linked to exports.

Beyond business, it's no secret that the world we inhabit is fraught with issues of a global nature.

Canadians need to be prepared to participate and to lead in the global village, working across borders, cultures, languages and values to mutual benefit.

For Canadians, meaningful international engagement and support for those in need is a core value. Involvement in efforts beneficial to the planet and its people is in our DNA.

What are we doing to develop Canada's leaders of tomorrow, the individuals who can negotiate, analyze, connect and engage in meaningful ways at the international level?

Best Practices: What International Education Abroad Strategies Have in Common

Common characteristics from the education abroad strategies cited above can serve as best practice models as Canada develops its own national education abroad strategy. These characteristics are:

- **Strategic.** Most plans have a focus on a particular region of interest at the national level. In the US, the focus is on China and Latin America and the Caribbean; the Australian plan is focused on the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Collaborative and championed at highest levels.** All of the initiatives have a high degree of collaboration at the national level engaging government agencies, institutions and industry. They are also championed by top leaders; in the United States, by the President.
- **Ambitious.** All of the plans target substantial increases in the number of students studying or pursuing an internship abroad.
- **Blended.** A number of the plans place importance on both study and internship experiences abroad.

- **Supported.** The plans are well-supported by scholarships and grants benefiting from government investment first, supplemented by business support.
- **Well-communicated.** Most plans include a modern, high-visibility communications strategy, in particular using strong website and social media resources.

With these best practices in mind, and a common language in education abroad, Canada will be well-positioned to take up the opportunity for more Canadians to have international educational experiences.

Where, for example, more than 30% of German students go abroad — and there is a concerted effort to increase this to 50% — it is estimated that a miniscule 3% of Canadian students participate in their Canadian university or college exchange programs. This is proving to be the Achilles' heel in Canada's aspirations for greater global engagement and competitiveness.

CBIE urges a national target of five times the current percentage. No less than 15% of Canadian students should have an education abroad experience.



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APPENDIX

COUNTRIES BY REGION



Africa

- Angola
- Burkina-Faso
- Burundi
- Central Africa Republic
- Comoros
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Democratic Republic of Sudan
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Federal Republic of Cameroon
- Gabon Republic
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Peoples Republic of Benin
- People's Republic of the Congo
- Republic of Botswana
- Republic of Chad
- Republic of Djibouti
- Republic of Guinea
- Republic of Ivory Coast
- Republic of Mali
- Republic of South Africa
- Republic of the Niger
- Republic of Togo
- Reunion
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Swaziland
- Uganda

- United Republic of Tanzania
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

East Asia

- Brunei
- Cambodia
- East Timor
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Laos
- Macao
- Malaysia
- Myanmar (Burma)
- People's Republic of China
- People's Republic of Mongolia
- Philippines
- Republic of Indonesia
- Republic of Korea
- Singapore
- Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Taiwan
- Thailand

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

- Albania
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Georgia
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Macedonia
- Moldova
- Republic of Kosovo
- Republic of Montenegro
- Republic of Serbia
- Russia
- Tajikistan
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan

Europe

- Andorra
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Federal Republic of Germany
- Finland
- France
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Monaco
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Ireland
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- The Netherlands
- United Kingdom and Colonies

Latin America and Caribbean

- Anguilla
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Aruba
- Barbados
- Belize
- Bermuda

- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Cayman Islands
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- French Guiana
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Jamaica
- Martinique
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Puerto Rico
- Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
- Republic of Panama
- San Marino
- St. Kitts-Nevis
- St. Lucia
- St. Pierre and Miquelon
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Surinam
- The Bahamas Islands
- The Netherlands Antilles
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Uruguay
- Venezuela
- Virgin Islands, British

Middle East & North Africa

- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Cyprus

- Egypt
- Iran
- Iraq
- Israel
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Morocco
- Oman
- Palestinian Authority (Gaza/West Bank)
- Qatar
- Republic of Yemen
- Saudi Arabia
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- United Arab Emirates

Oceania and South Pacific

- Australia
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Fiji
- French Polynesia
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Western Samoa
- South Asia
- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- India
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Republic of Maldives
- Sri Lanka

United States of America



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