



International Students in British Columbia

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B.C. is a popular destination for international students coming to study in Canada. From kindergarten to university, short-term courses to degree programs, and public to private institutions, B.C. offers a wide range of options and programs for students from around the world.

International students choose to study in B.C. for a variety of reasons. A survey conducted of international students in 23 of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions found that the top three factors influencing their decision to study in B.C. were the quality of education, safety and security, and the reputation of the institution. More than half of these international students (54%) also expressed an interest in working in B.C. after completing their studies.

With programs like the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC), many international students with Canadian post-secondary degrees have the opportunity to stay permanently as new immigrants after the completion of their studies. These programs allow the Province to attract and retain skilled international graduates who may already have Canadian qualifications, work experience and familiarity with Canadian society to succeed in B.C.

International students make significant contributions to the B.C. economy. In 2010, international students spent more than \$1.8 billion in B.C., supporting 22,000 jobs and generating \$70 million in government revenue. International education was B.C.'s fifth largest export during the year.

* More information on the British Columbia International Student Survey can be found on www.learnlivebc.ca/documents/ISS_Report.pdf



International students in this fact sheet are temporary residents who are in Canada principally to study and have a valid study permit from the federal government. With the implementation of the federal Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) in 2002, international students no longer require a study permit if the program of study is six months or less. As a result, current international student data from the federal government no longer includes all international students in Canada.

In 2010, using multiple data sources, the total number of international students in B.C. was estimated at 94,000. This includes students in the K-12 system, public and private post-secondary system, and private language schools.



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Policy and Stakeholder Relations Branch
Labour Market and Immigration Division
Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
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Table 1: Number of International Students Present in the Provinces and Territories, 2001–2010

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2010 % of Canada
British Columbia	39,562	43,264	45,342	46,653	47,729	48,432	50,149	50,167	55,454	60,473	27.7%
Alberta	10,653	11,182	11,749	11,998	12,409	12,934	13,828	14,376	15,558	16,293	7.5%
Manitoba	3,123	3,626	4,197	4,753	4,963	5,138	5,252	4,865	5,382	5,707	2.6%
Ontario	49,104	56,156	60,181	62,161	62,740	63,746	65,418	65,707	72,956	85,280	39.1%
Quebec	24,072	24,508	25,040	25,415	25,163	25,849	27,011	27,945	30,575	32,225	14.8%
Saskatchewan	3,029	3,296	3,518	3,620	3,729	3,486	3,521	3,649	3,961	4,339	2.0%
Atlantic Provinces	6,933	8,226	9,359	9,872	10,082	10,253	10,515	11,083	12,071	13,862	6.4%
Territories	52	81	88	97	111	85	93	85	69	60	0.0%
Canada Total	136,528	150,339	159,474	164,569	166,926	169,923	175,787	177,877	196,026	218,239	100.0%

Data Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Over the past decade, Canada and B.C. experienced significant growth in the number of international students (from kindergarten to university level). In 2010, there were 60,473 international students in B.C., compared to 48,432 in 2006 (+24.9%) and 39,562 in 2001 (+52.9%).

The number of international students has increased in all provinces since 2006. The Atlantic Provinces (+35.2%) saw the largest percentage increase over the 2006 to 2010 period, followed by Ontario (+33.8%) and Alberta (+26.0%). B.C. was fourth, increasing by 24.9% over the period.

In 2010, B.C. accounted for 27.7% of the international students in Canada. This was second only to Ontario which accounted for 39.1%. 14.8% of international students in Canada studied in Quebec accounting for the third largest share. Alberta and the Atlantic Provinces round out the top five.

B.C.'s share of Canada's total has stayed relatively consistent over the last ten years. In 2006, B.C. accounted for 28.5% of Canada's total and in 2001 accounted for 29.0%. Other provinces/territories share of Canada's international students total has also stayed consistent over this period.

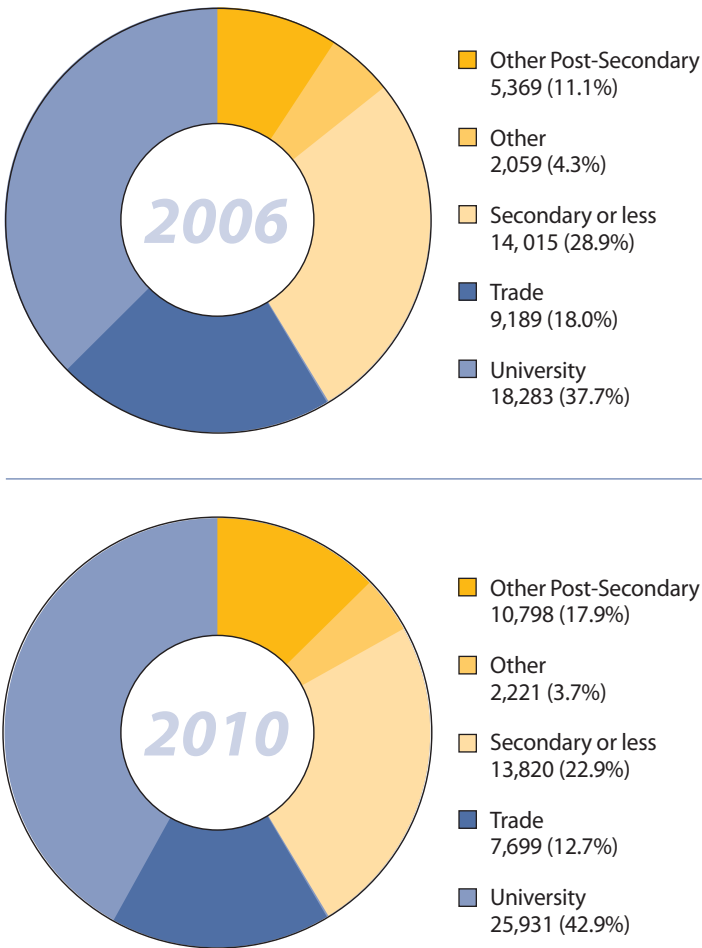
Level of Study

International students in B.C. study at various education levels and in both public and private institutions. Much of the overall growth associated with international students comes from the university and other post-secondary levels.

The number of international students in B.C. at the university level has increased by 41.8% (+7,648) from 18,283 in 2006, to 25,931 in 2010. Over the same five year period, the number of international students at the other post-secondary level has increased by 101.1% (+5,429) from 5,369 to 10,798.

The number of international students studying trades has fallen by 16.2% (-1,490) from 9,189 in 2006, to 7,699 in 2010. The number of international students at the secondary or less level has fallen slightly by 1.4% (-195) from 14,015 in 2006, to 13,820 in 2010.

Chart 1: Number and share of International Students Present in B.C. by level of study, 2006 and 2010



Data Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Level of study of international students is organized by Citizenship and Immigration Canada into five categories:

- Secondary or less: Kindergarten to Grade 12 educational institutions
- Trade: vocational trade 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 university institutions
- 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



Source Region and Countries

In 2010, international students in B.C. came from over 176 countries spanning all regions of the world. In particular, the Province attracts a significant number of international students from the Asia-Pacific region. In 2010, 69.3% of international students in the Province came from this region, which was down from 78.4% in 2006.

The Africa and the Middle East region have increased the most as a source region over this period. In 2006, 1,501 international students came from this region compared to 6,736 in 2010, an increase of 348.8%. In 2010, Africa and the Middle East accounted for 11.1% of the international students present in B.C. This was followed by Europe and United Kingdom (7.6%), South and Central America (5.7%), and the United States (5.1%).

The top five source countries stayed in the same order from 2006 to 2008 led by South Korea, followed by Mainland China, Japan, United States, and Taiwan. In 2009 and 2010, the order changed as Mainland China took over top spot followed by South Korea. Saudi Arabia was the third top source country of international students. Their total has increased from 348 in 2005, to 4,337 in 2010. Japan and the United States rounded out the top five.

Table 2: Top Ten Source Countries of International Students Present in B.C., 2006–2010

	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
South Korea	14,502	South Korea	15,113	South Korea	13,563	Mainland China	14,778	Mainland China	17,614	
Mainland China	10,557	Mainland China	11,011	Mainland China	11,740	South Korea	12,517	South Korea	11,851	
Japan	4,740	Japan	4,281	Japan	3,545	Saudi Arabia	3,407	Saudi Arabia	4,337	
United States	3,412	United States	3,403	United States	3,197	Japan	3,253	Japan	3,139	
Taiwan	3,043	Taiwan	2,929	Taiwan	2,518	United States	3,218	United States	3,069	
Hong Kong	1,599	Hong Kong	1,532	Saudi Arabia	1,469	Taiwan	2,315	India	2,255	
Mexico	1,102	Mexico	1,219	Hong Kong	1,437	Hong Kong	1,476	Taiwan	2,033	
India	887	Germany	934	Mexico	1,242	Mexico	1,404	Mexico	1,533	
Germany	750	India	923	India	1,001	India	1,284	Hong Hong	1,494	
Indonesia	683	UK	734	Germany	996	Germany	1,046	Germany	1,081	
Other Countries	6,891	Other Countries	7,797	Other Countries	9,114	Other Countries	10,302	Other Countries	11,368	
Not Stated	266	Not Stated	273	Not Stated	345	Not Stated	454	Not Stated	699	
B.C. Total	48,432	B.C. Total	50,149	B.C. Total	50,167	B.C. Total	55,454	B.C. Total	60,473	

Data Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Destination within B.C.

Seven out of ten (71.8%, 43,431) international students in B.C. study in Metro Vancouver. This trend has stayed consistent over the last ten years.

For other Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA), their share of B.C.'s total international student population has also stayed relatively stable over the last decade. In 2010, 1,297 (2.1%) studied in Kamloops, 1,104 (1.8%) in Abbotsford, 859 (1.4%) in Victoria, and 1,022 (1.7%) in Nanaimo.

International Students with Work Permits

Some international students at Canadian public post-secondary institutions and at certain private post-secondary institutions may be eligible to work on-campus without a work permit. For other types of work such as off-campus, co-op/internships, and work after graduation, a valid work permit is generally required.

Off-Campus Work Permit

The Off-Campus Work Permit Program allows certain full-time international students in participating public and eligible private post-secondary institutions to work off campus while completing their studies. Introduced in

2006, the program allows international students to work part-time during their regular academic periods and full-time during scheduled breaks without a labour market opinion (LMO) from Service Canada.

The number of international students in B.C. with an off-campus work permit has increased. In 2006, 1,854 international students in B.C. had an off-campus work permit. By 2010, this number increased to 5,693.

Co-op and Internship Work Permit

This permit is issued to work related to research, educational, or training programs. While most international students in B.C. with this work permit are attending a post-secondary institution, a small number are in high school. The Province requires all high school students in grade 11 and 12 to obtain work experience in order to graduate. As a result, international students studying at this level will need a valid work permit before engaging in work. A LMO is generally not required for this permit.

The number of international students in B.C. with this work permit has increased 80.0% from 2,135 in 2006, to 3,844 in 2010.

Post-Graduation Work Permit Program

The Post-Graduation Work Permit Program allows certain international graduates from a Canadian post-secondary institution to gain valuable Canadian work experience upon successful completion of their studies. International students may accept employment in any field with no geographical restrictions. Like other work permits for international students, a LMO is generally not required.

The number of temporary residents* in B.C. with a post-graduation work permit has increased from 1,251 in 2006, to 4,961 in 2010 (+296.6%).

* Citizenship and Immigration Canada classifies foreign nationals with a post-graduation work permit either as an international student or temporary foreign worker based on their principal reason for being in Canada. They are not considered both in a given year. The number of persons in B.C. with a post-graduation work permit in this document includes both international students and temporary foreign workers (temporary residents).

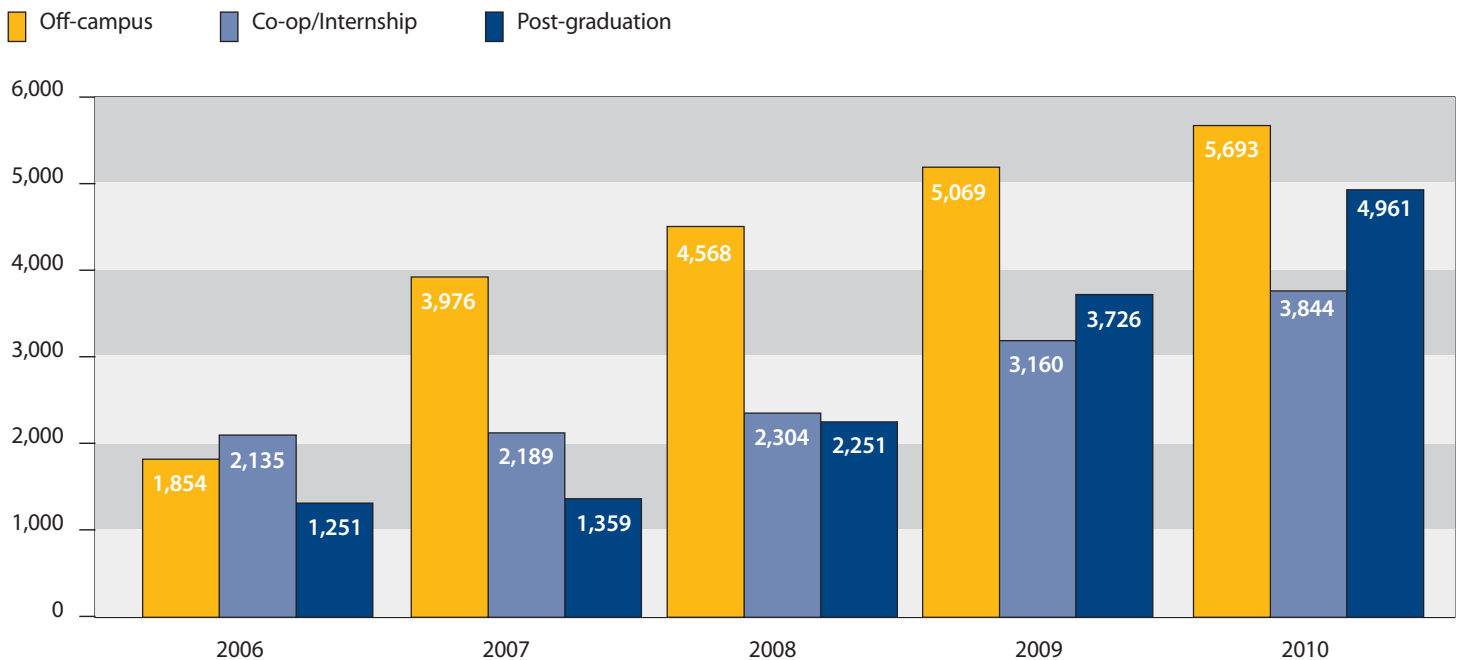
For More Information

For more information on international students, please visit:
 - Ministry of Advanced Education (www.learnlivebc.ca)
 - B.C. Council For International Education (www.bccie.bc.ca)

For more temporary resident and immigration reports and statistics, please visit:
www.welcomebc.ca/facts_and_trends
www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/menu-research-stats.asp

For more information on the International Students Fact Sheet, contact: Brian Evernden, Policy and Stakeholder Relations Branch, Labour Market and Immigration Division, Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
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Chart 2: Number of International Students in B.C. by selected work permits, 2006–2010



Data Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Present on December 1st