

International Student Pathways to Permanent Residence:


**Navigating Expectations and On-the-ground
Realities**

Dr Sonja Knutson
Memorial University

Overview

- Rationales
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- Current picture
- Student expectations
- On the ground realities
- Balancing the rationales.

Canada Beckons International Students With a Path to Citizenship

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Eun Young, a student from South Korea, at the College of the North Atlantic in St. John's, Newfoundland, in November. Andrew Testa for The New York Times

Rationales underpinning internationalization of higher education

Academic:

to enhance quality of teaching and/or research, develop an understanding of international dimensions of knowledge and expand horizons, align with international curricular standards, and enhance institutional profile;

Economic:

generate economic growth, increase revenue, enhance competitiveness, prepare for globalizing workforce.

Knight, 2004

Political:

strengthen institutional capacity, enhance awareness, improve positioning of national and institutional expertise;

Social/cultural:

to prepare students for global citizenship, increase international understanding, address global issues, influence cultural and community development.

A brief history

1950's -
60's

- Researchers with international development interest become engaged in overseas project work (Clark, 1999).
- First support office for "foreign students" in Canada is established at the University of Toronto (Riddell, 1985).

1970's

- Campus international offices focus on Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) projects (Clark, 1999).
- "Go-between" for institutional compliance, risk management with individual faculty "project consultants" (Clark, 1999).

1980's

- CIDA turns to these offices to fully manage int'l development projects, instead of engaging individual faculty (Clark, 1999).
- Establishment of differential fees for international students leading to intentionality in enrolment growth (Friesen, 2009).

1990's

- Knight (1994) details the scope of activities under the umbrella of internationalization.
- Debate occurs over the type of organizational structure needed to carry out the range of international activities (Clark, 1999).

2000's

- Most institutions have centralized international activities under a single or cross-unit coordinating body (AUCC, 2014).
- Canada's first international education strategy (IES) is launched with a focus on marketing Canada (DFATD, 2014)

Since IES

- Policy shifts by IRCC and provincial govts focus on work rights and permanent residency pathways (Schinnerl, 2021).
- Second international education strategy launched with recruitment focus on diversification (Global Affairs Canada, 2019).

Where we are today

- Canada's education brand, with its generous work rights and pathways to immigration succeeded in attracting huge enrolment growth.
- Changes in governments, policy and practice in the US, UK, and Australia, in addition to impacts of the varied pandemic restrictions also worked in Canada's favour.
- International student enrolment has increased dramatically from 330,105 in 2014 to more than 807,260 in 2022 (IRCC, 2022).
- In the 2018 report by Global Affairs on the IES, it is estimated international students in Canada spent about \$22.3 billion on tuition fees and living expenses (Global Affairs, 2020).

International student expectations

Reasons International Students Choose Canada

Canada's reputation as a safe and stable country.....**79.2%**

The reputation and quality of the education system.....**69.5%**

Offers a society that (generally) is tolerant and not discriminatory.....**50.2%**

Opportunities for permanent residence**38.1%**

Opportunities to gain work experience related to my program of study.....**34.3%**

Opportunities to work while I study in Canada**32.2%**

Opportunity to apply for a Post-Graduate Work Permit**30.5%**

Gaining intercultural awareness and global competencies**29.3%**

Knowing someone who lived/studied or is living/studying in Canada.....**27.1%**

Affordability of studying in Canada in comparison to other countries.....**26.4%**

On-the-ground realities

Sections

SALTWIRE

Atlantic Canada > News

Frustrated residents ask Cape Breton University to stop intake of international students amid housing crisis

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Actualités

Actualités

Universités: les demandes d'inscriptions d'étudiants internationaux explosent



NEW CANADIAN MEDIA

THE PULSE OF IMMIGRANT CANADA

International students face glaring food insecurity and a lack of ethnic food



CANADA

International students pay sky-high fees. Whose job is it to house them?

Comment la réalité linguistique du N.-B. est-elle dépeinte aux étudiants internationaux?



Canada's international student recruiting machine is broken



Linguistic racism can take a high toll on international students

Drummondville accueillera deux fois plus d'étudiants internationaux

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International students in Canada face discrimination, exploitation- Transcript

ACTUALITES SOCIETE

Crise du logement: les étudiants internationaux victimes des prix abusifs

On-the-ground realities

- Cdn international student policies have focused on economic rationales: attracting tuition revenue and skilled labour (Trilokekar, 2016).
- Provincial governments, who oversee education, have tacitly permitted international student enrolment to grow, and their own contributions to education costs have decreased dramatically (Usher, 2022)
- IRCC study permit regulations continue to require students to demonstrate they have access to \$10,000 CAD for living expenses annually, leading to mismatch between students and cost of living (IRCC, 2023).
- International students are vulnerable youth, arriving often with no family and inadequate funds for living, and most are likely to be persons of colour (Usher 2023).
- Little attention has been paid to ensuring a match between international student expectations and their lived experiences of racism, housing and food insecurity.

Balancing the rationales – how to get there?

- Common ethical framework for supporting international students.
- Professional development for all those interacting with international students.
- Improve shared understanding of the importance of a sense of belonging – with focus on faculty and domestic students as well as employers. International students spend most of their time in the classroom or the workplace.
- Clear, transparent information from IRCC regarding costs of living.
- Pre-arrival communication of accurate information about immigration (timelines, quotas, costs), as well as foreign qualification recognition.
- More engagement from Provincial governments – with true international education strategies aimed at a balanced approach – not just immigration strategies.

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