

STP RESEARCH RESULTS

Student Mobility in the
B.C. Public Post-Secondary System

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SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

Student Transitions Project (STP)

STP Research Results:
Student Mobility in the B.C. Public Post-Secondary System
September 5, 2023

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Executive Summary

About this Research

This report features selected research findings on student mobility in the B.C. public post-secondary system, using data from the most recent annual STP submission from Fall of 2022. All academic credit registrants in B.C.'s 25 public post-secondary institutions from 2002/2003 to Fall 2023 are included. This study was conducted by the Student Transitions Project (STP), a collaborative research partnership involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and post-secondary institutions.

For readers seeking information on the impact of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic on student mobility in B.C. this report includes data covering the pandemic time-period. Please see inset box on [page 6](#), *Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Student Mobility*, for details on timelines and STP milestones.

Quick Facts

What is Student Mobility? Student mobility is the sequential or simultaneous enrollment of academic credit registrants in multiple B.C. public post-secondary institutions. [\[Page 10\]](#)

How does the STP measure student mobility? The STP looks at all academic credit registrants in a single registration year and quantifies the proportion of these registrants who switched institutions, relative to their last registration period. [\[Page 11\]](#)

What is the student mobility rate? In the most recent registration year, 2021/2022, there were approximately 343,800 academic credit registrants, of which 49,538 enrolled in a different institution from their previous registration period. These mobile students represent 14.4% of academic credit registrants and this is the student mobility rate for 2021/2022. [\[Page 11\]](#)

About the STP

The Student Transitions Project is British Columbia's collaborative research project that measures student success from the K-12 to post-secondary systems. This effective system-wide partnership, involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and public post-secondary institutions, is tracking student success by reporting on student transition rates to post-secondary education, student mobility among post-secondary institutions, and post-secondary completion and retention rates. STP is managed by a steering committee with representation from the two education ministries, public institutions and the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT).

STP Steering Committee Members

Sarah Dunn, Director, Institutional Research and Planning, British Columbia Institute of Technology.

Tony Eder, Associate Vice-President, Academic Resource Planning, University of Victoria.

Leila Hazemi, Director, Research and Analytics, Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills.

Mahi Boozarjomehri, Director, Outreach, Analytics and Reporting, Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Anna Tikina, Chair, STP Steering Committee and Director, Research and Admissions, BCCAT.

Which pathways did mobile students take into their current institution of registration? A total of 49,538 students moved to a new institution or returned to a previous institution in 2021/2022. Among these mobile students, 9% are **movers** who moved to a new institution for the first time; 4% are **returns** who returned to an institution previously attended; 4% are **stopout movers** who moved to a new institution after a stop out period of non-registration; and 1% are **stopout returns** who returned to an institution previously attended (after registering elsewhere in the interim). [Page 12]

Which pathways did students take in/out of their institution of registration in 2020/2021? By focusing on a single registration year, the STP provides a Student Pathways Diagram for each institution, region and sector, as well as the B.C. public post-secondary system. These diagrams provide information on the pathways of student inflows from preceding years and outflows into the subsequent year. [Page 13]

What proportion of mobile students additionally continue at the same institution they attended in the previous academic year? Roughly 38% of the 49,538 mobile students continued enrolling at the same institution from the previous academic year -- these are **continuing mobile** students. The remaining mobile students (62%) are **exclusively mobile** students who switched institutions without continuing their enrolment elsewhere [Page 14]

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Student Mobility

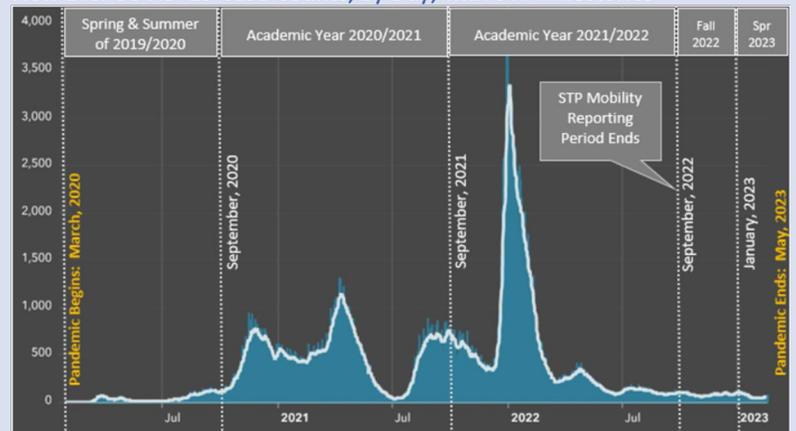
The COVID-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020, has had numerous effects on the lives of people around the world, including B.C. students who switched to on-line learning in March for the remainder of the 2019/2020 academic year. This safer mode of education delivery in B.C. public post-secondary institutions continued throughout the academic year of 2020/2021.

As the population became increasingly vaccinated against the disease, the majority of post-secondary learning returned to the traditional on-campus classroom environment in the Fall of 2021, but the pandemic persisted, until the World Health Organization declared an end to the public health emergency on May 5, 2023.

What was the impact of COVID-19 on student mobility within B.C. throughout this long and disruptive time? Since this year’s mobility analysis includes registrants up to the end of academic year 2021/2022, it is now possible to assess the impact of the pandemic on student mobility in B.C. throughout the majority of the disruption.

This report includes pre-pandemic mobility data (from before 2019/2020), as well as student mobility data during the pandemic (2019/2020 to 2021/2022). Post-pandemic effects will be analyzed in the next scheduled update to the STP mobility analysis in two years.

New B.C. COVID-19 Case Counts, by Day, with STP Milestones



Source: BC CDC Dashboard

Definitions

Student mobility is the movement of students (specifically registrants in post-secondary credit courses) from one B.C. public post-secondary institution to another.

Students take a variety of routes or **pathways** between institutions over time. When a student switches institutions, the student takes a **mobile student pathway**, otherwise a non-mobile pathway.

The **student mobility rate** is the proportion of students who took a mobile pathway to their registration in the year, expressed as a percentage of all students registered in the year.

Mobile Student Pathways: Depending on the timing and type of mobility, four different mobile pathways are possible.

- a) **Move** – Switch institutions by moving to an institution never previously attended.
- b) **Stopout Move** – Switch institutions by moving to an institution never previously attended, but after a stopout period of non-registration.
- c) **Return** – Switch institutions by returning to an institution previously attended, but not the most recently attended institution.
- d) **Stopout Return** - Switch institutions by returning to an institution previously attended, but after a stopout period of non-registration.

Non-Mobile Student Pathways: When students do not switch institutions, there are four other pathways they might have taken (or will take in the future).

- a) **New to STP** – New student to the STP with no previous record of registration (back to 2002/03) in any institution in the B.C. public post-secondary system.
- b) **Exit STP** – Left the B.C. public post-secondary system. There are no further record(s) of registration in the B.C. public post-secondary education system beyond the end of the end of the reporting period.
- c) **Continue** – Continue registration at the institution last attended in the previous time period.
- d) **Stopout Continue** – Continue at the institution last attended, but after a stopout period of non-registration. No other institutions were attended in the intervening period.

What are the trends in student mobility? The student mobility rate (14.4%) continues to decline in B.C. The declining mobility rate is primarily attributed to the growth in academic credit registrants exceeding the growth in the number mobile students. Beginning in 2019/2020, both the total number of academic credit registrants and the subset of mobile students have been declining. The steeper drop in the number of mobile students, relative to the more moderate decline in academic credit registrants, is further contributing to a steeper decline in the student mobility rate over the last three years. [Page 15]

What is the average distance ‘traveled’ when mobile students switch institutions? In 2021/2022, the 49,538 mobile students traveled an average of 148 km or a median distance of 78 km when they switched institutions. Despite the relatively far distance, on average, the majority of mobile students switch to nearby institutions within 20 km of their previous institution. Due to online learning opportunities, this distance measure is somewhat artificial, but recent increases to the average and median distance traveled may indicate that more students are accessing education at more distant institutions via remote learning. [Page 16]

What proportion of student mobility is attributed to students switching into or out of Thompson Rivers University? Roughly 22% of student mobility in 2021/2022 is attributed to students switching into or out of Thompson Rivers University (TRU), an institution with an Open Learning division that provides flexible and accessible post-secondary education to students through open admission and distance education options. [Page 17]

Where do students enrol for a Bachelor's degree in B.C.?

What are the trends? The majority (70.0%) of Bachelor's degree seekers in B.C. enroll in RIUs, with smaller shares enrolling in TIUs (22.4%), Colleges (5.3%) and Institutes (2.5%). The overall growth in students seeking a Bachelor's degree in B.C. over the decade (+14%) primarily took place in RIUs (+18%) and Colleges (+20%), while TIUs (+4%) and Institutes (+5%) saw smaller growth. [Page 18]

How many B.C. public post-secondary institutions do students attend to earn a Bachelor's degree in B.C.?

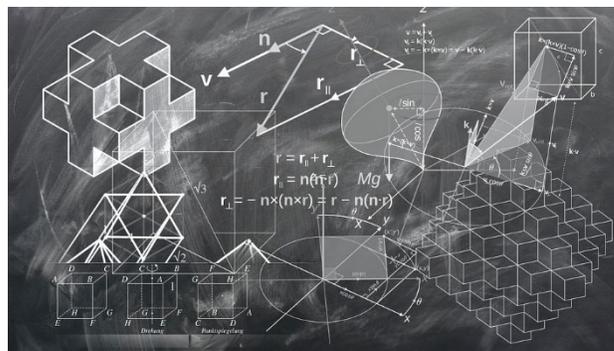
Bachelor's completers of 2021/2022 attended an average of 1.6 B.C. public post-secondary institutions over the course of their degree. The majority (60%) attended only one institution throughout their degree program, and this is more than 10 percentage points higher than ten and fifteen years previously. [Page 19-20]

How has the growth in international students affected the student mobility rate?

International students are significantly less mobile than domestic students, with mobility rates about half that of domestic students (9.0% versus 16.0%). However, international students are becoming increasingly more mobile and represent a growing share of total post-secondary enrollment in B.C. These trends are likely to influence overall student mobility rates in the future. [Page 21]

Who are the mobile students? Mobile students are more likely to be female, Indigenous, domestic, age 19 to 25, and earned an Associate Degree, Certificate or Diploma in Arts and Sciences, Health or Human and Social Services before switching institutions. Student mobility rates for various sub-populations are provided in this report. [Page 22]

How many students moved between different institution types in B.C.? Among roughly 49,500 mobile students who switched institutions in 2021/2022, the vast majority, or about 31,300 students switched from one institution type to another. The two most popular routes are: (1) from Colleges to RIUs (5,100 students), and (2) from Colleges to Institutes, (5,700 students) [Page 23]



How many students moved between regions in B.C.?

Among roughly 49,500 mobile students who switched institutions in 2021/2022, approximately 22,300 (or 41% of students) switched from one B.C. region to another. The majority of mobile students (59%) do not switch regions when they switch institutions. The largest group of mobile students switching institutions entirely within the Mainland/Southwest region. [Page 24]

Among mobile students, how significant are the inter-relationships between the regions and institution types?

The inter-relationships between institution types are relatively balanced, with roughly equal numbers of mobile students flowing between all pairs of institution types in B.C. Regionally, nearly half (46%) of student mobility takes place entirely within the Mainland/Southwest region. [Page 25]

What proportion of student mobility occurs between institutions within the same institution type? Among the 30,937 mobile students who switched institutions without stopping out, 26% enrolled in another institution with the same institution type. The more dominant pathway (74%) is to move from one sector to another when students switch institutions [Page 26]

What proportion of student mobility occurs between institutions within the same region? Among those 30,937 students who switched institutions from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022 (without a stopout period of non-registration), 59% enrolled in another institution within the region, while 41% switched to an institution outside of the region. [Page 27]

How many students follow the traditional transfer route from a B.C. College to Research-Intensive University? Currently, 4,024 students or 8.1% of the total volume of 49,538 mobile students follow the traditional transfer pathway to a B.C. Research-Intensive University from another B.C. public post-secondary institution. These “traditional transfer” students have a minimum of 24 credits, and a basis of admission of B.C. College or B.C. Associate Degree. Roughly half of these students (48%) enrolled at SFU, 25% at UBCV, 17% at UVic, 7% at UBCO and 3% at UNBC. [Page 28]

What are the source institution types of traditional transfer students to RIUs? What are the trends? Among the 4,024 traditional transfer students in 2021/2022, roughly half (49%) transferred from B.C. Colleges which is lower than the proportion from ten years ago (54%). The share of traditional transfer students entering RIUs from TIUs has declined from 25% to 17%. B.C. private institutions are not included in the STP mobility analysis; however, 34% of traditional transfer students likely transferred to RIUs from B.C. private institutions, as deduced from each student’s B.C. basis of admission category and lack of a previous STP registration record from a B.C. public post-secondary institution. [Page 29]

What proportion of Fall 2021 registrants attended more than one institution simultaneously? In the Fall of 2021, a total of 4,989 students were simultaneously enrolled in multiple institutions, representing roughly 2% of all 310,896 distinct students registered in the term. The most common registration combination was simultaneous enrollment in an Institute and TIU (19% of dual enrollees). Typically, when students register in two institutions simultaneously, they enrol in two distinct institution types, although 12% of dual-enrolled students were enrolled in two distinct TIUs. [Page 30]

Among Fall 2021 registrants attending more than one institution, in which institutions did students enrol simultaneously? Among 4,901 students enrolled simultaneously in two institutions, the students were registered in a total of 222 distinct pairs of institutions at the same time, with Thompson Rivers University (TRU) playing a significant role in many of these institution pairs. The data reveals that 9.5% of students registered at TRU in Fall of 2021 were also enrolled in at least one other institution at the same time. By comparison, 1.4% of students registered at SFU in Fall of 2021 were also enrolled in one or more additional institutions at the same time. [Page 31]

Special Thanks

The STP would like to thank representatives from the Ministry of Education and Child Care, the Ministry of Post-secondary Education and Future Skills and the B.C. public post-secondary institutions for collaborating in this research effort. Without their co-operation and data contributions, this research could not have been accomplished.



For More Information

A wealth of additional information is also available to post-secondary institutions seeking more detailed information on student mobility in their sector, region or institution.



STP reports, newsletters and other public resources are available on the public Student Transitions Project web site at:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/data-research/student->

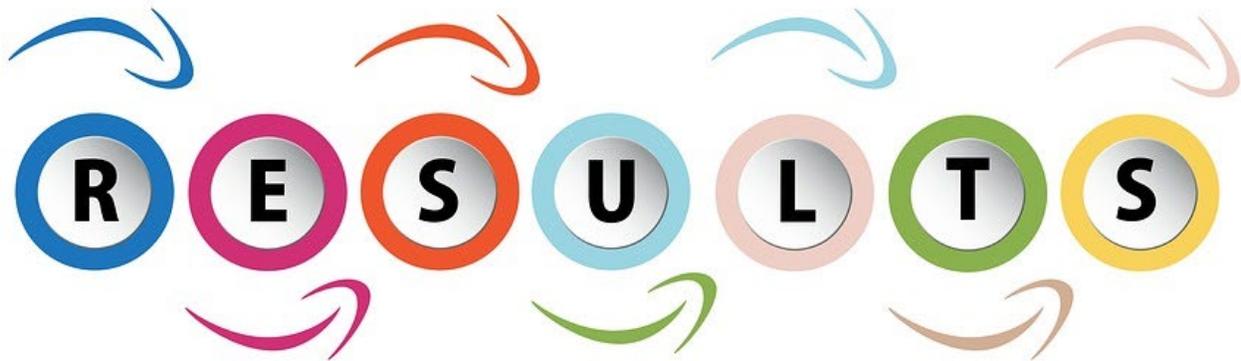
Research Results

○ What is Student Mobility?

Students take a variety of different routes through B.C.'s education system as they navigate their way through courses, programs and institutions to achieve their education goals. They each have their own reasons for following their different education pathways, whether planned or unplanned. As a result, students frequently attend multiple institutions throughout their education career, both sequentially and simultaneously. **Student mobility** is the sequential or simultaneous enrollment of academic credit registrants in multiple B.C. public post-secondary institutions.

This report from the Student Transitions Project (STP) summarizes the latest student mobility research from the STP2022 data set, including post-secondary registrants in academic years 2002/2003 to 2021/2022, plus registrants in Fall 2022.¹ These STP research results focus on recurring and consistent trends (☑), as well as any significant shifts or changes in the trends (◆). Additional background and context (○) relevant to the mobility findings are also integrated throughout this report. This report is available on the [STP website](#)².

For readers seeking information on the impact of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic on student mobility in B.C., please see inset box on [page 6](#), *Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Student Mobility*, for relevant timelines.



¹ The STP now has twenty complete years of B.C. public post-secondary enrolments for 2002/2003 to 2021/2022 registrants, plus the partial 2022/2023 academic year (Fall 2022 only). Student mobility studies focus on student movement in each full academic year, thus the STP data for the partial 2022/2023 academic year (Fall 2022 only) is not given much consideration in this report. Post-secondary enrollments outside of B.C. or in B.C. private institutions are excluded.

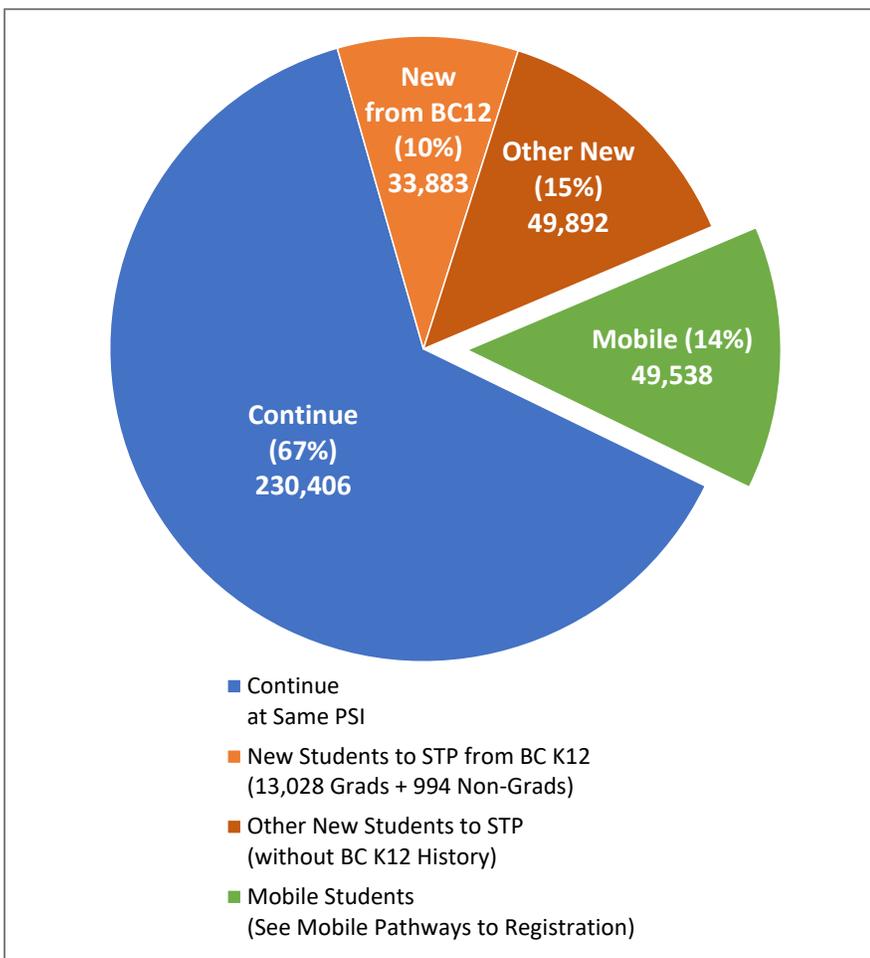
² The public STP website is located here: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/data-research/student-transitions-project>

○ How does the STP measure student mobility? What is the student mobility rate?

The STP looks at all academic credit registrants in a single registration year and quantifies the proportion of these registrants who switched institutions, relative to their last registration period. In the most recent registration year, 2021/2022, there were approximately 343,800 academic credit registrants, of which 49,538 enrolled in a different institution from their previous registration period. These are the mobile students and represent 14.4% of academic credit registrants, comprising the **student mobility rate** for 2021/2022.

The majority of students (67%) continued in 2021/2022 at the same institution where they last registered. The balance of the registrants in the year are comprised of new students, with 10% coming from B.C. secondary schools and 15% with no record of B.C. secondary school attendance (see **Figure 1**).

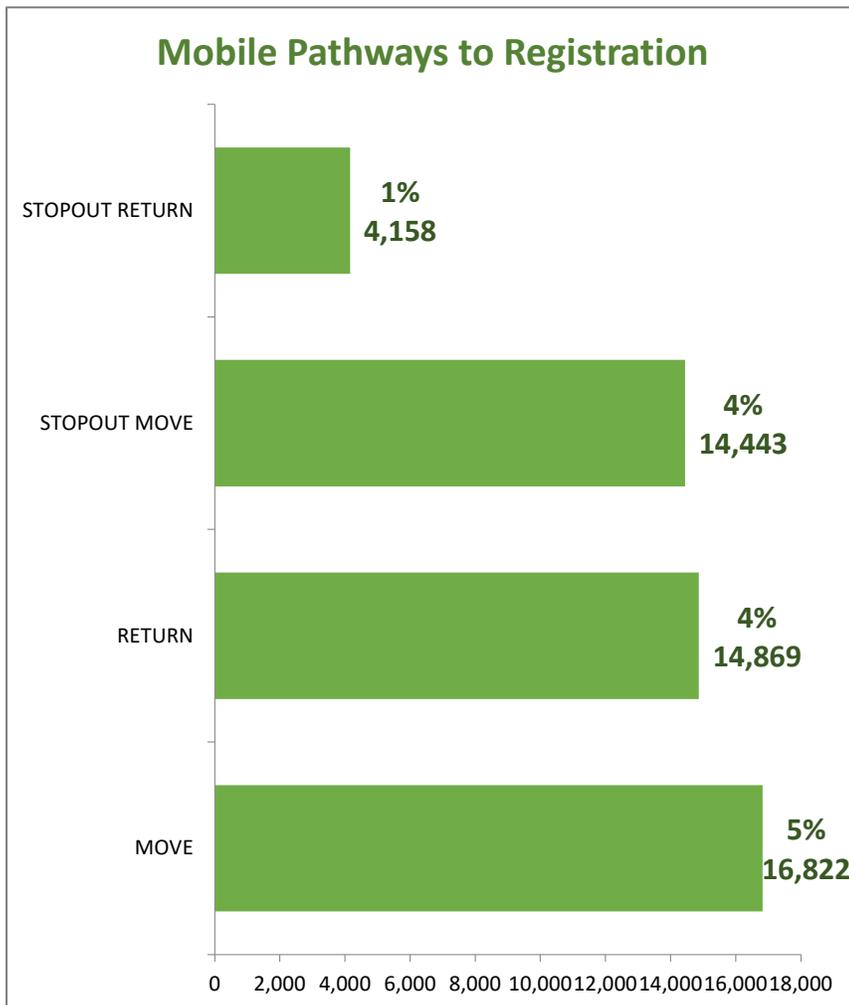
FIGURE 1: STUDENT MOBILITY RATE (2021/2022)



☑ Which pathways did mobile students take *into* their current institution of registration in 2021/2022?

By taking a closer look at the 49,538 mobile students of 2021/2022, it is possible to identify whether students switched institutions after last registering in 2020/2021 (9%), or switched institutions after a stopout period of non-registration (5%). The STP can also identify whether students took the most common pathway of ‘moving’ (9%) to a new/different institution for the first time, or if they took the less common pathway of ‘returning’ (5%) to an institution they had attended in the past (but not most recently). The most common mobile pathway taken by 16,822 students was a direct move to a new institution without a stopout period (5%). See [Figure 2](#) for a breakdown of the 49,538 (14%) mobile students, bearing in mind that mobile students may be counted in multiple categories if they switched institutions multiple times, either sequentially within the year or simultaneously in a single term. In addition, since the mobility model quantifies multiple student pathways, it is important to note that roughly 38% of the mobile students who took a mobile pathway to their institution in 2021/2022 also continued at the same institution where they last enrolled in a previous academic year (see [page 14](#)).

FIGURE 2: MOBILE PATHWAYS TO REGISTRATION (2021/2022)

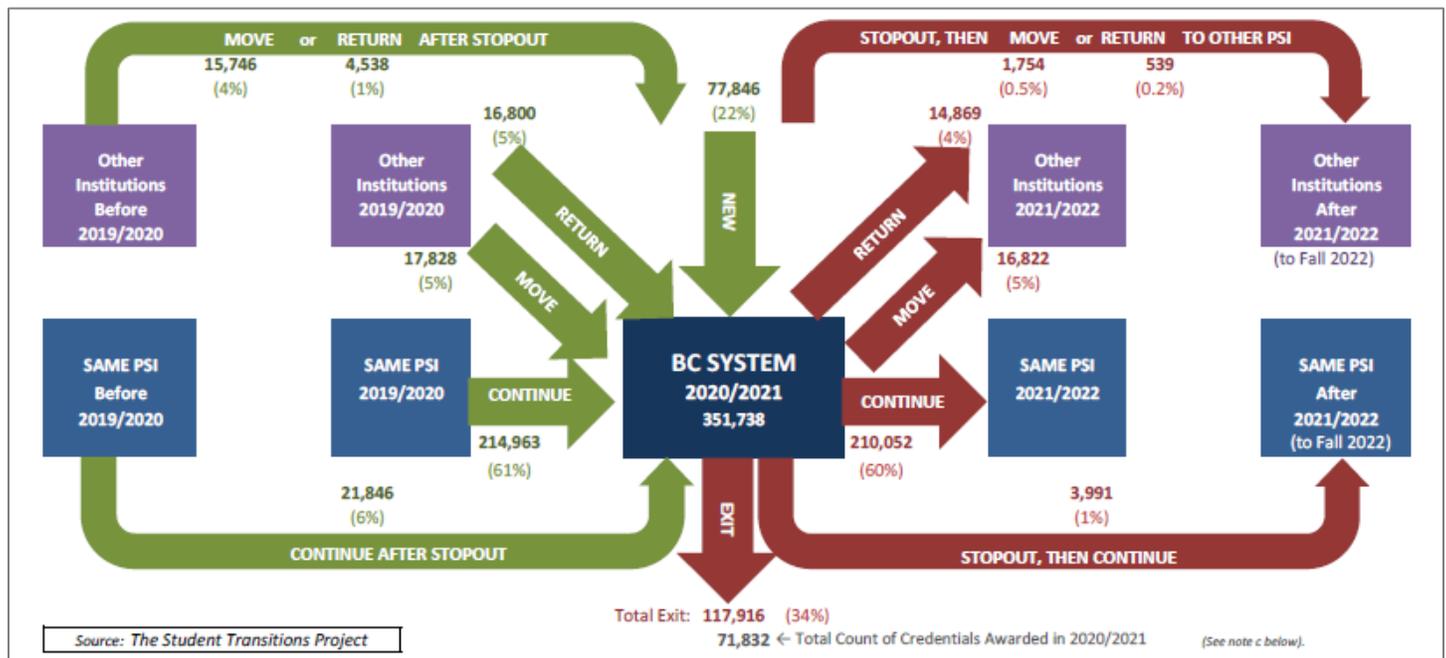


☑ Which pathways did students take *in/out* of their institution of registration in 2020/2021?

As shown on the [previous page](#), mobile students followed numerous pathways into their institution of registration in 2021/2022. By focusing on the previous academic year (2020/2021), it is possible to view all possible incoming and outgoing pathways of students over multiple preceding and subsequent academic years. Students may enter the post-secondary system for the first time; or continue at the same institution where they last registered; some will switch institutions, with or without a stop out period; and others may exit the system, with or without a credential. See pathways diagram in [Figure 3](#)³.

- The focus of the diagram is the population of academic credit registrants in 2020/2021, with the source pathways of student inflows from preceding years shown on the left, and destination student outflows shown on the right.
- The central core of the diagram shows relatively balanced numbers of students flowing directly into and out of the B.C. public post-secondary system in 2020/2021 from the immediately preceding (2019/2020) and subsequent (2021/2022) academic years.
- Reaching beyond the center of the diagram, from the far left to the far right, the student inflows and outflows cover a multi-year, but unbalanced, period of time. Up to seventeen years of inflows are shown on the far left (2002/2003 to 2018/2019), but only the Fall term is shown on the far right (Fall 2022). As a result, the number of inflowing stopout moves and stopout returns over seventeen years (15,746 and 4,538) are not balanced with an equal number of outflowing stopout moves and stopout returns in the Fall of 2022 (1,754 and 539).

FIGURE 3: STUDENT PATHWAYS IN THE B.C. PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM



³ Student Pathways Diagrams are provided on the STP website for each institution, each region and each institution type at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/post-secondary-education/data-research/stp/student_pathways_system_region_sector.pdf

◆ What proportion of mobile students additionally continue at the same institution they attended in the previous academic year?

Students take multiple *mobile* pathways (see [Figures 2 and 3](#)), but the underlying STP data reveals that student mobility into the subsequent academic year frequently accompanies the continuation of an enrolment at the same institution from the previous academic year. This may occur in sequential semesters or terms of the year, or simultaneously in a single term (see [page 30](#)). Among all 49,538 mobile students in 2021/2022, roughly 62% were *exclusively* mobile students, whereas the remaining 38% switched institutions and additionally continued at the same institution where they enrolled in the previous academic year. The majority of the continuing mobile students were enrolled in multiple institutions in *sequential* terms of the 2021/2022 academic year, with roughly one-fifth enrolled *simultaneously* in multiple institutions in the Fall term; and fewer simultaneously enrolled in other terms. As shown in [Figure 4](#), these mobility trends are generally consistent from year to year, with some recent exceptions. Student mobility studies traditionally have not distinguished exclusively mobile from continuing mobile students, but given the disruption to the trend line during the pandemic, some deeper analysis is provided this year.

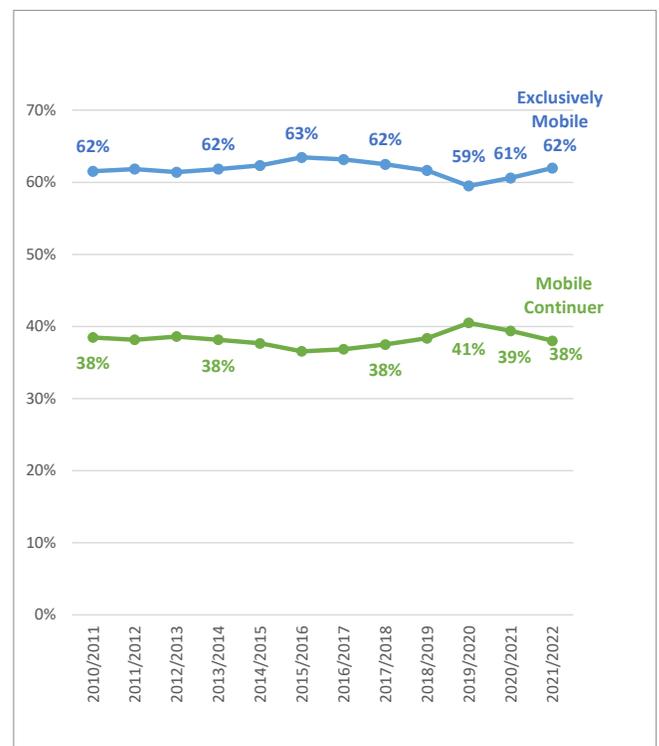
During the pandemic, beginning in 2019/2020, there is evidence of a temporary reduction to 59% in the proportion of **exclusively mobile students** who switched institutions without additionally continuing at another institution from the previous year. Possible deterrents or barriers to exclusively mobile students, such as re-locating to a new city or accessing registration services and academic advice during the pandemic, may have contributed to this drop, but a recovery is now evident.

Directly offsetting the drop in exclusively mobile students was an increase to 41% in the proportion of **mobile continuer**s, or mobile students who also continued at the same institution from the previous year; and this trend appears to have returned to typical levels by 2021/2022. The temporary increase in mobile continuer provides some evidence that a greater proportion of students may have taken advantage of the expanded access to on-line learning opportunities available at other B.C. public post-secondary institutions during the pandemic-induced shift to online learning; and these students were additionally able to simultaneously continue enrolling at their home institution.

What are the patterns in institution origins and destinations of exclusively mobile versus continuing mobile students in

2021/2022? The largest share of **exclusively mobile** students switched from Colleges (34%) and TIUs (27%), with fewer moving from RIUs (24%) and Institutes (18%). The primary destination of exclusively mobile students was Institutes (34%), with smaller shares moving to Colleges (25%), RIUs (22%) or TIUs (20%). By comparison, **mobile continuer**s were more likely to switch to or from TIU's (35% and 38% respectively), and this is likely attributed to the influence of Thompson Rivers University (TRU). The role of TRU is significant among mobile continuer: 40% of mobile continuer moved to or from TRU (while simultaneously continuing at another institution in 2021/2022), which is more than double the proportion (16%) of exclusively mobile students who switched to or from TRU without continuing elsewhere.

FIGURE 4: TREND IN MOBILE STUDENTS – EXCLUSIVELY MOBILE VS MOBILE CONTINUERS



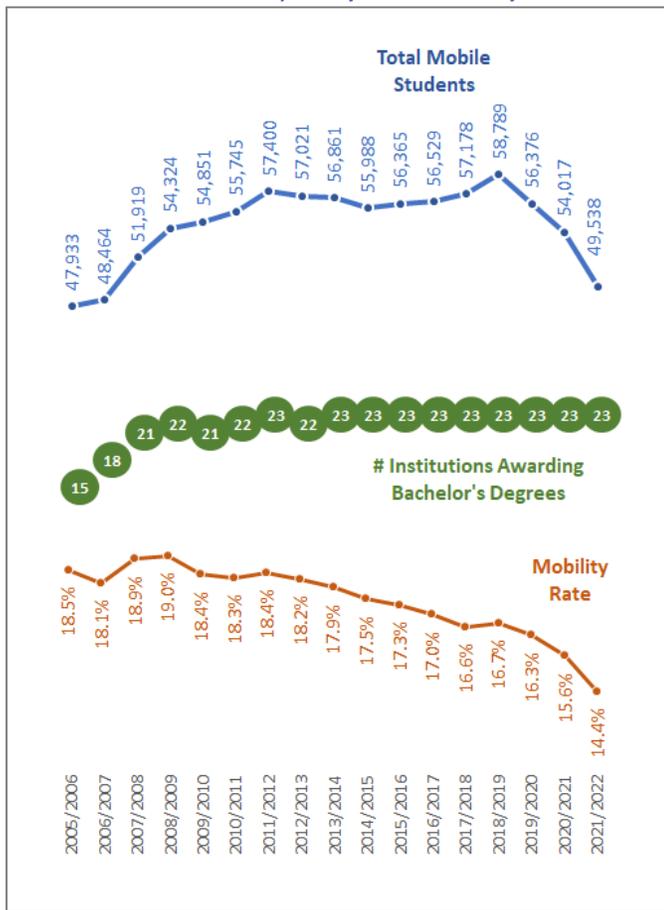
◆ What are the trends in student mobility?

The **student mobility rate** (14.4%) is the proportion of all academic credit registrants in the year who switched from the institution where they last registered, thus following a mobile pathway to their current institution of registration in 2021/2022. Despite the relatively steady growth in the number of mobile students over the first fourteen years shown in **Figure 5**, the mobility rate has been steadily declining more recently, with steeper declines beginning in 2019/2020, when the number of mobile students also began to decline, as shown in **Figure 6**.

The mobility rate has declined in B.C., from its highest measured level of 19.0% in 2008/2009 to its current level of 14.4% in 2021/2022. The declining mobility rate is primarily attributed to the growth in academic credit registrants exceeding the growth in the number mobile students, but beginning in 2019/2020, both the total number of academic credit registrants *and* the subset of mobile students have been declining. The steeper drop in the number of mobile students, relative to the more moderate decline in academic credit registrants, is further contributing to a steeper decline in the student mobility rate over the last three years.

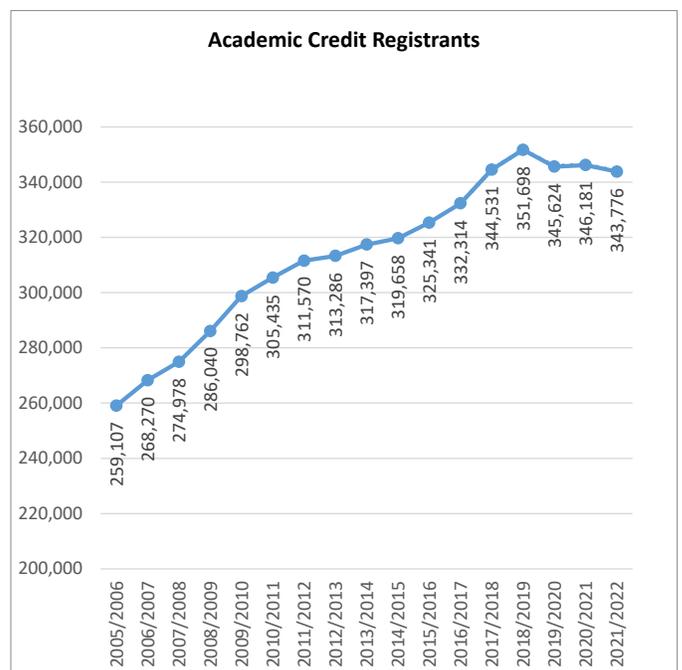
Colleges (-8.5%) and Institutes (-7.8%) experienced the largest decline in academic credit registrants since 2018/2019. TIU’s were less affected at -5.0%, while RIUs saw an increase in credit registrants (+4.1%).

FIGURE 5:
STUDENT MOBILITY TRENDS, 2005/2006 TO 2021/2022



The declining mobility rate is consistent with the expansion of degree completion opportunities in B.C., as a growing share of Bachelor’s degree completers in B.C. are now able to complete their degree in Colleges, Institutes and TIUs, increasing from 20% in 2005/2006 to 27% in 2021/22. Other factors, affecting mobility rates are discussed later in this report.

FIGURE 6: TREND IN ACADEMIC CREDIT REGISTRANTS



◆ What is the average distance ‘traveled’ when mobile students switch institutions?

In 2021/2022, the 49,538 mobile students traveled an average of 148 km or a median distance of 78 km when they switched institutions, either moving to a new institution for the first time or returning to an institution previously attended, including student mobility after a stop out period of non-registration (see [Figure 7](#)). Despite the relatively far distance, on average, the majority of mobile students switch to nearby institutions within 20 km of their previous institution. On average, students who switch institutions within their own region travel one-tenth as far as those who switch to institutions outside of their region (30 km versus nearly 300 km).

While the share of mobile students switching to nearby institutions (< 20 km) has declined from 47% to 43% over the decade, proportionately more students are switching to institutions that are 200 to 399 km away, increasing from 23% to 28% over the decade (see [Figure 8](#)). The shifts in the distribution of distance traveled has effectively led to an increase in the average distance traveled by mobile students, increasing from 136 to 148 km over the decade (see [Figure 7](#)).

Given that students frequently are not required to ‘travel’ any physical distance between institutions when they attend another institution virtually or online, the average distance measure is somewhat artificial; however, increases to the average distance likely indicate greater access for students to attend distant post-secondary institutions via online learning, especially during the pandemic period of predominantly online learning.

Consistent with the increase in the proportion of mobile students switching to more distant post-secondary institutions, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) in the B.C. interior is 277 km from other institutions, on average, and is a common destination for students seeking access to post-secondary education online. Changes in enrolment trends at TRU, especially among mobile students, has an influence on changes in the average distance of mobile students. See more information on the [next page](#).

FIGURE 7: TREND IN AVERAGE DISTANCE ‘TRAVELED’ BY MOBILE STUDENTS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS

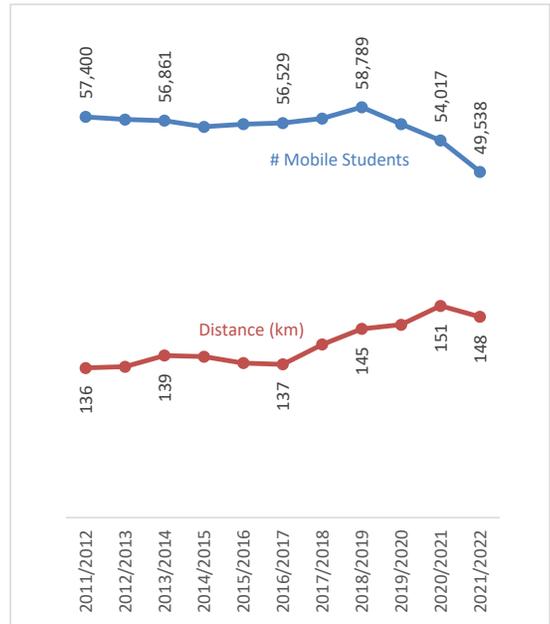
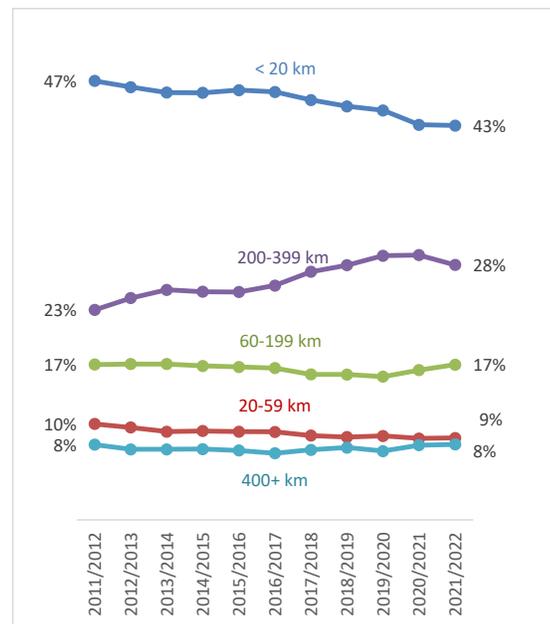


FIGURE 8: TRENDS IN DISTRIBUTION OF MOBILE STUDENTS BY DISTANCE TRAVELED



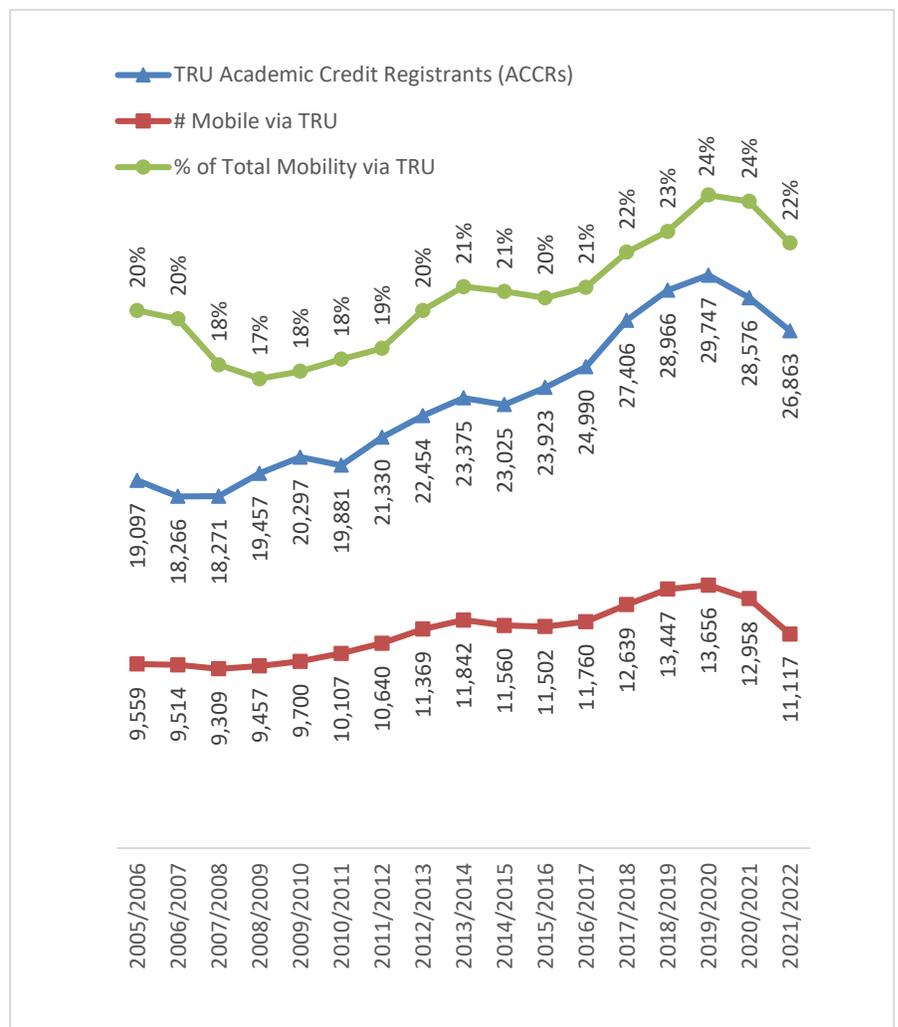
◆ What proportion of student mobility is attributed to students switching into or out of Thomson Rivers University?

Roughly 22% of student mobility in 2021/2022 is attributed to students switching into or out of Thomson Rivers University (TRU), an institution with an Open Learning division that provides flexible and accessible post-secondary education to students through open admission and distance education options. TRU plays a significant role in student mobility in the province, especially given that 11,117⁴ of the 49,538 mobile students in B.C. went via TRU in 2021/2022. This includes 6,329 students who moved or returned **from TRU** to other institutions (including stop outs), plus 6,402 students who moved or returned **to TRU** from other institutions previously attended (including stop outs).

As shown in **Figure 9**, the role TRU serves in student mobility in B.C. has gradually increased over time, reaching a peak of 24% during the pandemic in 2019/2020. The trend in the number of mobile students going via TRU has generally followed the trend in the total number of Academic Credit Registrants enrolled at TRU.

Despite a relatively steep decline in the total number of mobile students in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 (-8.3% cumulatively), the declining number of mobile students at TRU over the same time period was not as steep (-3.6%). The increased role that TRU played in serving the education needs of B.C.'s mobile students during the pandemic suggests that students probably took advantage of the flexibility of online learning opportunities outside of their home institution during the pandemic (in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021). Note that it is not possible to quantify the extent to which online (versus in-person) courses at TRU plays a role in student mobility because the STP does not collect post-secondary course data or their mode of delivery.

FIGURE 9: STUDENT MOBILITY VIA THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY



⁴ Unduplicated headcount. Students may move/return to/from multiple institutions, but are counted once in the total.

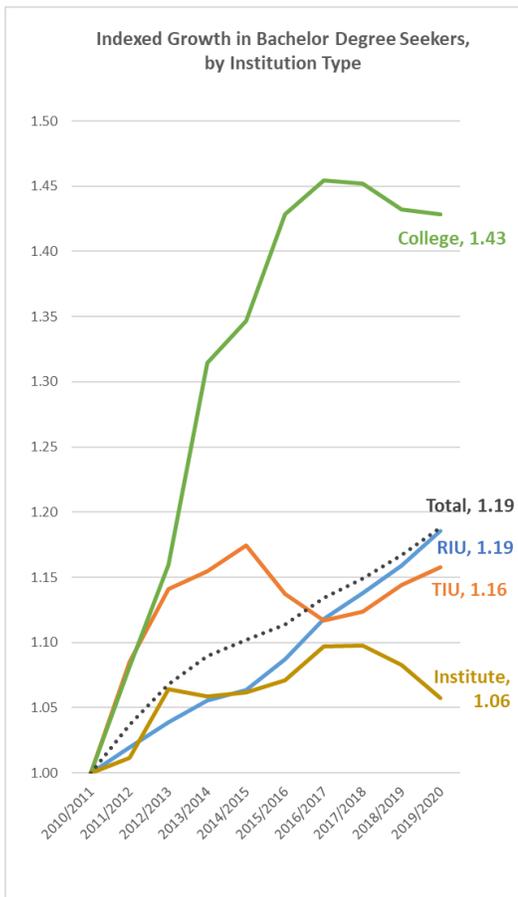
◆ Where do students enrol for a Bachelor’s degree in B.C.? What are the trends?

Since the introduction of the 2002 Degree Authorization Act, the province of B.C. has seen rapid growth in the number of institutions offering Bachelor’s degrees. This has resulted in a growing share of B.C.’s public post-secondary students enrolling in and earning a Bachelor’s degree. Where do they enrol? What is the growth rate over the last decade? What has shifted?

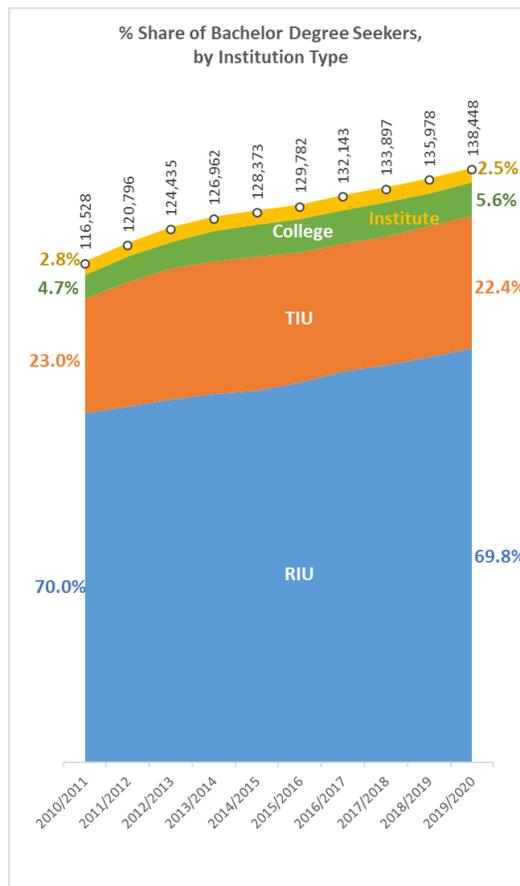
- **Where:** The majority (70.0%) of Bachelor’s degree seekers in B.C. continue to enroll in RIUs, with smaller shares enrolling in TIUs (22.4%), College’s (5.3%) and Institutes (2.5%).
- **Growth rate:** The overall growth in students seeking a Bachelor’s degree in B.C. over the decade (+14%) primarily took place in RIUs (+18%) and Colleges (+20%), while TIUs (+4%) and Institutes (+5%) saw smaller growth. See [Figure 10A](#).
- **Changing proportions:** The unequal growth rate in Bachelor’s degree registrants across B.C.’s institution types over the last decade has resulted in a slightly larger share of B.C.’s Bachelor degree seekers now enrolling in B.C. Colleges, increasing from 4.7% to 5.6%. The proportion of students seeking a Bachelor’s degree in RIUs has leveled off at roughly 70% over the last decade, while the remaining institution types collectively contribute 30% of the province’s Bachelor degree seekers. See [Figure 10B](#).

FIGURE 10: GROWTH IN BACHELOR’S DEGREE SEEKERS IN B.C., BY INSTITUTION TYPE

(A) INDEXED GROWTH IN BACHELOR’S DEGREE SEEKERS



(B) CHANGE IN % SHARES OF BACHELOR DEGREE SEEKERS



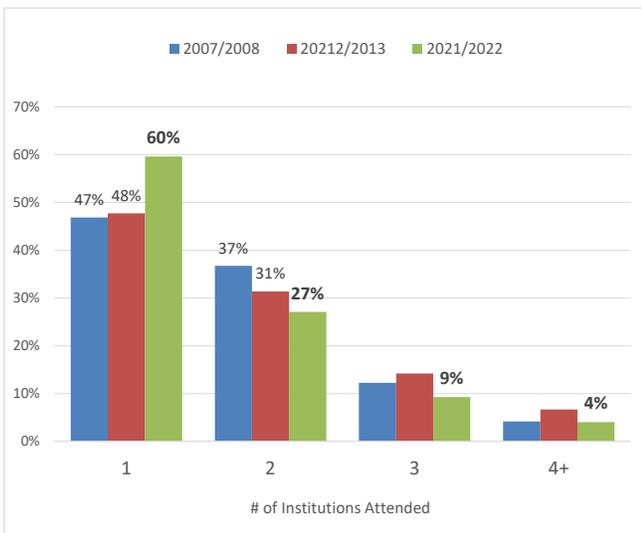
◆ How many B.C. public post-secondary institutions do students attend to earn a Bachelor’s degree in B.C.?

Given the growing share of Bachelor’s degree seekers now attending Colleges, Institutes and TIUs, further evidence in the STP reveals that Bachelor’s degree graduates are also attending fewer institutions, on average, to complete their degree than earlier cohorts of degree recipients. This shift is likely due to the expanded Bachelor’s degree completion opportunities in many of B.C.’s public post-secondary institutions.

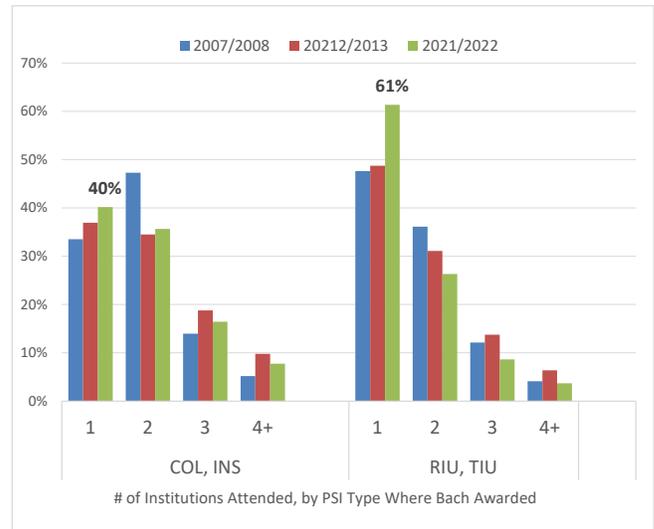
- **Figure 11A** shows that the majority (60%) of Bachelor’s degree completers of 2021/2022 attended only one B.C. public post-secondary institution throughout their degree program, and this is more than 10 percentage points higher than ten and fifteen years previously. Similar trends are evident within clusters of institution types (see **Figure 11B**), although College and Institute recipients of Bachelor’s degrees are less likely to have attended a single institution (40%) than degree completers at a TIU or RIU (61%).
- Bachelor’s degree completers of 2021/2022 attended an average of 1.6 post-secondary institutions over the duration of their degree program; and consistent with the preceding findings, those earning a degree at a B.C. College or Institute attended more institutions, on average (2.1 and 1.8 respectively) than those earning a degree at RIUs or TIUs (averaging 1.5 and 1.7 institutions attended). Looking back ten and fifteen years previously, students attended an average of 1.7 to 1.8 B.C. public post-secondary institutions to complete their degree.

FIGURE 11: NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED BY BACHELOR’S DEGREE RECIPIENTS:

(A) BY YEAR OF COMPLETION



(B) BY YEAR AND INSTITUTION TYPE WHERE CREDENTIAL AWARDED



- **Figure 12** on the following page provides a detailed breakdown of the number of institutions attended by Bachelor’s degree recipients at each institution where degrees were awarded in 2021/2022. Among students who attended multiple institutions to complete their degree, the clusters of the top three institution combinations shows that access to online education (primarily at TRU) and regional proximity to other institutions likely influenced institution choice.

**FIGURE 12: NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED BY 2021/2021 BACHELOR'S DEGREE RECIPIENTS,
BY INSTITUTION WHERE DEGREE AWARDED**

PSI of BACH Degree	# of B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions Attended						Top 3 Other PSI's Attended	# Bach Degrees Awarded
	1	2	3	4+	Total	Avg.		
BCIT	31%	41%	20%	9%	100%	2.1	SFU, DOUG, UBCV	844
CAM	63%	28%	9%	1%	100%	1.5	UVIC, TRU, NIC	168
CAPU	55%	29%	11%	5%	100%	1.7	DOUG, LANG, TRU	523
COTR	75%	25%	0%	0%	100%	1.3	TRU, SEL	<10
DOUG	41%	37%	16%	6%	100%	1.9	BCIT, TRU, KPU	588
ECU	75%	19%	5%	1%	100%	1.3	LANG, KPU, DOUG	370
JIBC	52%	34%	9%	5%	100%	1.7	DOUG, KPU, LANG	44
KPU	50%	33%	12%	5%	100%	1.7	BCIT, KPU, DOUG	1,050
LANG	34%	33%	20%	13%	100%	2.2	VCC, BCIT, DOUG	246
NIC	64%	21%	14%	0%	100%	1.5	TRU, CAM	14
NVIT	3%	31%	34%	31%	100%	3.2	DOUG, LANG, TRU	29
OKAN	73%	21%	4%	1%	100%	1.3	TRU, UBCO, SEL	191
RRU	54%	21%	16%	9%	100%	1.9	CAM, UVIC, LANG	294
SEL	25%	50%	0%	25%	100%	2.4	TRU, UNBC, UVIC	<10
SFU	65%	26%	7%	3%	100%	1.5	DOUG, LANG, KPU	5,354
TRU	64%	21%	10%	6%	100%	1.6	OKAN, BCIT, UCC	1,021
UBCO	62%	29%	7%	2%	100%	1.5	OKAN, TRU, UBCV	2,004
UBCV	70%	21%	6%	3%	100%	1.4	LANG, UBCO, DOUG	8,358
UFV	60%	24%	10%	6%	100%	1.6	TRU, BCIT, DOUG	1,040
UNBC	35%	35%	20%	9%	100%	2.1	CNC, TRU, UBCV	541
UVIC	47%	37%	12%	4%	100%	1.8	CAM, TRU, VIU	3,782
VCC	27%	32%	23%	18%	100%	2.4	DOUG, BCIT, LANG	82
VIU	46%	32%	15%	8%	100%	1.9	TRU, NIC, CAM	870
Total	60%	27%	9%	4%	100%	1.6		
	16,331	7,443	2,547	1,108	27,429			27,413

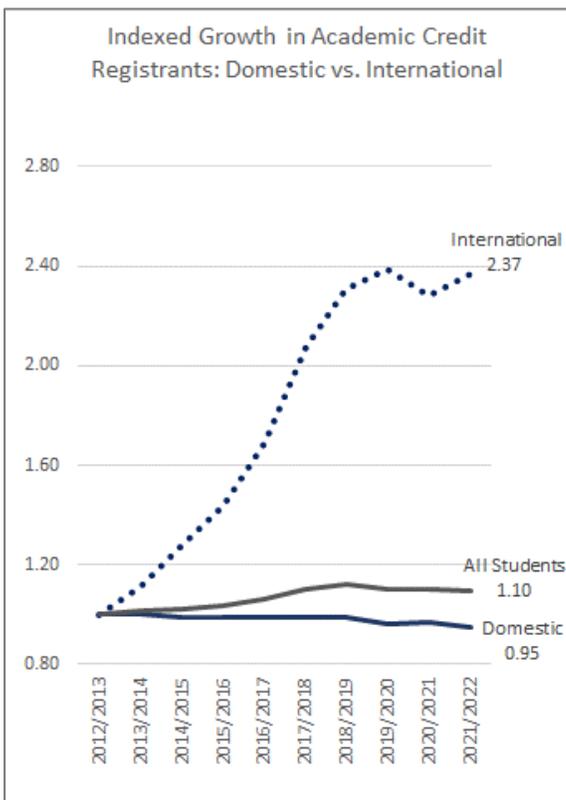
◆ How has the growth in international students affected the student mobility rate?

The B.C. public post-secondary system has seen significant growth in international students, such that the number of international students registered in academic credits in 2021/2022 has more than doubled (2.37 times) over the last ten years (see **Figure 13A**), while domestic students seeking academic credits has remained relatively unchanged at 95% of the enrolment level from a decade ago. **International students**, as defined in the inset box on the **next page**, are significantly less mobile than domestic students, with mobility rates of 9.0%, which is less than half that of domestic students (16.0%)⁵.

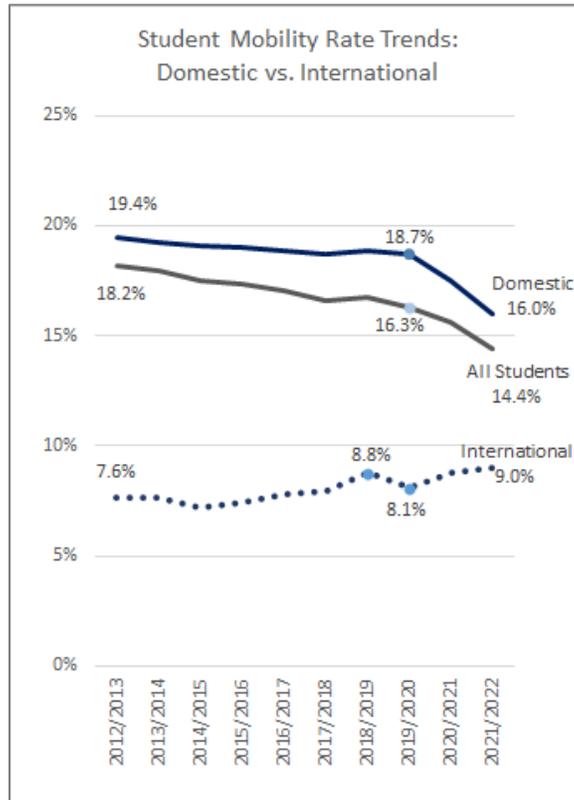
International students continue to represent a growing share of total post-secondary enrollment in B.C., with international students now representing roughly 19% of total headcount enrollment in the B.C. public post-secondary system, up significantly from 8% ten years ago.⁶ Since international students continue to have consistently lower student mobility rates than domestic students, the growth in international students continues to put downward pressure on the overall student mobility rate (currently 14.4%); however, international students are becoming increasingly more mobile, while domestic students are becoming less mobile. These opposing trends are likely to influence overall student mobility rates in the future, so the STP will continue to monitor the student mobility of these two populations. See **Figure 13B**.

FIGURE 13: TEN-YEAR TRENDS IN DOMESTIC VS. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

(A) GROWTH IN ACADEMIC CREDIT REGISTRANTS



(B) STUDENT MOBILITY RATE TRENDS



⁵ The mobility rates shown here are derived from all mobile students who last registered in a different institution in the preceding year or after one or more years of non-registration.

⁶ Source: STP Enrollment Dashboard (STP2022).

Who are the mobile students?

By comparing the distribution of mobile students to all registered students, it is evident that some students are more mobile than others. Compared to the typical post-secondary registrant in B.C., mobile students are more likely to be female, Indigenous, domestic, age 19 to 25, and earned an Associate Degree, Certificate or Diploma in Arts and Sciences, Health or Human and Social Services before switching institutions. See [Figure 14](#).⁷

FIGURE 14: STUDENT MOBILITY RATES OF STUDENTS CONTINUING IN THE B.C. SYSTEM FROM 2020/2021 TO 2021/2022, BY STUDENT GROUP

Student Group	Mobile Students	Total Registrants	% Share of Mobile Stdnts	% Share of All Registrants	Student Mobility Rate
Gender:					
Female	18,218	123,514	59%	56%	14.7%
Male	12,682	98,137	41%	44%	12.9%
Aboriginal Status:					
Indigenous	2,264	11,418	7%	5%	19.8%
Non-Indigenous	28,673	210,736	93%	95%	13.6%
Visa Status:					
Domestic	25,915	175,687	84%	79%	14.8%
International	5,226	46,985	17%	21%	11.1%
Age:					
19 to 25	18,080	123,740	58%	56%	14.6%
26 to 55	8,802	65,213	28%	29%	13.5%
18 and younger	3,952	31,422	13%	14%	12.6%
56 and older	254	2,336	1%	1%	10.9%
Earned Credential Before Moving:					
Credential Received	5,429	22,176	18%	10%	24.5%
No Credential	26,195	202,441	85%	91%	12.9%
Program Area:					
Personal Improvement & Leisure	240	527	1%	0%	45.5%
Other	306	1,048	1%	0%	29.2%
Developmental	805	3,216	3%	1%	25.0%
Human and Social Services	4,332	21,596	14%	10%	20.1%
Health	3,835	20,991	12%	9%	18.3%
Arts and Sciences:	15,001	89,689	48%	40%	16.7%
Arts	13,363	74,636	43%	34%	17.9%
Sciences	1,827	15,551	6%	7%	11.7%
Trades	924	6,363	3%	3%	14.5%
Business and Management	4,242	39,798	14%	18%	10.7%
Engineering and Applied Sciences	2,671	32,752	9%	15%	8.2%
Education	590	7,366	2%	3%	8.0%
Visual and Performing Arts	449	6,249	1%	3%	7.2%
Study Level:					
Developmental	804	3,220	3%	1%	25.0%
Undergraduate	29,789	200,995	96%	90%	14.8%
Graduate	640	18,919	2%	9%	3.4%
Credential Category at Origin PSI:					
None	10,170	29,488	33%	13%	34.5%
Associate Degree	3,439	11,268	11%	5%	30.5%
Other	2,358	8,204	8%	4%	28.7%
Advanced Diploma	208	749	1%	0%	27.8%
Developmental Credential	456	2,105	1%	1%	21.7%
Certificate	2,612	14,699	8%	7%	17.8%
Diploma	4,523	26,368	15%	12%	17.2%
Short Certificate	428	2,768	1%	1%	15.5%
Apprenticeship	329	2,346	1%	1%	14.0%
Advanced Certificate	88	721	0%	0%	12.2%
First Professional Degree	302	2,821	1%	1%	10.7%
Bachelors Degree	8,536	104,959	28%	47%	8.1%
Post-Degree Diploma	485	6,295	2%	3%	7.7%
Graduate Certificate	29	455	0%	0%	6.4%
Post-Degree Certificate	61	1,135	0%	1%	5.4%
Graduate Diploma	34	865	0%	0%	3.9%
Masters Degree	455	11,860	1%	5%	3.8%
Doctorate	79	5,656	0%	3%	1.4%
Grand Total All Students Registered in both 2020/2021 and 2021/2022	30,937	222,154	100%	100%	13.9%

What is an international student?

An **international student** is any non-Canadian citizen who does not have permanent residency status in Canada and is participating in a program of study at an education institution in Canada. International students are defined differently in each of two different post-secondary data sources provided to the STP.



The **Central Data Warehouse (CDW)** institutions (all post-secondary institutions excluding Research universities) define international students on the basis of the fees the students pay. Students who pay international fees are classified as international students. It is also assumed that international exchange students pay domestic fees and are therefore counted as domestic students in this study.

The **Research-Intensive Universities (RIUs)** identify international students according to the student visa status. The following visa status values are provided to the STP: Diplomat, Minister, Other, Student Visa, Visitor and International Exchange. International exchange students are *included* in this analysis.

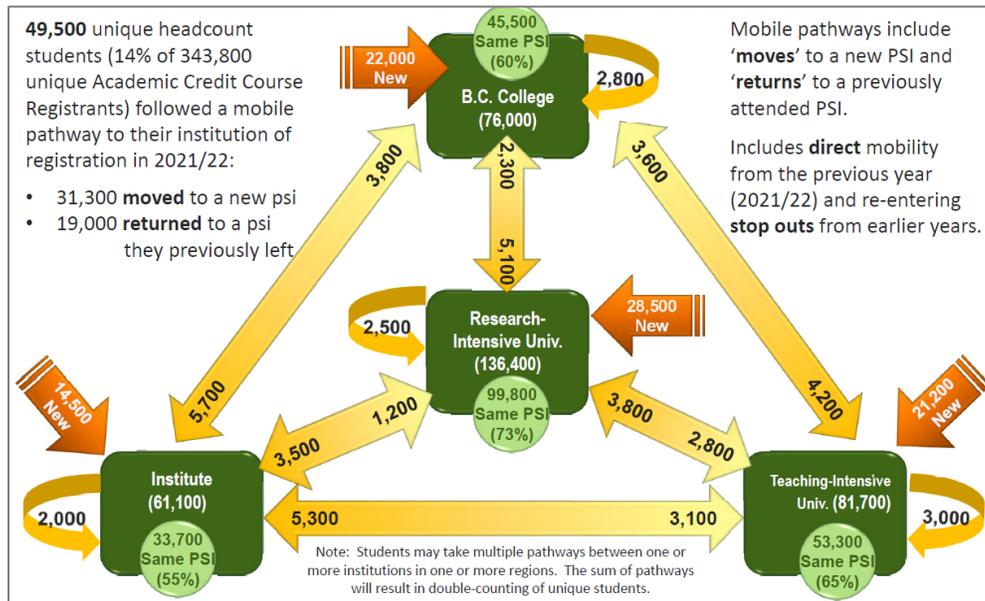
⁷ The mobility rates shown here are derived from mobile students who last registered in a different institution in the preceding year. Students who moved/returned after one or more stopout years of non-registration are excluded.

☑ How many students moved between different institution types in B.C.?

Among roughly 49,500 mobile students who switched institutions in 2021/2022, the vast majority, or about 31,300 students switched from one institution type to another. The STP has helped to debunk the myth that students primarily move only from Colleges to Research-Intensive Universities. As shown in **Figure 15**, students move in all directions between all institution types, but the two most popular routes are: (1) from Colleges to RIUs (5,100 students), and (2) from Colleges to Institutes, (5,700 students). In terms of the volume and direction of student flows between institution types in 2021/2022, there is a net outflow of students from Colleges (-5,300) and TIUs (-2,600), with a net inflow to Institutes (+6,400) and RIUs (+1,500).

FIGURE 15: STUDENT MOBILITY BETWEEN INSTITUTION TYPES (2021/2022)

(A) STP INSTITUTION TYPE MOBILITY DIAGRAM



(B) CHORD DIAGRAM OF PSI-TYPE MOBILITY



(C) INSTITUTION-TYPE MOBILITY MATRIX

To:\nFrom:	BCCOL	INST	TIU	RIU
BCCOL	2,791	5,714	5,087	4,196
INST	3,773	2,001	1,186	3,098
TIU	2,323	3,503	2,454	2,801
RIU	3,631	5,328	3,847	3,036

B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Institution Type

B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions belong to one of four institution types or sectors, as defined by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training. All student mobility information in this study assigns each institution to its current institution type, as defined below.

Colleges – Camosun College, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Douglas College, Langara College, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Coast Mountain College (formerly Northwest Community College), Okanagan College, Selkirk College, Vancouver Community College.

Institutes – British Columbia Institute of Technology, Justice Institute of British Columbia, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

Teaching-Intensive Universities (TIUs) – Capilano University, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Royal Roads University, Thompson Rivers University, Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley.

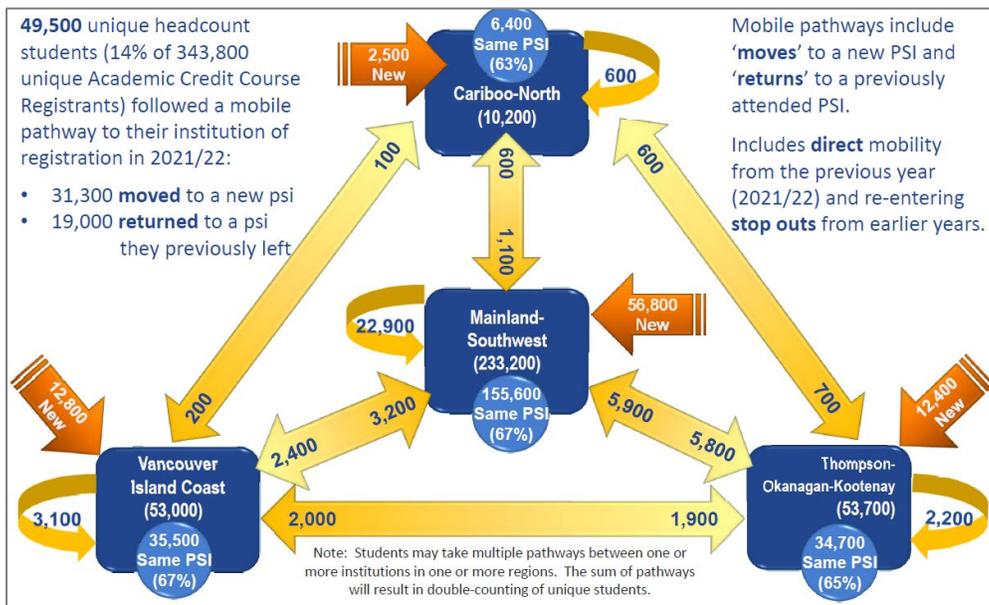
Research-Intensive Universities (RIUs) – Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia (including University of British Columbia, Okanagan), University of Northern British Columbia, University of Victoria.

☑ How many students moved between regions in B.C.?

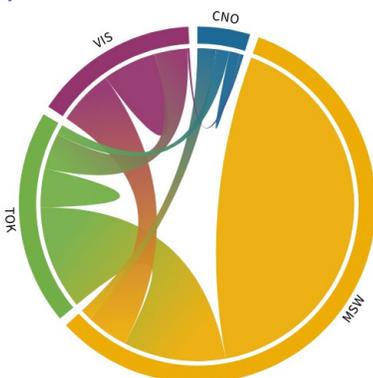
Among approximately 49,500 mobile students who switched institutions in 2021/2022, approximately 22,300 (or 41% of students) switched from one B.C. region to another (see **Figure 16**). The majority of mobile students (59%) do not switch regions when they register, with the largest group of mobile students switching institutions entirely within the Mainland/Southwest region. This is the most populated region of the province, where the largest number of post-secondary institutions are located; and the most popular destination region for mobile students who switched regions. The net flow of mobile students is into MSW (+1400); and out of CNO (-700), VIS (-600) and TOK (-100) regions.

FIGURE 16: STUDENT MOBILITY BETWEEN REGIONS (2021/2022)

(A) STP REGIONAL MOBILITY DIAGRAM



(B) CHORD DIAGRAM OF REGIONAL MOBILITY



(C) REGIONAL MOBILITY MATRIX

To:	CNO	MSW	TOK	VIS
From:				
CNO	615	1,068	743	213
MSW	634	22,932	5,822	2,422
TOK	596	5,940	2,209	2,027
VIS	128	3,196	1,870	3,055

B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Region

B.C. public post-secondary institutions are located in urban and rural regions of the province. For the purpose of tracking the mobility of students around the province, the STP has assigned each of the post-secondary institutions to one of the following four geographic regions.

Cariboo-North Region (CNO)

College of New Caledonia (CNC), Northern Lights College (NLC), Coast Mountain College (CMTN, formerly NWCC), University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC).

Mainland-Southwest Region (MSW)

British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), Capilano University (CAPU), Douglas College (DOUG), Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECU), Justice Institute of B.C. (JIBC), Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU), Langara College (LANG), Simon Fraser University (SFU), University of British Columbia, Vancouver (UBCV), University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), Vancouver Community College (VCC).

Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay Region (TOK)

College of the Rockies (COTR), Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), Okanagan College (OKAN), Thompson Rivers University (TRU), Selkirk College (SEL), University of British Columbia, Okanagan (UBCO).

Vancouver Island/Coast Region (VIS)

Camosun College (CAM), North Island College (NIC), Royal Roads University (RRU), University of Victoria (UVIC), Vancouver Island University (VIU).

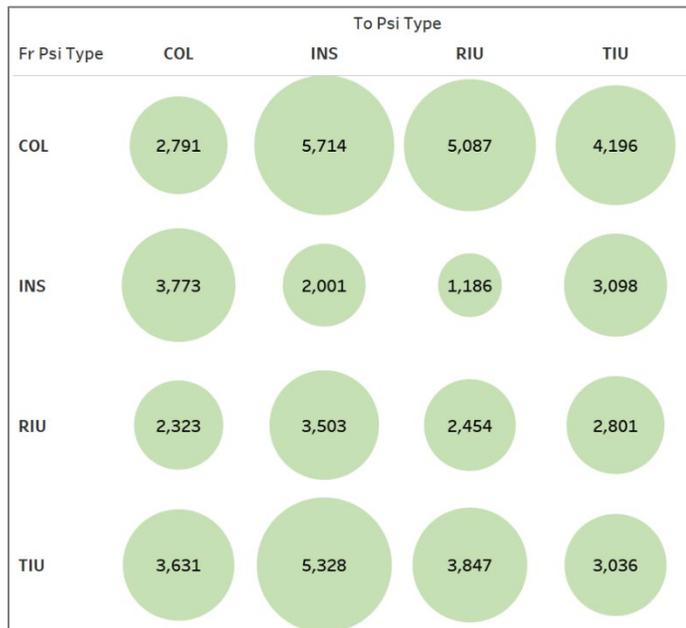
☑ Among mobile students, how significant are the inter-relationships between the regions and institution types?

The inter-relationship between **institution types** are relatively balanced, as demonstrated by the roughly equal volume of mobile students flowing between virtually all pairs of institution types in the B.C. public post-secondary system (see **Figure 17A**). With the exception of the relatively small mobility pathways from Institutes to RIUs (1,186) and inter-Institute mobility (2,001), an average of roughly 3,700 students flow between each of the remaining pairs of institution types in B.C.

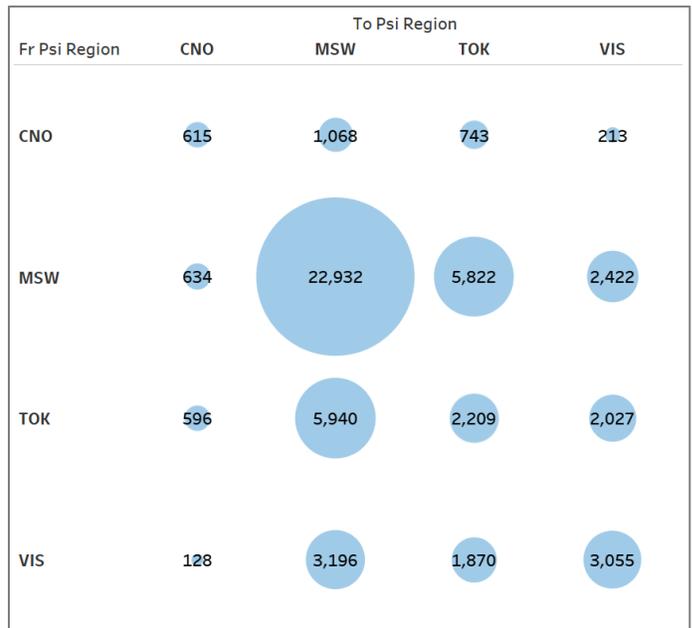
Compared to the roughly equal flow of students moving between institution types, the volume of student mobility between the four large **regions** of B.C. is relatively weak and unbalanced. Roughly two-thirds of all student mobility in 2021/2022 involved students moving *into* or *out of* Mainland/Southwest institutions, and this includes the significant volume (46% of total student mobility) that takes place entirely *within* the Mainland/Southwest region. As shown in **Figure 17B**, student mobility into or out of Thompson-Okanagan-Kootenay institutions (21%) or Vancouver Island institutions (15%) significantly outnumbers the student mobility into or out of Cariboo-North institutions (5%). Note that students may take multiple pathways between institutions, thus the sum of incoming or outgoing students between regions or institution types will exceed the total number of distinct mobile students.

FIGURE 17: 2021/2022 STUDENT MOBILITY INTER-RELATIONSHIPS

(A) BETWEEN INSTITUTION TYPES



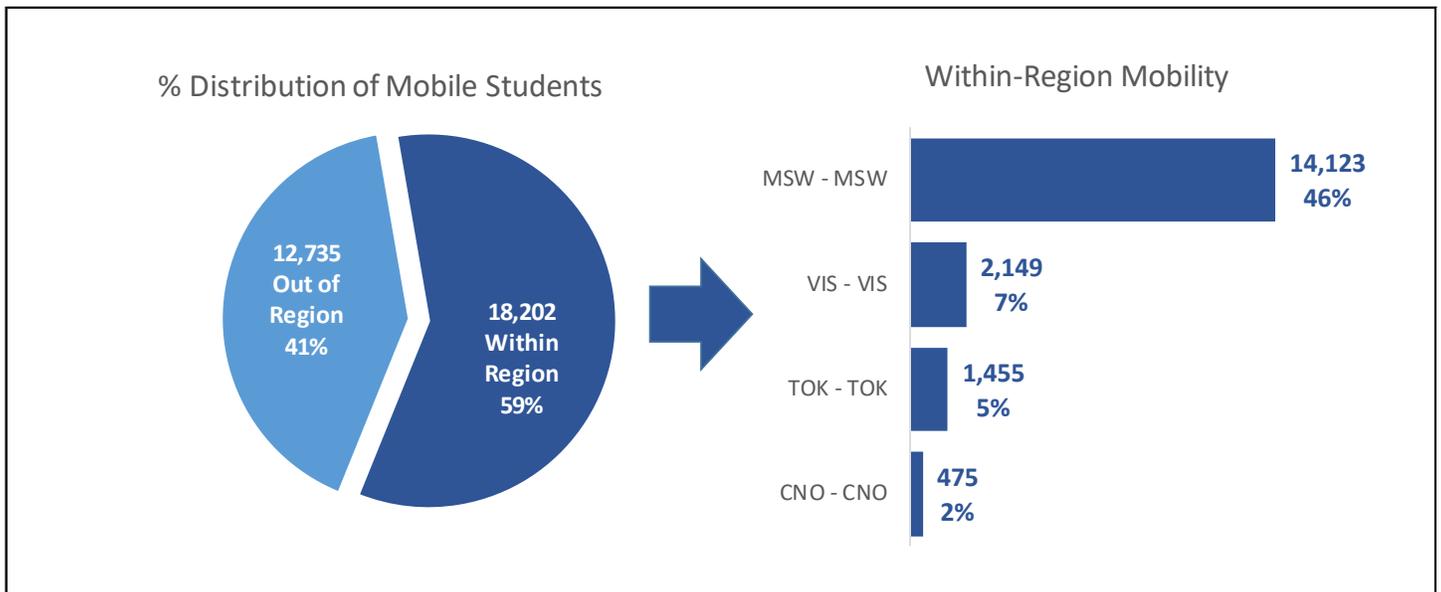
(B) BETWEEN REGIONS



What proportion of student mobility occurs between institutions *within* the same region?

Among those 30,937 students who switched institutions from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022 (without a stopout period of non-registration), 59% enrolled in another institution within the region, while 41% switched to an institution outside of the region. Most (46%) of these within-region mobile students were students who switched institutions within the Mainland/Southwest region. See **Figure 18**.

FIGURE 18: WITHIN-REGION STUDENT MOBILITY

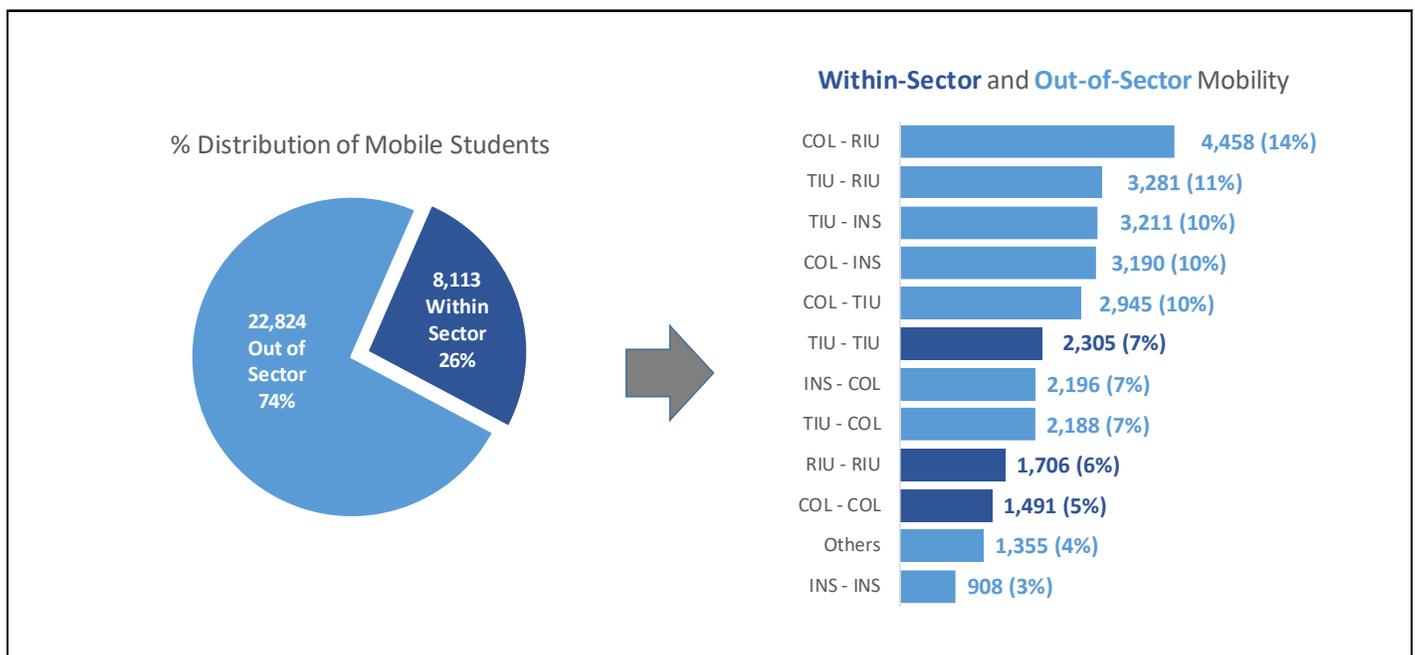


☑ What proportion of student mobility occurs between institutions *within* the same institution type?

Among those 30,937 students who switched institutions from 2020/2021 to 2021/2022 (without a stopout period of non-registration), 8,113 students (26%) enrolled in another institution within the same institution type. The most popular route within the same institution type was TIU to TIU, accounting for 7% (of the 26%) of mobile students who switched institutions within the same institution types. (See [Figure 19](#)).

The more dominant pathway for 22,824 (74%) of nearly 31,000 mobile students is to move from one sector to another when they switch institutions. This out-of-sector student mobility is more than triple the number of movers who remained in the same institution type. The two most common out-of-sector mobile pathways typically originate in a College (14% or 4,458 students) or Teaching Intensive University (11% or 3,281 students) and end at an RIU. Student mobility into Institutes is also popular, especially from TIUs (3,211 students) or College (3,190 students).

FIGURE 19: WITHIN-SECTOR AND OUT-OF-SECTOR STUDENT MOBILITY



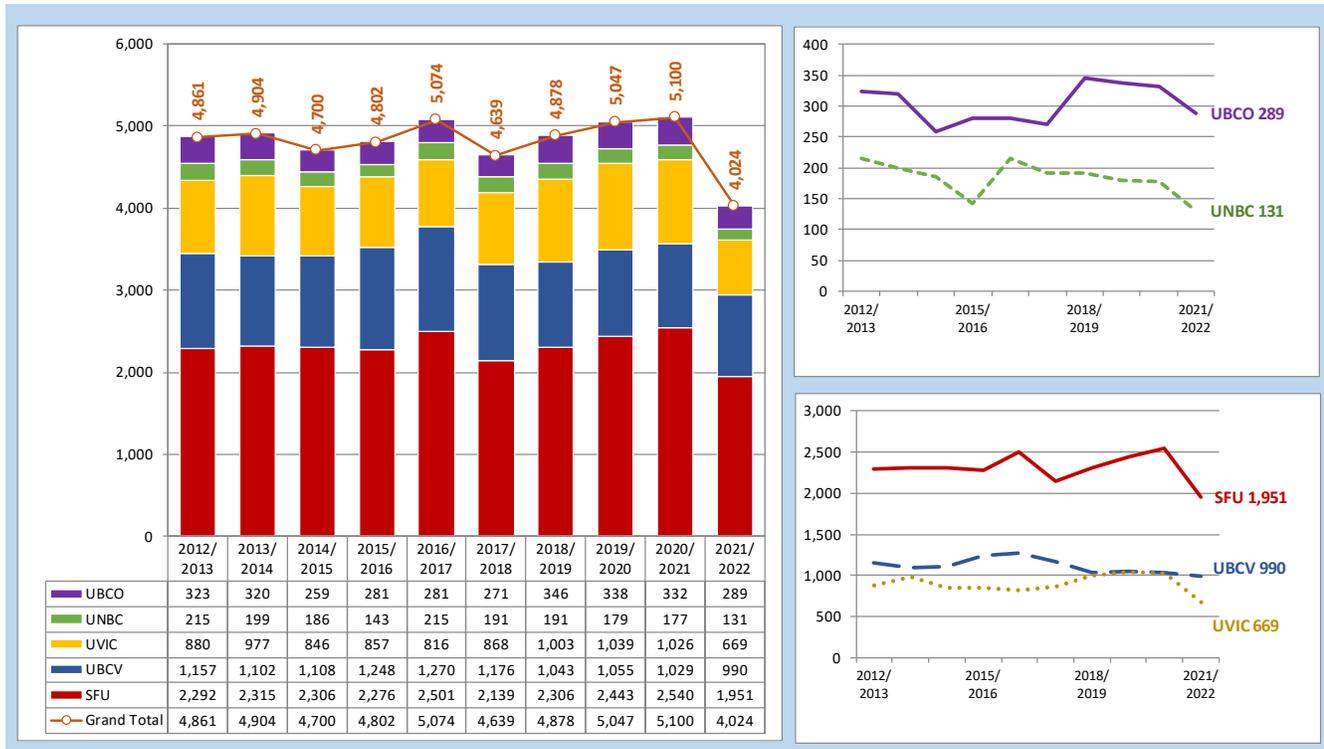
◆ How many students follow the traditional transfer route from a B.C. post-secondary institution to a Research-Intensive University?

In 2021/2022, 4,024 students followed the traditional transfer pathway⁸ to a B.C. Research-Intensive University, the smallest number of traditional transfer students on record in the STP’s 20-year history. Proportionately, this represents 8.1% of all 49,538 mobile students and is moderately lower than the trend over the preceding nine years (8.6%). The decline in traditional transfer students may be attributed to international enrolment declines experienced during the pandemic, as the decrease in international transfer students (-36%) was three times that of domestic transfer students (-12%).

Looking further back in STP’s historical data, it is evident that the traditional transfer route was more common nearly two decades ago in 2004/2005, when 14.5% (or 5,864 out of 40,357 mobile students) pursued this pathway. Degree expansion in B.C. now offers numerous degree completion opportunities for students in B.C. Colleges, Institutes and TIU’s; and B.C.’s well-established transfer system continues to support the traditional transfer pathways to RIUs, while also supporting all multi-directional student mobility described earlier in this report (see [Figure 20](#)).

Among the 4,024 traditional transfer students in 2021/2022, nearly half (48%) enrolled at SFU; and despite having nearly double (1.8 times) the number of undergraduate students as SFU, UBCV enrolled just 25% of the traditional transfer students. Smaller shares of traditional transfer students enrolled at UVic (17%), UBCO (7%) and UNBC (3%). Each of the RIUs enrolled fewer traditional transfer students in 2021/2022, compared to their typical volume in previous years.

FIGURE 20: NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL TRANSFERS STUDENTS⁸ BY ACADEMIC YEAR AND DESTINATION RESEARCH-INTENSIVE UNIVERSITY



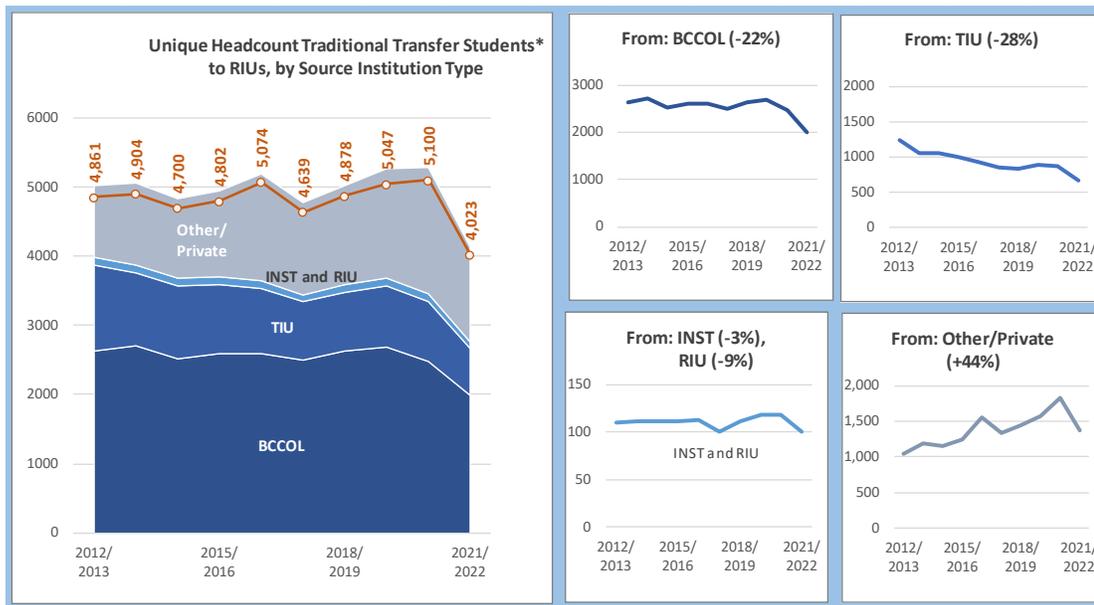
⁸ **Traditional transfer students** transferred from B.C. post-secondary institutions to Research-Intensive Universities with a minimum of 24 credits and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00, with a basis of admission “B.C. College” or “B.C. Associate Degree”.

◆ What are the source institution types of traditional transfer students enrolling in RIUs? What are the trends?

The trend in the number of traditional transfer students* entering each of the RIUs in B.C. over the last decade was shown previously in **Figure 20**, while the trend by source institution type is provided in **Figure 21** below.

- Among the 4,023 traditional transfer students in 2021/2022, roughly half (49%) transferred from **B.C. Colleges** which is five percentage points lower than the proportion from ten years ago (54%).
- By comparison, the share of traditional transfer students entering RIUs from **TIUs** has declined eight percentage points, from 25% to 17% over the decade, likely because opportunities for degree completion at TIUs has reduced the need for students to transfer to RIUs.
- The number of traditional transfer students from **Institutes** to RIUs, or between **RIUs**, is negligible (3% combined).
- B.C. private institutions are not included in the STP mobility analysis; however, 34% of B.C.’s traditional transfer students likely transferred to RIUs from **B.C. private institutions**, as deduced from the admission category of these B.C. students and their lack of a previous STP registration record from a B.C. public post-secondary institution. This significant source of transfer students is not surprising, given that Fraser International College (FIC), a private institution with direct transfer pathways for international students to SFU contributes to roughly one-third of the new B.C. College transfer students to SFU.⁹
- B.C. private institutions, such as FIC, Coquitlam College and Columbia College, were playing an increasingly larger role in supplying transfer students, especially international students, but enrolments at these institutions were likely impacted by the pandemic, resulting in a more limited supply of eligible transfer students to RIUs in 2021/2022.

FIGURE 21: NUMBER OF TRADITIONAL TRANSFERS STUDENTS* BY ACADEMIC YEAR AND SOURCE INSTITUTION TYPE



*Traditional transfer students transferred from B.C. post-secondary institutions to Research-Intensive Universities with a minimum of 24 credits and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.00, with a basis of admission “B.C. College” or “B.C. Associate Degree”. The basis of admission category for each student entering an RIU identifies traditional transfer students, regardless of whether the student previously attended a B.C. public or private post-secondary institution. Since a portion of the B.C. transfer students do not have a previous STP registration record from a B.C. public post-secondary institution, they likely transferred from a B.C. private institution. Students from outside of B.C. or Canada fall into a different admission category.

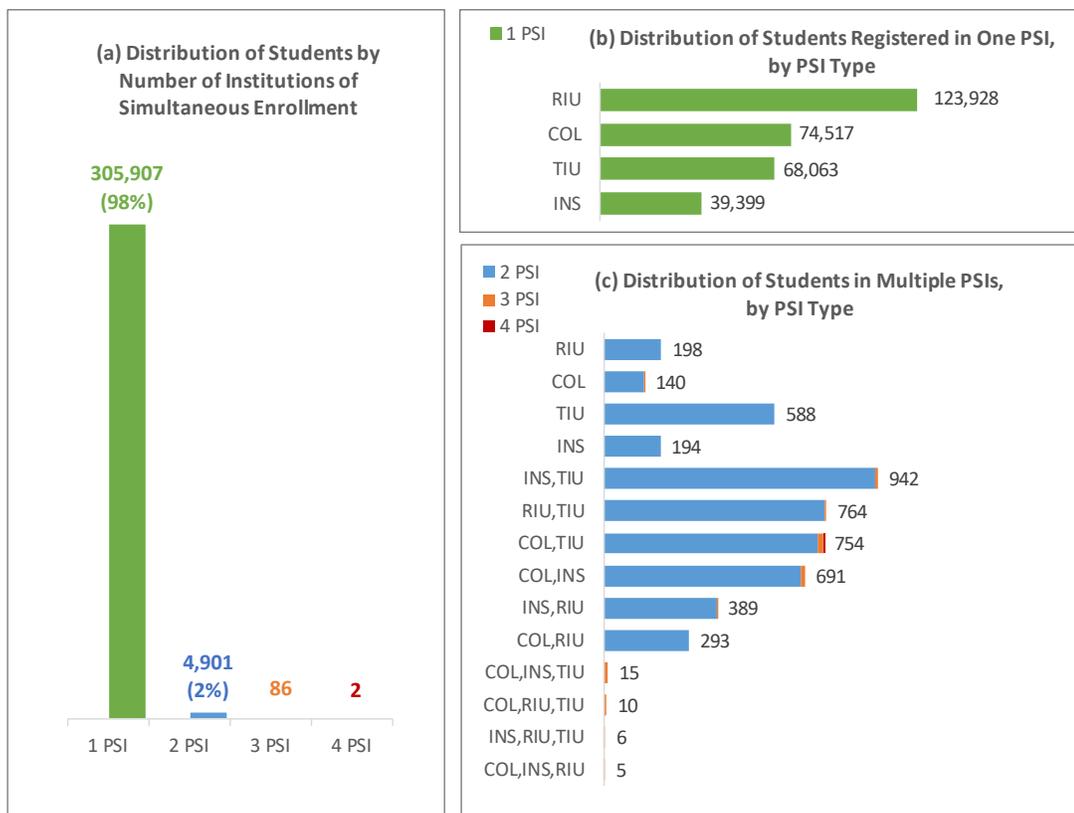
⁹ Source: SFU Registration Status Report, Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, <https://www.sfu.ca/irp/enrolments/RegStatusReport.html>.

☑ What proportion of Fall 2021 registrants attended more than one institution simultaneously?

While student mobility includes both sequential and/or simultaneous enrolment in multiple institutions, much of this report has focused on the sequential aspect of student mobility. In the Fall of 2021, a total of 4,989 students were simultaneously enrolled in multiple institutions, representing roughly 2% of all 310,896 distinct students registered in the term. Among those enrolled in multiple institutions, the vast majority or 4,901 registered in two institutions (see [Figure 22a](#)). As previously discussed on [page 14](#), roughly one-fifth of the continuing mobile students who switched institutions and additionally remained at their previous institution, are among the students who enrolled simultaneously in multiple institutions in a Fall term.

The most common registration combination was simultaneous enrollment in an Institute and TIU (19% of dual enrollees). Typically, when students register in two institutions simultaneously, they enrol in two distinct institution types, although 12% of dual-enrolled students were enrolled in two distinct TIUs. Enrollment in two Colleges, two RIUs or two Institutes was less common, at 3% to 4% each; and an insignificant proportion of students enrolled in three or four institutions at one time. See [Figure 22c](#).

FIGURE 22: DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS WHERE SIMULTANEOUSLY ENROLLED (FALL, 2021)



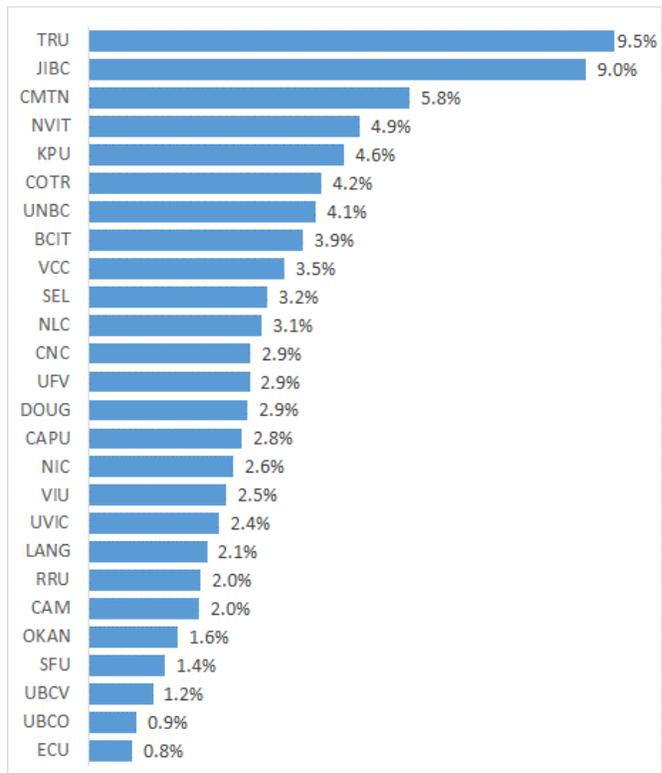
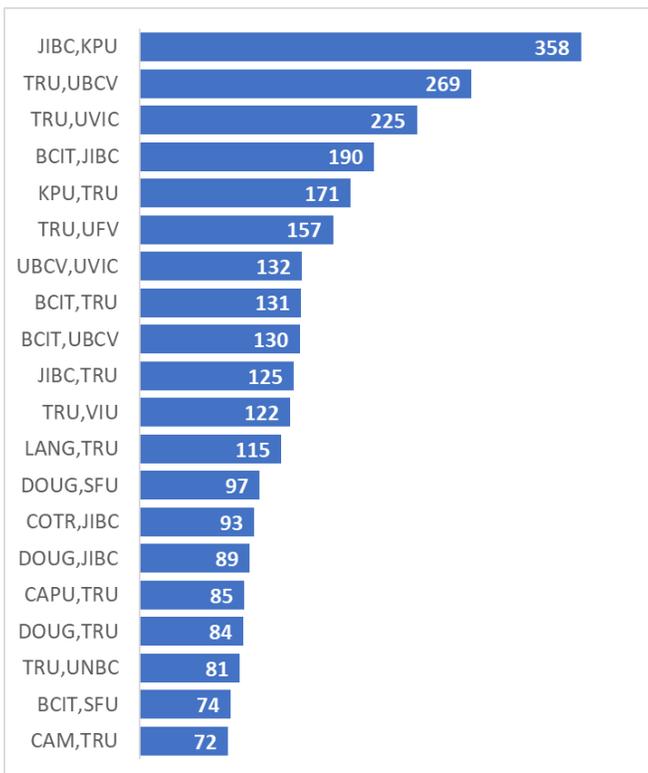
✓ Among Fall 2021 registrants attending more than two institutions simultaneously, which institutions did they enrol in?

With twenty-five public post-secondary institutions in the province, the number of possible combinations of institutions where students may enrol simultaneously is seemingly endless. There are 625 possible pairs¹⁰ of institutions and **Figure 23** shows the top twenty pairs of institutions where students enrolled simultaneously (among the 222 distinct dual enrollment pairs identified in Fall of 2021). All dual enrolled students represent fewer than 2% of all registrants in the term, the top twenty institution pairs represent 2,800 or 57% of the 4,901 students registered in two institutions simultaneously. The remaining 202 pairs of institutions, not among the top 20, account for 43% of students enrolled in two institutions in the Fall of 2021, with an average of ten or median of two students attending each pair of institutions simultaneously.

Thomson Rivers University (TRU) plays a significant role in simultaneous enrollment, likely due to the numerous online learning programs and courses offered through TRU’s Open Learning division. TRU is present in 12 of the top 20 institution pairs listed in **Figure 23**. In addition, from each institution’s perspective, the STP data reveals that 9.5% of the students registered at TRU in Fall of 2021 were also enrolled in at least one other institution at the same time; and a notably similar proportion is 9.0% for JIBC students. Comparable information for the B.C. system is shown in **Figure 24**, ranging from less than 1% for Emily Carr University registrants to nearly 6% of Coast Mountain College students simultaneously enrolled elsewhere.

FIGURE 23: DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS BY INSTITUTION PAIRS WHERE SIMULTANEOUSLY ENROLLED (FALL 2021)

FIGURE 24: % OF TOTAL REGISTRANTS ATTENDING OTHER INSTITUTION(S) SIMULTANEOUSLY (FALL 2021)



¹⁰ Since UBCO and UBCV are treated as separate institutions in this analysis, there are twenty-six institutions and thus 26*25=625 possible pairs of institutions in which students might enrol simultaneously.

Conclusion

The findings in this report demonstrate that B.C.'s well-established transfer system supports student mobility, allowing students to enrol in multiple institutions throughout their education journey in B.C., either sequentially or less frequently, simultaneously. Student mobility is generally declining in B.C. and this report helps to shed light on some of the reasons for this trend:

- Beginning in 2019/2020, both the total number of academic credit registrants and the subset of mobile students have been declining; and the growth in academic credit registrants exceeded the growth in the number of mobile students. The steeper drop in the number of mobile students, relative to the more moderate decline in academic credit registrants, is further contributing to a steeper decline in the student mobility rate over the last three years.
- The majority of Bachelor's degrees continue to be completed at B.C.'s Research-Intensive Universities, but a growing share are now being completed at B.C. Colleges, Institutes and Teaching-Intensive Universities. As a result, students are attending fewer institutions on average to complete a Bachelor's degree, with an increasing majority of students attending only one institution.
- International students are significantly less mobile than domestic students, but they are becoming increasingly more mobile and represent a growing share of total post-secondary enrollment in B.C. These opposing trends are likely to influence overall student mobility rates in the future.
- The number of traditional transfer students who move from another B.C. public post-secondary institution to a B.C. Research-Intensive University (admitted as a B.C. College Transfer or B.C. Associate Degree student) has declined 21% over the previous year, to roughly 4,000 students. This may be attributed to international enrolment declines experienced during the pandemic, given that the decrease in international transfer students (-36%) was three times the decrease of domestic transfer students (-12%).

In addition to declines in student mobility, several other interesting trends were revealed in this student mobility analysis:

- More than one-third of mobile students also continue to enrol at the same institution from their previous academic year. This pattern was more evident during the pandemic than typical levels.
- The majority of mobile students switch to nearby institutions within 20 km of their previous institution, but coincident with expanded online learning opportunities, students are now accessing post-secondary education further away from their previous institution.
- Thompson Rivers University serves an increasingly important role in student mobility in B.C. and reached a peak in this role during the pandemic in 2019/2020.

This research on student mobility in B.C. is typically conducted every two years. The STP continues to strive toward providing timely, relevant and insightful information about student transitions, post-secondary enrolment and student mobility in B.C. Suggestions and feedback from readers is appreciated.